

across the Atlantic to temper the colder climates of northern Europe, so the vast river of salvation, which has its source in the throne of God, will not stay its progress until its life-giving current has reached the remotest bounds of earth and caused to spring up in every land the beautiful flowers of truth and righteousness.

Preaching the Kingdom of God, v. 31. How insignificant seemed the kingdom which Paul preached, in comparison with the mighty empire over which Nero, his judge, ruled! And yet, while the Roman power has long fallen into decline and decay, the

kingdom of God remains and grows among men. And it will ever continue to extend its boundaries and increase its influence until it has subdued all the kingdoms of this world. Those who link their fortunes with the progress of this kingdom will share in the certain glory of its triumph.

With all confidence, v. 31. The life that is confident of the truth and bold to proclaim it, is the life that tells. Nothing can take the place of earnestness; it is a condition of helpful service. Let us shun the dangers of half-heartedness.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

Here on earth the servant of God may be a prisoner bound, but in heaven he will be a conqueror crowned. v. 16.

A loving heart is the fountain of gentle speech. v. 17.

Innocence may not prevent suffering but it can take away its bitterness. v. 18.

It is genuine patriotism that is not quenched by persecution. v. 19.

Hope illumines the darkness of earth with the radiance of heaven. v. 20.

There is often a wide difference between rumor and reality. v. 22.

People are brought to Christ by persuasion, not by compulsion. v. 23.

The faithfulness of the preacher cannot make up for the carelessness of the hearer. v. 24.

The gospel says to all, "Come and welcome." v. 30.

The true preacher will find a pulpit anywhere. v. 31.

"God fulfilled Paul's desire to see Rome in this way, probably for two reasons: First, for safety's sake, and secondly for the wider audience that awaited him."

"Satan endeavors to cast all the reproach on religion that he can. 'As for this sect, we know that it is everywhere spoken against.' But wise men measure things by the end; what is the end of a religious life? It ends in a kingdom. Would a prince regard the jeers of a few insignificant people,

when he is going to be crowned? You who are beginners, bind their reproaches as a crown about your head, despise their censures as much as their praise; a kingdom is coming."

There were many possible reasons why the hearing of Paul's appeal was so long delayed. The record of the previous proceedings forwarded by Festus may have been lost in the wreck, and it was therefore necessary to wait for fresh official information, as the prisoner's accusers had not arrived. And when they arrived, it is very possible that they may have been willing to interpose fresh obstacles, and that they would be content to keep Paul bound as before; as evidence was probably wanted, not only from Jerusalem, but from various parts of the empire, the interposition of these fresh delays was easy. Paul had himself suggested that the Jews in Asia should be summoned, ch. 24: 19.—Knowling.

Appeals to the Emperor were heard by a judge appointed for the purpose, and not necessarily by the Emperor himself.

For Englishmen there must arise the thoughts that perhaps from some of these Roman soldiers who heard Paul in his prison the message of the gospel came first to our island.—Cambridge Bible.

Thy soul was like a star and dwelt apart;

Thou had'st a voice whose sound was like the sea;

Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free;
So did'st thou travel on life's common way.