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The Last TwentyYears of Peter's Life

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Befenntnis unterhalten und sich ihre Irrtümer vorhalten lassen wollten. Aber daran denkt man nicht. Nicht einmal die gemeinsame Grundlage, daß man die Schrift als Gottes Wort anerkennt, wäre vorhanden. Deshalb bedeutet der Weltkonvent nichts anderes und wird nichts anderes bedeuten als sündlichen Unionismus.

Wir beten: Herr, erbarme dich der Leute auf Erden auch in dieser letzten Zeit und gib deinen Knechten Gnade, trotz ihrer tausendfältigen Unwürdigkeit dein reines Wort in Demut und mit Festigkeit weiter zu bezeugen! Wir beten aber auch: „Ach Gott, es geht gar übel zu, auf dieser Erd' ist keine Ruh'." Laß doch deinen lieben Jüngsten Tag bald kommen!
B. S j d.

The Last Twenty-Five Years of Peter's Life.

The reason for putting the topic in this form is obvious. It refers, as a matter of course, to the years 42—67 A. D., during which, according to belief in Roman Catholic circles, Peter, the "Prince of the Apostles," was bishop of the congregation at Rome and incidentally the first Pope. The situation with regard to the Romish claims is well set forth by Shotwell (in Shotwell and Loomis, *The See of Peter*, XXIII) as follows: "With reference to the Petrine doctrine . . . the Catholic attitude is much more than a 'predisposition to believe.' That doctrine is the fundamental basis of the whole papal structure. It may be summed up in three main claims. They are: first, that Peter was appointed by Christ to be His chief representative and successor and the head of His Church; second, that Peter went to Rome and founded the bishopric there; third, that his successors succeeded to his prerogatives and to all the authority implied thereby. In dealing with these claims, we are passing along the border-line between history and dogmatic theology. The primacy of Peter and his appointment by Christ to succeed Him as head of the Church are accepted by the Catholic Church as the indubitable word of the inspired Gospel in its only possible meaning. That Peter went to Rome and founded there his see is just as definitely what is termed in Catholic theology a dogmatic fact. This has been defined by an eminent Catholic theologian as 'historical fact so intimately connected with some great Catholic truths that it would be believed even if time and accident had destroyed all the original evidence therefor.' In this sense [so Shotwell continues] it may be said that Catholics accept the presence of Peter at Rome, on faith. But they assert at the same time that faith is really not called upon, since the evidence satisfactorily establishes the event as an historical fact."¹)

1) According to the recent book by Gilbert Bagnani, *Rome and the Papacy*, the dogma of the Papacy is a belief resting on the authority of the Church, independently of historical evidence.

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Let us pause here to remark: It is evident from the paragraph just quoted that the author holds no brief for the traditional view, that he has no sympathy for its origin and later ramifications, but that his interest, on the contrary, is that of an objective searcher for the truth, so far as it may be ascertained. His paragraph, on the whole, gives the *status quo* of the Catholic position as such, even if individual Catholic historians have discredited the papal claims on a historical basis.

The questions which concern us in this short study are these: *What do we know about the last twenty-five years of Peter's life?* Was Peter ever bishop of the Roman congregation? May we concede that he visited Rome or was brought there at any time between 42 and 67? What about his alleged martyrdom in Rome? Let us state at once that we are not here concerned with the *doctrinal* proofs against the *primacy* of Peter; we are merely interested in finding whether there is some nucleus of truth in the information which is commonly dispensed.

