

view, was after all the great problem, and the greatest stumbling-block in the way of the advance of Christianity.

**26. Ye see and hear.** The fact was plain to every observer. **Not alone at Ephesus.** As if he said, "If it were our business only that were interfered with by this new doctrine we might wonder whether we were able to cope with it, but all idolaters must make common cause." **Throughout all Asia.** As before, this means the province bordering on the Aegean Sea. **This Paul.** A phrase of contempt. **Heath persuaded and turned away much people.** Half a century later Pliny tells us that the heathen institutions in the neighborhood of Ephesus had fallen into utter neglect as a direct consequence of Christian teaching. Nearly all the men intent on gain were hurt by the rapid spread of Christianity. **They be no gods which are made with hands.** The worship of images and crucifixes has often begun in devout symbolism, as when a poetic mind seeks an ideal representation of spiritual truth. But, however it begins, it always ends as here in the common folk believing, whatever they say, that real gods have been made with hands.

**27. Our craft is in danger.** "Our business interests are in peril." If Paul succeeds you will be out of work. **To be set at naught.** To come into contempt, to be made a laughing stock of. **But also.** This our overthrow is not the worst of things: **The temple of the great goddess will be despised and her magnificence will be destroyed.** This is a very weighty sentence. It is as if he said: "Do not persuade yourselves that this is a passing fashion or fad. You who make shrines, you will starve, except Paul goes; you who worship Diana, you will be scorned and the goddess mocked, except Paul goes; you who love your city and province, the supremacy they have enjoyed will disappear, except Paul goes." **All Asia and the world worshipeth.** All western Asia Minor had built this temple. Each of its hundred and twenty columns was the gift of a city, and the annual festival of the goddess attracted thousands from all directions.

**28. Full of wrath.** Grew madder and madder. **Cried out.** Were crying out. We can picture a group of excited men starting through the streets shouting, "Great is Diana," and arousing all the idle and the bad. When Paul's traveling companions were captured by this mob they rushed into the theater, which was probably used for public gatherings.

**29. The whole city was filled with confusion.** As a city always is when a great mob starts. **Having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia.** They were Europeans, and it probably was not difficult to identify them and associate them with Paul. It seems strange that they did not suffer injury. The fact

that Gaius is a Macedonian makes it probable that he was not the Gaius of Derbe, of Acts 20, 4; or the Gaius of Corinth, of 1 Cor. 1, 14; Rom. 16, 23; or the Gaius of Ephesus, of 3 John 1. Aristarchus we only know as a faithful friend of Paul. **Paul's companions.** Emphatically Paul made friends. It has been conjectured that just at this hour Aquila and Priscilla (Rom. 16, 3, 4) risked their necks to save Paul.

**30, 31. Paul would have entered in.** Was minded to enter in. **The disciples suffered him not.** They had watched the gathering storm and were resolved to keep him in safety. **The chief of Asia.** The Asiarchs, presidents of the Ephesian games. One was appointed annually, and who ever had been Asiarch retained the title. **Which were his friends.** The number of men of high rank won to the friendship of Paul is amazing. **Desiring him.** This request probably had greater influence over him even than that of the Christians.

**32. Some therefore cried one thing, and some another.** Finely descriptive. **The assembly was confused.** The word for assembly is the word elsewhere translated church. If Paul had entered the theater he doubtless would have been murdered, and if the mob could have murdered Paul their trouble would have been over. But the theater, with its galleries of seats and its dignified marble pillars, turned that mob into a sort of turbulent deliberative assembly. The leaders evidently did not know what to do next.

**33. They drew.** "They brought." **Alexander.** Probably the coppersmith (2 Tim. 4, 14); doubtless himself a maker of shrines. **The Jews putting him forward.** When a mob arose the Jews were always in danger, and as they had been influential in arousing this one, its pacification meant much to them. The Jews were eager to show that they could not be confounded with Christians. **Alexander beckoned with the hand.** Paul was able on similar occasions to quiet the people. **Would have made his defense.** "A defense," that is, of the Jews and of the mob.

**34. They knew that he was a Jew.** Instead of "knew" the Revised Version has "perceived," as if they recognized his nationality. Not a hard thing to tell ordinarily; and though Asiatic features are more like Jewish features than are those of the European or American, still Alexander was a marked man; besides, he was probably known to many of this assembly. **The space of two hours.** Excited as the mob was, it could hardly have continued this monotonous shouting for so long a time if it had not been in some sort and to some degree ritualistic, a formal homage to Diana. "Vain repetitions" were common in heathen worship.