

16 And he drave them from the judgment-seat.

17 Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment-seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things.

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GENERAL STATEMENT.

From Athens, the intellectual centre of the Grecian world, Paul turns to Corinth, its commercial metropolis. Here he finds a city thronged with multitudes in the pursuit of wealth and pleasure, a city whose name was a synonym for lust. Here he enters the home of an exiled family who have been tossed over the waves of varied fortune, and are for a time labouring at their lowly trade in Corinth. The tent-maker's shop becomes a place where angels bave to look on Paul in fellowship with Priscilla and Aquila. On Sabbath days the looms are at rest, and the household unite with the worshipping company in the synagogue, where to unwilling Jews, but eager Gentiles, Paul bears testimony to Jesus as the Christ. There is the usual result, angry and blasphemous opposition from many, but a few sincere inquirers. We notice an epoch in the history of the Gospel when the first formal separation is made between Jews and Christians, and the first Church assemblies in the house of Titus Justus, hard by the Jewish synagogue. The work goes on, with increasing progress of the Gospel, as Timothy and Silas rejoin the apostle, and unite their labours with his. There are times of discouragement, when the spirit of Paul falters under sore trials, the hate of Jewish foes, the hardness of Gentile hearts, and the burdens of a sickly body. In his darkest hour, at midnight, his drooping soul is cheered by a sight of that Saviour whose face he saw years before at the gate of Damascus, and again in the court of the temple. He hears words of comfort, and learns from the Master's lips that his work is not in vain. For more than a year the labour goes on, during the week with the flying shuttle in the tent-shop, on the Sabbath with the growing company of Christian worshippers. Once more Paul stands at the judgment-seat. As before, at Philippi and Thessalonica, there are false accusers to pervert his utterances into disloyalty to the imperial rule. It is a scene worthy of a poet's pen or a painter's brush, to picture the apostle Paul standing for trial before the proconsul Gallio, the brother of Seneca. The proud Roman looks with equal scorn upon accusers and accused, and impatiently dismisses from court the burning question, not only of that age, but all time, the cause destined to triumph over the world, and to lift the cross above the eagles of Rome.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 1. After these things. The visit to Athens, related in the last lesson. Came to Corinth. The Roman capital of Greece, its largest city, and the centre of its commerce. It stood upon the Isthmus, at the

narrow tongue of land between the two parts of Greece called Hellas and Peloponnesus. In the centre of the city was a rocky height strongly fortified, called the Acro-Corinthus. Its population were of all races, mingled, and were so addicted to social vices, that "to Corinthianize" was a current term for immorality. Yet in this city was founded a Church of Christ, to which Paul addressed two of his longest and most important epistles. 1. Where sin abounds, there grace may abound also.

2. A certain Jew. Probably, but not certainly, already a disciple of Christ when Paul met him. Named Aquila. "Eagle." Ever afterward one of the most constant friends of the apostle, and often named in the epistles. Born in Pontus. One of the northern provinces of Asia Minor, bordering on the Black Sea. Came from Italy. We see here illustrated the roving habits of the Jews of the Dispersion, who removed from one end of the Roman Empire to the other according to the opportunities of business or the necessities of persecution. We find Aquila and his wife at Ephesus soon after this, and again at Rome later. His wife Priscilla. Who is often named before her husband, and may have been the more energetic or more devoted to the Gospel, though the constant union of the two names shows that they were harmonious. 2. Happy is that home where united heads are one in Christ! Claudius. The fourth Roman emperor, a quiet man of scholarly tastes, somewhat weak in nature, called to the throne after the murder of Caligula. The modern estimate of his character and reign is considerably above the ancient. He reigned from A.D. 41 to 54. Commanded all Jews. The Roman historian of that period says that the Jews were banished from Rome because riots arose among them, instigated by one "Chrestus." This probably indicates that the Gospel had reached Rome, and that the Jewish Christians were opposed by their unbelieving brethren to such an extent that the Roman rulers interfered. To depart from Rome. The decree was not long in force, for Paul found many Jews in Rome eight years after this. Acts 28. 15. Came unto them. It may have been either their common trade or common faith which led them, Paul and Aquila, together.

3. The same craft. Rev. Ver., "trade." Every Jew, however high his station, was required to teach his son a trade; and the greatest Rabbis were also shoemakers, tailors, or other handicraftsmen. Abode with them. O rare privilege of that lowly home, to have Paul as its guest for more than a year! 3. We, too, can have him in our home by his written thoughts, which are the best part of a great man. And wrought. Though Paul asserted in his epistles the right of an apostle to be supported by the Church, yet he laboured for his own living, partly because the churches were small and poor, partly because he would have men see that he sought them and not