A peculiar feature of the situation is the rather vehement attempt on the part of Protestant writers to disprove the Romish claims *in toto*. Luther's interest in objecting to the claims of Rome was to show the utter insufficiency of their alleged proof for the primacy of Peter. This was also the main point in the attempts of later Lutheran writers. But since Baur of Tuebingen presented his chief objections to the traditional Romish view about Peter's residence in Rome, his arguments have been repeated in various forms to this day, undoubtedly in good faith. But no one will deny the danger connected with a procedure which seems to begin with a thesis and, consciously or unconsciously, presents only such material as supports the contention of the thesis. After all, *it is not necessary to state that Peter never was in Rome if our purpose is merely to show that the claims regarding his episcopacy and primacy are unfounded.*

Let us take up the Petrine tradition as it is summarized chiefly by Shotwell and Loomis, since these two authors have gathered all the evidence extant in primary and secondary sources. In the so-called First Epistle to the Corinthians, ascribed to Clement of Rome and certainly to be dated before the end of the first century, we have the following passage (chap. 5; Loeb, *The Apostolic Fathers, I*, 16—18): "There was Peter, who by reason of unrighteous envy endured not one or two, but many trials, and so, having borne his testimony, he passed to his appointed place of glory. Amid envy and strife, Paul pointed out the way to the prize of patient endurance. After he had been seven times in bonds, been driven into exile, been stoned, been a herald in the East and the West, he won noble renown for his faith, for he taught righteousness unto the whole world and reached the farthest bounds of the West and bore his testi-

mony before the rulers; thus he departed from the world and passed unto the Holy Place, having set an illustrious pattern of patient endurance."

It has been stated: "Not a word about Peter in Rome." But the *argumentum e silentio* may in this case prove a boomerang, for it would apply in equal measure to Paul, of whom we know that he was in Rome.

In the *Ascension of Isaiah*, a document of 75 to 100 A. D. (quoted by Shotwell, 71), we find the statement: "He himself, even this king, shall persecute the plant which the twelve apostles of the Beloved shall plant, and one of the Twelve shall be delivered into his hands." This has been taken as "the most ancient of surviving testimonies as to the manner of Peter's death" (Shotwell). — Ignatius of Antioch, in his *Letter to the Romans* (Lake, *Apostolic Fathers*, I, 230), addresses himself to the Christians of the capital: "I do not command you as Peter and Paul did. They were apostles; I am a convict. They were free; I am a slave to this very hour." Even if Ignatius addresses the Ephesians and the Trallians in almost the same words, the argument from silence concerning Rome would hardly hold here; on the contrary, the Christians of Rome are admonished like those of Ephesus and Tralles, who had likewise heard Paul (and Peter).² The silence of the writers concerning the city may simply indicate that neither the primacy nor even the episcopacy of Peter was thought of in those days. But it surely cannot be asserted that the name of Peter was never associated with Rome before the year 150 A. D.

It may now simply be noted in passing that Papias of Hierapolis (fl. ca. 120) held the view of Peter's activity in Rome, that Dionysius of Corinth (ca. 170), in writing to the Romans, makes the statement: "You have thus by this admonition bound together the plantings of Peter and Paul at Rome and at Corinth; for they both alike planted in our Corinth and taught us, and both alike taught together in Italy and suffered martyrdom at the same time" (quoted by Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, II, 25), and that Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and others accepted the statement of Peter's having been in Rome.

So strong is the nucleus of evidence in the traditional account that Shotwell (*l. c.*, XXIII, 74) is constrained to remark: "Since, in the nature of things, a tradition is never contemporary evidence, the determination of its value must depend upon verification through other sources. *Undoubtedly the tendency to reject tradition went too*

2) There is no reference to Peter in either Ephesians or Trallians, in the version of the Ignatian letters as now accepted. But it is interesting to note that the longer version, which cannot be much later than the first quarter of the second century, has, in the *Epistle to the Trallians*, chap. VII, a passage stating that Anencletus and Linus acted as deacons to Peter. (See *Apost. Fathers*, ed. by Coxe, I, 69.)

far in the nineteenth century. It is now generally agreed that tradition, while losing or distorting the details, very commonly embodies some historical elements. . . . It seems to show that at the opening of the second century Peter was connected with the community at Rome in the minds of prominent Christians of Asia Minor." No matter, then, whether later writers were clearly not justified in making the most of indefinite traditional accounts in the interest of establishing the Petrine episcopacy and primacy, we may not go to the opposite extreme in using the argument from silence, since this must yield in even this domain. It is more than likely that there was no need for stressing the connection of Peter with Rome, since this was generally accepted as a fact.

