

religion of his fathers, but quite the contrary. (Hervey).

15. And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow (R. V. look for), that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. Not only the Pharisees, but the great majority of Jews, believed in a future state. The Sadducees alone denied it. Paul agreed with the whole nation, and its wisest and holiest men. Those who accused him were a "sect" (ch. 5: 17).

16. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward man. "Herein" means "on this account." The fact of the resurrection exercised a controlling influence upon his whole life and conduct. His life was one lived in expectation of the judgment day. "To exercise" one's self, is to practise self-discipline. He could not expect to reach the goal without keeping himself in moral training. A conscience "void of offence" is one that does not charge with disobedience to its intimations. Conscience rebukes us when we do what we know to be wrong. Paul asserts that he does not knowingly disobey conscience. He was conscientious even when persecuting.

17. Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings. It was four or five years since Paul's last brief visit (ch. 18: 22). The "alms" which he brought were the donations of gentile churches for the relief of Jewish Christians who were in poverty. The "offerings" were connected with the vow which he had undertaken.

18. Whereupon (R. V. amidst which) certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult. While engaged in presenting these offerings and oblations, in strict accordance with the requirements of the ceremonial law, quietly and unostentatiously worshipping, he was found by his old Ephesian enemies.

19. Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had aught against me. The R. V. translates these two verses as follows: "Amidst which they found me purified in the temple, with no crowd, nor yet with tumult; but there were certain Jews from Asia, who ought to have been here before thee, and to make accusation, if they had

ought against me." Those who created the tumult had not the courage to appear. They were doubtless on their way home by this time.

20. Or else let these same here (R. V. men themselves) say, if they have found any evil doing in me (R. V. what wrongdoing they found), while I stood before the council.

21. Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day. Paul's statement is that the only occasion on which his words were ever the cause of a tumult in Jerusalem, was when he declared his belief in the resurrection. It is interesting to note how Paul comes back again and again to this; even in his legal defences he wishes to drive this wedge in between the Pharisees and Sadducees, if by any means he can show the Pharisees how near they are, by their belief in this doctrine, to faith in Jesus. (Lindsay) Some see in this reference a "bold irony," as if to hint that the only disturbance excited by him was between themselves. But this thought is not in keeping with the tone of the defence as a whole.

22. And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way (R. V. But Felix, having more exact knowledge concerning the Way), he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter (R. V. I will determine your matter). He must have known something about the conversion of Cornelius, and the work of Philip in Samaria, with his subsequent labors in Cæsarea. His wife, Drusilla, was a Jewess, a daughter of Herod Agrippa I., and this would interest him in their religious questions. Felix "deferred," or postponed, the case until Lysias should come, when he would finally decide upon it.

23. And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty (R. V. indulgence), and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him. Felix was evidently well-disposed towards Paul. He ordered a relaxation of the prison rules in his case. He was probably, as at Rome, allowed to occupy private apartments, chained to a soldier who guarded him. The 26th verse suggests that