

path followed by the Apostle. There is some significance in the short account of the first preaching of the Gospel in Europe—"we sat down, and spake unto the women which were come together." Did the congregation consist entirely of women? or were the women the more important section of it? or was it that the new teaching met with a readier response from them than from the men? The position of women in the ancient civilization was generally more independent than St. Paul was accustomed to under the Mosaic dispensation. Women moved more freely in every relation of life, and it may be that the Apostle recognized the possibilities lying in this circumstance—possibilities which were amply fulfilled. Women everywhere owe an incalculable debt to the religion of Jesus, and the women of Asia Minor, of Macedonia, of Thessalonica, of Achaia, of Rome, already enjoying social rights and recognized as a factor in the state, were not slow to appreciate the moral and spiritual elevation brought them by Christianity, or to aid the Apostles in their labour of love. Among the women of the New Testament, Lydia occupies an honourable place and it is pleasant to read the record of her gracious hospitality. In a sort of contrast to the action of Lydia, it was by means of another woman that the Apostles were subjected to cruel injustice and outrage. This other woman is nameless—a poor slave, without social or personal rights, the property of her owners and entirely at their disposal. The religion of the time included a belief in the agency of spirits, not always evil, who taking possession of people, destroyed their individuality, so that the human personality became subject to, and the mouth piece of unseen influence. Prof. Ramsay in his interesting book "St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen" points out that there were occasions on which Paul, as the messenger of Christ, came into violent collision with prevailing superstition—the struggle being not that of different forms of religion, or between the old and the new, but between freedom for the human mind and the degrading slavery of superstition. The first time was in Paphos where Elymas the sorcerer was confounded, the second was in Philippi, the third in Ephesus over the great Diana. On each of these occasions, the opponents of Christianity had some sordid and purely selfish interest at stake. In this case the owners of a helpless girl were exploiting her peculiarity for their own advantage, "for she brought them