Other extraneous material which cannot be ignored is that found in apocryphal writings of the second, third, and fourth centuries. The embellishments of the stories may indeed be inventions, often strongly permeated with superstition, but there is almost invariably a nucleus of truth which can be discerned without difficulty, especially if the various apocryphal writings originated in widely separated communities. There are the *Actus Petri cum Simone* (ca. 180—220), in which the alleged conflict between the Apostle Peter and Simon Magus is pictured, containing also the *Domine, quo vadis?* episode; the *Didascalia Apostolorum* (third century), not to be confused with the *Didache ton Dodeka* of the beginning of the second century, in which Peter is himself represented as giving a report on the heresy of Simon in Rome; the pseudo-Clement *Letter to James* (third century), in which there is a reference to Peter's coming to Rome and the last incidents of his life; the *Recognitiones*, ascribed to Clement (third century), in which the coming of Peter to Rome forms a large part of the story; the *Martyrium Sanctorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli* (fourth century), which gives a long account of the alleged trial and death of the two apostles; and the *Acta Petri et Pauli* (fourth century), which shows many strange accretions, indicating a great distance from the source. But the nucleus of all these stories is the same and may therefore, according to the psychology of traditions, be accepted as essentially true, namely, that both Peter and Paul were in Rome toward the end of their lives and that they suffered martyrdom in the capital of the Roman Empire.³⁾

And yet another field of extraneous material must be touched upon, namely, that of Christian archeology, particularly that of numismatics and epigraphy. Here gilded glasses and bronze busts of the Apostles Paul and Peter are especially interesting, since some of them are of acknowledged antiquity. Concerning these even Bennett

3) For further references and discussions in this field see Shotwell and Loomis, *l. c.*, 135, note; also James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*.

(*Christian Archeology*, 113 f.) concedes that some of them may go back to the third century. But Cobern (*New Archeological Discoveries*, 520), who has followed the work of the recent Italian archeologists with every indication of objective scholarship, writes: "Another even more certain ancient relic commemorating the two great apostles are the gilded glasses, dating from the second half of the second and the beginning of the third century, on many of which pictures of Peter and Paul are executed on the flat bottom in gold leaf. Out of 340 of these glasses published by Garucci these pictures are found on eighty. They also contained such mottoes as, 'Mayest thou live long!'; 'A mark of friendship'; 'Life and happiness to thee and thine.' These were evidently gifts for festival occasions, and Marucchi believes, since there is a uniformity of type in the pictures, that they have originated from real portrait pictures."⁴)

Cobern and Bennett write from the Protestant viewpoint, but it is significant that Kaufmann (*Christliche Archæologie*, 388), writing from the Roman Catholic viewpoint, makes his statement in the same objective fashion: "*Hervorragende Beispiele dieser Art verdanken wir der plastischen Kunst, welche unzweifelhaft einen neuen Anstoss zur Portraetierung Petri und Pauli gegeben hat. Es wird zufaellig sein, wenn im roemischen Denkmaelermaterial Petrus zuerst auf den Fresken erscheint. . . . Die Sicherheit, mit welcher der traditionelle Typus auftritt und alle Schwankungen ueberwindet, welche sich aus dem Verlassen des Idealbildes und der Aufnahme des realen ergeben, laeszt im Verein mit den zeitgenoessischen literarischen Hinweisen auf Apostelporraets keinen Zweifel, dasz er an authentische Vorlagen anknuepft, mithin sich vom apostolischen Zeitalter herauf vererbt. An der Spitze der einschlaegigen Denkmaeler steht der . . . Bronzediskus, dessen technische Behandlung einer Datierung ins Zeitalter der Antonine, wie sie de Rossi ansetzt, nicht widerspricht.*" That would place the disk shortly after the middle of the second century. It was found in the catacombs of St. Agnes. In evaluating this and similar evidence, one is inclined to agree with the (Protestant) historian Foakes-Jackson, who, in referring to this and other epigraphical evidence, especially from the catacombs, makes the statement: "One is prepared to accept as final the statement: 'For the archeologist the presence and execution of SS. Peter and Paul in Rome are

4) Illustrations of such gilded glasses are given by Bennett on Plate I, and his remark in that connection is most interesting: "With the exception of a very few of late origin there is in these gilded glasses no intimation of any preeminence of Peter over Paul. In some instances where these apostles are associated with Christ on the same glass, Paul had the place of honor; in others Peter is at the right hand of Christ, thus showing that the primacy of either would not once be suggested by the pictorial representations."

