

He also won from the first Christian Council at Jerusalem the concession that, if those converts, as to ceremonials, barely "kept themselves from fornication," (which seemed to mean from complicity with idolatrous customs,) "from things strangled, and from blood, they should do well," and "that no other burden" should he laid upon them.

The College of Apostles at Jerusalem, with other large-minded persons of Hebrew education and bias, while they winked at conformity to Judaism for the present, out of deference to invincible prejudice, and from considerations of policy, could not help foreseeing that the Old Testament ritual was to be superseded by that more vital system, of which it was only the symbol and the shadow. But lesser men, with the positiveness and pertinacity which characterizes narrow but conscientious minds, clung to the idea of the perpetuity of Jewish ceremonials, and would fain have imposed that "yoke of bondage" on all possessed of "the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free," to accomplish which they denied apostolic authority to Paul, "who had begotten them through the Gospel," thus causing a great deal of anxiety and even schism, if not downright division, wherever they went. Estrangement and separate organization were no doubt, the result to a considerable extent in many places.

Evidences are not wanting of this from the Acts of the Apostles, although the author to whom we are about to refer, thinks, not without some warrant, that the book that goes by that name is only a small part of a much larger collection of apostolic annals, now lost, the present being a sort of abridgement, compiled in such a way as to form an eirenicon, or harmonizer, of the Jewish and Gentile sections of the Christian Church. But it is in the pastoral epistles of Paul; especially those to the Romans and Galatians, particularly the latter, that the diver-

gence, happily afterwards harmonized, fully appears. It is in the Epistle to the Galatians particularly, that the efforts of the Judaizers fully come to light, whom Paul resolutely and ably, not to say vehemently, withstood; showing their inconsistency and the subversive tendency of their meanness to all that was vital to real Christianity.

Humanly speaking, had not this single-minded and fearless man taken the unflinching stand he did take, Christianity would have dwindled down to a mere Jewish sect, and Judaism, which had been its cradle, would have been its grave. Providence favoured, (a few years after his death,) the protest Paul had preferred. A well organized and widely ramified revolt on the part of the Jews against the Roman authority, throughout all parts of the empire, attended by deeds of the greatest atrocity, so exasperated all against whom it was directed, as to lead to an exterminating recoil against the Jews themselves, which issued in the slaughter of myriads of them, and the proscription of the survivors. This shocked their Christian fellow-countrymen, made Judaism generally unpopular, and induced the Judaizing Christians to regard their Christian brethren of Gentile origin, and those opposed to circumcision, with charity and favour. Indeed, for a time at least, in some places circumcision was prohibited by civil authority. Gradually and generally the two sections of the Church became one, and new questions arose to divert attention from the old vexation, and to bring St. Paul's writings into notice, being the most explicit and logical of all the apostolic Scriptures, and the widest in their range of subjects, as a standard of appeal by which those questions relating to gnosticism and other things were to be determined. We need not say how triumphantly the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, which is found to be the only system the teaching of which pro-