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 facts established beyond a shadow of doubt by purely monumental evidence.'" (Peter, *Prince of the Apostles*, 162.)

But what about this cumulative evidence in the face of the alleged silence of Scriptures or the reference to "Babylon" as a clue to the residence of Peter in the last years of his life? Is the New Testament really dead against Peter's being in Rome at any time? Let us examine the positive evidence, especially that from Scripture.

We know, of course, that Peter was in Jerusalem in the year 30 A. D., the year of the formal organization of the Christian Church on the great day of Pentecost. He was there for some time, according to Acts 3—8, for at least a year and a half or two years, or till after the murder of Stephen. He was there in the year 35/6; for Saul visited him three years after his conversion, after his sojourn in Arabia, and abode with him fifteen days, Gal. 1, 17, 18. Shortly after Saul left for Tarsus, Peter was busy with missionary work in Western Judea, in Lydda, Saron, Joppa, and Caesarea, Acts 9, 32 ff.; chap. 10. He was again in Jerusalem about the year 37 or somewhat later, Acts 11, 2 ff. That there was no indication of a primacy or even of a superior position on the part of Peter at that time is evident from the fact that some of the members of the congregation at Jerusalem "contended with him," calling him to task for his ignoring of the rules of Levitical purity. When Saul was brought back to Antioch, about 43/4, he remained there for at least a year before he and Barnabas made the trip up to Jerusalem with the relief for the brethren, Acts 11, 22—30. Now, although Peter evidently was in Jerusalem about this time, it is interesting to note that Saul and Barnabas did not report to him, but to the elders of the congregation, Acts 11, 30. About that time, in the year 44, Peter was still in Jerusalem, for he was imprisoned after the death of James, the brother of John, only to be set at liberty by an angel, Acts 12, 5—17. This was shortly before the death of Herod Agrippa I, which occurred in the year 44.

The comprehensive account which the Book of Acts gives concerning the activity of Peter closes with chapter 12, and it is clear, even at this point, that the alleged presence of Peter in Rome as early as 42 is not in keeping with historical truth. It may well be assumed, however, on the basis of the address of First Peter, that he employed the next years in doing mission-work in Northern Asia Minor, in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia (the northern part), Cappadocia, Asia (the proconsular province, its northern part), and Bithynia. This would also account for the fact that Paul, a few years later, was hindered from doing mission-work in these provinces. We next list the episode of Gal. 2, 11 ff., since that best agrees with Acts 15, 1. That Peter accepted the reproof of Paul upon this occasion appears from his conduct at the meeting at Jerusalem. Since we now know the time of Paul's entrance into Corinth on his second

missionary journey (see the Gallo inscription and the comment thereon in Barton, *Archeology and the Bible*, 439 f.), we are able also to give the time of this meeting, namely, the year 49. That Peter had now returned to Jerusalem is plainly stated in Acts 15, 7 ff. and Gal. 2, 9. 10. This takes seven more years away from the papal claim concerning the twenty-five years of Peter's bishopric in Rome.

Beyond this year we have no historical knowledge of Peter in any New Testament passage. There are incidental references, of course, as when Paul, in 1 Cor. 9, 5, asks the question: "Have we not power to lead about a sister [as] a wife as well as other apostles and as the brethren of the Lord and Cephas?" The final reference is that of 1 Pet. 5, 13, which has caused so much contention, since it states: "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you, and so doth Marcus, my son." This, in the opinion of the anti-Petrine scholars, clinches the matter, for it seems to show that Peter spent the last years of his life in some Babylon, preferably that in the Far East. But the matter is not quite so self-evident and simple, as we shall presently see. For the present we quote only the rather dry and objective remark of Meusel (*sub voce* "Babylon"): "*Babylon in 1 Petr. 5, 13 wird entweder buchstaeblich von dem alten Babylon am Euphrat oder von Babylon in Aegypten oder von Neu-Babylon (Seleucia am Tigris) verstanden oder am besten, da ueber einen Aufenthalt des Petrus am Euphrat sonst gar keine Andeutung vorliegt, als symbolische Bezeichnung fuer Rom gedeutet, was seine Analogie ja auch in der Apokalypse hat (14, 8; 16, 19 u. oe.)*" Are Meusel and his coworkers steeped in a dead traditionalism?

Let us approach our problem from another angle, one suggested by the reference in 1 Pet. 5, 13 to "Marcus, my son." Acts 12, 12 tells us that Peter was well acquainted with the mother of John Mark, or Marcus, in whose home the congregation met for the great prayer-meeting on the night of Peter's deliverance from prison. That John Mark was himself in Jerusalem at that time, in the year 44, appears from Acts 12, 25, since Barnabas and Saul, upon their return from Jerusalem, when they brought the relief for the brethren, took with them John whose surname was Mark. Mark was an ἀνεψιός to Barnabas, a "cousin germane," as the dictionaries have it, which may mean first cousin, but it may also mean that Mary, the mother of Mark, was a sister to Barnabas. It is clear that Peter, during his ministry at Jerusalem, came into close spiritual touch with Mark, and that the intimacy was later renewed after the young man had earned his spurs in the work of the Lord.

This intimacy is brought out in a most interesting way in connection with the Gospel of Mark. This gospel, as the leading textbooks in New Testament Introduction (Appel, Barth, Feine, Fuerbringer, Zahn, etc.) bring out, shows a certain dependence upon

Peter. Justin Martyr, in his *Dialog with Trypho*, calls the Gospel of Mark the "memoirs of Peter." Papias calls Mark the *ἑρμηνεύτης* of Peter, not in the sense of an amanuensis, but in the sense of one transmitting information which he has received, so that certain features of the original form are still clearly discernible. Similar statements are made by Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.*, III, 1, 1), Clemens Alexandrinus (*Hypotyp.*), his third reference reading in Latin (*ad 1 Pet.* 5, 13): *Marcus, Petri sectator, praedicante Petro evangelium palam Romae coram quibusdam Caesareanis equitibus et multa Christi testimonia proferente, petitus ab eis, ut possent quae dicebantur memoriae commendare, scripsit ex his, quae Petro dicta sunt, evangelium, quod secundum Marcum vocatur.*

But while the Gospel according to St. Mark is associated with Peter, it is likewise associated, on the basis of internal reasons, with the West, with that part of the Roman Empire in which Latin was the speech at least of the common people, where one might expect Latinisms in a Greek document. Robertson says of this phenomenon: "There are a few more Latin words in Mark than in the other gospels, but this is certainly only natural if he was in Rome. They are all political, military, or monetary words, just the ones that would permeate the current Greek. So we find denarius (Mark 6, 37), centurion (15, 39. 44), quadrans (12, 42), pallet, or camp-bed (2, 4. 9. 11), legion (5, 9. 15), sextarius, or wooden pitcher for measuring liquids (7, 4. 8), spy, or scout, *speculator* (6, 27)." (*Studies in Mark's Gospel*, 127.) Prof. Fritz Barth of Berne writes in his *Einleitung* (p. 182): "*Die vielen lateinischen Woerter, welche in dem Griechisch dieses Verfassers vorkommen, . . . haben auf die Vermutung gefuehrt, dasz das zweite Evangelium in lateinischem Sprachgebiet entstanden sei, und speziell fuer Rom scheint zu sprechen, dasz 15, 21 ein Rufus als bekannte Person vorausgesetzt wird, welcher vielleicht identisch ist mit 'Rufus, dem Auserwaelten im Herrn', Roem. 16, 13; die von Paulus erwachte Mutter desselben waere dann die Gattin des Simon von Kyrene gewesen.*" One conclusion seems warranted on the basis of internal evidence, namely, that Mark, while associated with Peter, was also associated with Rome.

But Mark's relation to the Apostle Paul rests upon an even more solid basis. That he was the servant of Saul and Barnabas, with whom he had made the journey from Jerusalem to Antioch, Acts 12, 25, appears from Acts 13, 5. But this first venture of the young man into the field of foreign mission work was evidently too much for his untried soul, and we are told of his defection in Acts 13, 13: "John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem." That this was really a serious matter, at least in the eyes of Paul, is seen from Acts 15, 38 f., since Paul refused "to take him with them who departed from them from Pamphylia and went not with them to the work."

But Mark made good the mistake of his early manhood. In the fifteen years between 47 and 62 he became a valued worker in the Church. When Paul, during his first captivity in Rome, about the year 62, wrote to the Colossians, he included the following recommendation: "Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments; if he come unto you, receive him)," Col. 4, 10. And somewhat later, during the same captivity, he wrote to Philemon, including in his letter greetings also from Marcus, his fellow-laborer, v. 24. Approximately five years later, during the second captivity of the apostle in Rome, he wrote to Timothy, then at Ephesus: "Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry," 2 Tim. 4, 11. So Mark was evidently still in the neighborhood of Ephesus, probably in Colossae, where he had gone about the year 63. Had he, in the mean time, made a journey to the Far East in order to be with Peter, when the latter wrote his First Epistle General? It is possible, yes; but probable? Decidedly no.

To complete this sketch, it will now be necessary to give at least an outline of the history of the Roman congregation in the first decades of its existence and the relation of Paul (and possibly Peter) to this church. Even if we refuse to associate the founding of this congregation with the reference to the strangers of Rome present at the first Pentecost, we cannot deny the rapid spread of the Gospel which set in after the persecution following the murder of Stephen, Acts 11, 19—21. There must have been a congregation of Christians at Rome in the early forties, for by the year 49 its missionary fervor had stirred up some trouble, which resulted in the expulsion, in an altogether indiscriminate manner, of all the Jews of Rome, Acts 18, 2. The date of this expulsion is brought out on the basis of Orosius and Suetonius, the latter remarking, in his *Annales* (Claud. 25): "*Judeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Romā expulit.*" This is confirmed also by Dio Cassius and other early witnesses. But after the death of Claudius, in the year 54, the decree was no longer in force, and not only the Jews, but also the Jewish Christians quickly found their way back to the capital. An instance of such a return is that of Aquila and Priscilla. About the year 56 they were still in Ephesus, having placed their house at the disposal of the congregation, 1 Cor. 16, 19, but early in 58 they were back in Rome, for Paul greets both them and the church that is in their house, Rom. 16, 3—5. By this time also the congregation had grown strongly in Gentile members, as the letter clearly shows. At this time no apostle had as yet served the congregation; for this follows from Paul's well-known statement in Rom. 15, 20, about not building upon another man's foundation. Cp. 2 Cor. 10, 15. 16. — It was in the spring of the year 61 that Paul came to Rome as a prisoner who had appealed to the highest court of

the Roman Empire. But, although the Christians of Rome and its suburbs honored the apostle by coming out to meet him as far as Appii Forum and the Three Taverns, there is no evidence that Paul ever assumed the bishopric of Rome. Certain it is that we cannot place Peter in the city at this time. Paul confined himself chiefly to home mission work and to teaching until, after two years, he received his release, evidently leaving the city as soon as possible, as his statements to Philemon and other correspondents would lead us to believe.⁵⁾

The following points may now be said to stand out clearly: Mark was associated with Peter in person; Mark was associated with Peter in the writing of his gospel. But this gospel was associated with Rome; hence Peter may well be said to be associated with Rome in his connection with Mark. The conclusion is given additional weight by the fact that Mark was definitely associated with Paul in Rome, in 62/3 and in 67 A. D. *There is nothing to hinder the conclusion that Peter may well have been in Rome between 63 and 67.*

And this introduces the final factor in the argument. In July of the year 64, about a year after Paul's release from his first captivity, a terrible fire swept the city of Rome. The result is well known. The Christians were blamed for the outbreak of the conflagration, and Nero staged the first persecution of the Nazarenes, the details of which are given not only by Suetonius and Tacitus, but also by Martial and Juvenal and by later writers. This persecution of Nero, commonly believed to have been entirely local, obviously went beyond the confines of Rome and even of Italy, at least in a sporadic fashion, as the various references in the First Epistle of Peter and the Letter to the Hebrews indicate. It was during the aftermath of this persecution that Paul was arrested and taken to Rome. And it is more than probable, it has the support of the best internal evidence, not to speak of the extraneous material listed above, that Peter also was arrested, wherever he may have been, in 65, even if he had not come to Rome as early as 63 or 64, an assumption which would connect him somewhat more closely with the congregation in the capital. This, then, may well be the conclusion of an unbiased study of all source material, including everything that Scripture offers: Peter never was bishop of Rome, least of all did he claim the primacy, and the claim of a twenty-five-year residence is utterly without foundation. But the *authentic information*, as offered above, *will certainly warrant the conclusion that Peter may well have come to Rome after the year 63, if only as a captive in the aftermath of*

5) For a short history of the congregation at Rome see Iversen, *The Roman Congregation at the Time of Paul*; Edmundson, *The Christians in Rome in the First Century*; an article in the *Theol. Monthly of May, 1926*, entitled "The Congregations at Rome and at Antioch."

the Neronian persecution, during which he also suffered death as a martyr of the faith.

This, by the way, is also in its essential features the position taken by Luther in his conclusions on the subject, especially in his writing *Auf das ueberchristliche, uebergeistliche und ueberkuenstliche Buch des Bocks Emsers zu Leipzig Antwort Dr. M. L.* There we read: "Although I hold that St. Peter was in Rome, yet I should not want to die on this as on an article of faith. . . . It is no article of faith, and no one is a heretic on this account whether he does not believe that St. Peter was ever bishop at Rome [*zu Rom je gessen habe*]." (18, 1334.) Luther rejects the bishopric of Peter in Rome absolutely, especially that of an alleged twenty-five-year period, and he rightly concludes that, with the inability to prove the episcopacy and the primacy of Peter, all papal claims fall to the ground. And that, after all, is the only interest we have in solving this question, without overshooting the mark, in a dispassionate, objective discussion of available facts.

P. E. KRETZMANN.

Sermon Study on 1 Cor. 1, 21—31.

(Eisenach Epistle-lesson for Quinquagesima Sunday.)

This interesting and timely passage is part of an argument against strife and dissensions which threatened to disrupt the congregation at Corinth. Instead of laying the stress where it properly belonged, on the preaching of Christ Crucified, the Corinthians attached themselves to the personality of the various preachers and extolled the special gifts and characteristics of these men and at the same time despised the other teachers and their adherents to such an extent that they were in danger of losing sight of the unity of the Gospel of Christ, of creating schisms and disruptions. The apostle had called their attention to the fact that Christ was their one and only Savior, v. 13. He then brings out in an extended argument that those very matters which they placed foremost, human personality, oratory, learning, etc., were by God studiously neglected in His plan of salvation. Far from taking into consideration human wisdom, God rather conceived His plan of salvation with a view to destroy the wisdom of the wise, v. 19. The apostle had asked, "Where is the wise?" etc., v. 20. Not only cabalistic and sophistic quibblings, even the honest efforts of the world's philosophers to understand God by their own wisdom are futile, yea, made to appear as foolishness by God's plan of salvation. This assertion, made in the form of a rhetorical question, is now proved by the apostle in the opening verse of our Epistle-lesson, which links up with v. 20 by *ῥᾶρ*, for.

V. 21: *For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom*