

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_jtvi-01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jtvi-01.php)

JOURNAL OF  
THE TRANSACTIONS  
OF  
The Victoria Institute,  
OR,  
Philosophical Society of Great Britain.

---

VOL. LI.



LONDON:

(Published by the Institute, 1, Central Buildings, Westminster, S.W. 1.)

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

1919.

## 611TH ORDINARY MEETING.

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, ON MONDAY, JUNE 16TH, 1919,

AT 4.30 P.M.

THE REV. PREBENDARY H. E. FOX, M.A., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the preceding Meeting were read, confirmed and signed.

The CHAIRMAN read a letter from the President, Lord Halsbury, who was to have given the Annual Address, explaining the cause of his absence, due to Lady Halsbury's serious illness.

The Chairman expressed his own sympathy and regret, and that of the Meeting, at the President's absence, but they rejoiced to hear that Lady Halsbury's health was improving.

Prebendary Fox referred briefly to the objects of the Institute, and called on Col. Mackinlay to read his valuable paper.

---

THE LITERARY MARVELS OF ST. LUKE.

THE ANNUAL ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE VICTORIA  
INSTITUTE, JUNE 16TH, 1919,

By Lt.-Col. G. MACKINLAY, late R.A.

PART I.

**T**HERE is full proof that the same author wrote both the third Gospel and the book of Acts. We shall accept the unanimous tradition that he was St. Luke; this is quite in accord with various indirect Scriptural statements. It is not a matter of importance for the purposes of our investigation to know the actual name of the author, but it is convenient to adopt one.

The study of the methods of expression of the Scriptural writers is worthy of our earnest attention; this is specially true with regard to the works of St. Luke, whose beauties of diction are very striking. His style is said to resemble that of Thucydides, and Renan has pronounced the third Gospel to be the most beautiful book ever written. St. Luke's inspired writings have been examined with minute care by many modern scholars, and they have afforded a rich mine for research, which is by no means exhausted. We shall confine ourselves in the following pages to the consideration of a few of his literary arrangements. The line of investigation which we shall take has the advantage that it can be followed by anyone of ordinary intelligence: technical training is not a necessity.

## LUCAN TRIPLICATIONS.

We shall consider some examples of St. Luke's use of triple iteration, and of his appeals to memory in order to give emphasis, involving a very elaborate literary arrangement. Lastly, we shall make a practical deduction, useful in these days of unsettlement, and of the desire on the part of many to restate their beliefs in terms of present-day knowledge.

Triplication is sometimes employed in Scripture for the purpose of giving emphasis; for instance, the three smittings of his ass by Balaam showed the vehemence of his anger (Num. xxii, 28-33), and the same prophet's thrice repeated blessing of Israel demonstrated the earnestness of his message, particularly as cursing had been expected from him (Num. xxiv, 10).

But it is in the writings of St. Luke that the most frequent employment of this method of giving emphasis is to be found, and in beautiful variety.

The purport of the Acts—the preaching of the Gospel throughout the world by the power of the Holy Spirit—is emphasized by the triple account of the commissioning of St. Paul for that purpose at his conversion, and also by a somewhat similar triple account of the commission to Peter to begin the same work, when the servants of Cornelius came to him. These are supported by many other triplications.

In like manner St. Luke has emphasized the object and climax of his Gospel—the Death and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ—by no less than thirty.

The general arrangement of the triplications in the two books is on similar lines.

Those in the Gospel of St. Luke fall into four groups :—

1. Divine proclamations of our Lord (four in number).
2. Those which point forward to the Crucifixion or emphasize some doctrine dependent on it (sixteen).
3. Those during the Betrayal, Trial and Crucifixion of our Lord (six).
4. Those in the last Resurrection chapter, which point back to the Great Sacrifice, or else emphasize some blessing directly resulting from it (four).

Manifestly we have not space in this paper to consider them all, but we shall take a complete group as a sample of the whole, and we shall select the third; it does not contain a large number of triplications, and several of them have long been recognised;

our investigation, therefore, will not be tedious or needing much explanation, and we shall obtain some idea of the elaborate arrangement of the whole.

### TRIPPLICATIONS IN THE CRUCIFIXION SECTION.

The triplications in this section come in the undermentioned order, and they are enumerated on the *left* half of the following Table :—

In the Gospel of St. Luke.	Correspondences in the Book of Acts.
I. (Failure)— No. (21) Peter's three denials, xxii, 56-62. ,, (22) Pilate's three failures to save our Lord's life, xxiii, 7-11, 18-22.	I. (Success)— No. (15) Peter's boldness on three occasions, iv, 13, 29, 31. ,, (16) A Roman officer saves Paul's life on three occasions, xxi, 27-32; xxiii, 10; xxiii, 12-33.
II. (Testimony)— No. (23) Pilate's three testimonies to our Lord's faultlessness, xxiii, 4, 14, 22. ,, (24) Similar testimony from three others, xxiii, 15, 41, 47.	II. (Testimony)— No. (17) The testimonies of three sets of Roman rulers that Paul had committed nothing worthy of death, or of bonds, xxiii, 29; xxv, 25; xxvi, 31. ,, (18) Similar testimony from three other groups, xix, 37; xxiii, 9; xxviii, 21.
III. (Death)— No. (25) The three dying sayings of our Lord, recorded by St. Luke, xxiii, 34, 43, 46. ,, (26) A triplet of triplications. Human failure and testimony, and the divine power of Christ. See I, II and III.	III. (Death)— No. (19) The three dying sayings of Stephen, vii, 55-60. ,, (20) A triplet of triplications. Human success and testimony, and the divine power of the Holy Spirit. See I, II, and III.

N.B.—As the Scriptural texts are given in this Table, they are not quoted again in the pages of this paper. The reference numerals to passages in the Acts are printed in italics in order to distinguish them from those in the Gospel of St. Luke.

We shall confine our attention for the present to the triplications in the Gospel of St. Luke. Those in the Acts will be considered in Part II, p. 7.

(21) *Peter's three denials.*

Triplication No. (21) (see Table) tells of St. Peter's three denials of His Master in His time of deepest trial, thus emphasizing the failure of human love.

Examining the structure of this triplication, we notice that the first and third components are the most striking, while the intermediate one, which serves as a link between the two others, is less prominent. The first attracts attention, while the last leads immediately to the climax, the fulfilment of our Lord's sad prophecy to Peter, "The cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me" (Luke xxii, 34, 61).

Our Evangelist states that the first challenger "looked steadfastly" on Peter, and said, "This man also was with him." But he denied, saying, "Woman, I know him not."

The last one "confidently affirmed" that the Apostle had been with our Lord, "for he is a Galilæan." But Peter said, "Man, I know not what thou sayest."

The intermediate interrogator is recorded as simply saying, "Thou also art one of them," without any mention of steadfast looking or confident affirming. Peter's reply on the second occasion is recorded in only three Greek words, whilst the first denial is in four, and the last in five words.

(22) *Pilate's three failures to save our Lord's life,* and (23) *Pilate's three testimonies to our Lord's faultlessness.*

The next two triplications are interwoven with each other; we therefore take their components together. We find it convenient, in each case, to consider those of No. (23) before those of No. (22).

In the first component of No. (23) Pilate declared our Lord faultless when He was brought before him; but instead of releasing Him as he should have done, he at once endeavoured to evade his responsibility by sending Him to Herod, No. (22).

The second components of each triplication are also close together. Pilate repeated that he found no fault in our Lord. As Herod had also come to the same conclusion, there was a stronger reason for release than before. Pilate, however, suggested the fatal compromise, that he should chastise our Lord in order to please the Jews, and then release Him according

to his own inclinations. The multitude then very naturally took advantage of his manifest weakness, and cried out, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas," the murderer.

Again, the third time, did Pilate testify to our Lord's innocence, and still further increased his shame, when he feebly descended to argue with his subjects, saying, "Why, what evil hath this man done? I have found no cause of death in him"; and again he repeated his proposal of chastisement and release.

But the voices of the chief priests, of the rulers, and of the people prevailed, and our Lord was condemned by Pilate (xxiii, 24), notwithstanding his great authority as Roman ruler, and that "he had determined to release him" (Acts iii, 13).

(24) *Similar testimonies from three others.*

So careful is our Evangelist to emphasize the fact that our Lord had not broken any human law, that he adds another triplication, No. (24), containing the evidence of three other men to the same effect.

Herod could not find any fault in our Lord.

Secondly, the penitent thief on the cross said of Him, "This man hath done nothing amiss."

And thirdly, the centurion present at the time exclaimed, "Certainly this was a righteous man."

(25) *The three dying sayings of our Lord, recorded by St. Luke.*

With deep reverence we approach the crowning triplication of the Crucifixion section, No. (25), composed of the three sayings of our Lord upon the cross which St. Luke has recorded. Our Saviour's firm confidence of the acceptance of His atoning Sacrifice is strongly emphasized by them.

The first saying was, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

As the object for which our Lord came into the world was to obtain pardon for sinners through the shedding of His precious blood, the first saying recorded is a prayer for the forgiveness of those around Him. His confidence in the efficacy of His atoning work was so great that His prayer had no reference to His own condition.

Immediately came the firstfruits of the answer. Both of the crucified thieves had railed upon our Lord (Matt. xxvii, 44); but soon one of them confessed his sin, and said to the other,

“Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds”; and then speaking to our Lord he said, “Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy Kingdom” (Luke xxiii, 40-42).

In his second saying our Lord again made no reference to His own position, but, full of confidence, He graciously promised the repentant sinner that he would be with Himself on that very day in Paradise. Our Lord, dying on the cross the death of a malefactor, and surrounded by a hostile crowd, spoke with the dignity and authority of the Divine King upon His throne.

Lastly, we have the simple yet majestic statement that as our Lord died He said, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit”: in full assurance that His atoning Work was finished and accepted (John xix, 30).

God the Father was addressed in the first and last of these sayings, on which Dean Alford has remarked that our Lord “is the Son of God, and He speaks in the fulness of this covenant relation.”

The intermediate saying contained gracious words of blessing spoken to a single repentant and believing sinner—what a contrast!

This arrangement reminds us of the planning of some of the Psalms, in which the praises of Jehovah come at the beginning and end, while His pardoning love in removing our transgressions from us, “as far as the east is from the west,” is dwelt upon in the intermediate part (Ps. ciii, 12).

(26) *A triplet of triplications.*

Triplications Nos. (21) and (22) both emphasize human failure—of Peter’s love and of Pilate’s power respectively—to succour our Lord in His dying moments. These two may therefore be regarded as one.

Similarly, Nos. (23) and (24) both testify to our Lord’s innocence; they also may be regarded as one, doubled for the sake of increased emphasis.

Consequently we may regard No. (21) with (22), (23) with (24), and (25) as forming a triplet of triplications. The first component shows human failure, notwithstanding the strong human testimony to our Lord’s faultlessness in the second, while the third and last component emphasizes the greatness of our Lord’s atoning sacrifice upon the cross.

Before we leave this part of our subject we may notice the tremendous contrast between the first component No. (21) with (22) of this triplet of triplications, and the last one No. (25); between the sinful fear and failure of Peter and of Pilate in the former, and the absolute sinlessness and majesty of our Lord in the latter.

The facts connected with the Sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ are indeed strongly emphasized by the group of triplications in the Crucifixion section of the Gospel of St. Luke.

## PART II.

### MEMORY.

St. Luke, in his Gospel, sometimes appeals to memory, as, for instance, he is the only Evangelist who records the gracious words of our Lord at the Last Supper, "This do in remembrance of me" (xxii, 19).

But it is in the Acts that Luke chiefly makes use of remembrance, and often in a somewhat subtle form, to emphasize the grand events of the Gospel story.

### SINGLE REMINDERS.

In the Acts he seldom mentions the word remembrance or any equivalent to it, though he often tells that the apostles and evangelists preached Christ crucified and risen (ii, 22, 23; iv, 2, 10, etc.), and that they sometimes referred to events in our Lord's life, as, for instance, when Peter said that He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil" (Acts x, 38). But a special feature of St. Luke's writings in his second book is that he selects for record certain parts of the careers of the first preachers of the Gospel, which strongly bring to the memory of his readers corresponding events in the Life, and especially in the Death, of our Lord. Luke thus emphasizes the Gospel by his record in the Acts. The Rev. R. B. Rackham\* has pointed out many of them: we have only space to mention a few. St. Luke states that just before His death our Lord "stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke ix, 51). Some years afterwards Luke records

\* *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, pp. xlvi and 401, 1908.

that Paul said, "I am ready . . . to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts xxi, 13). After our Lord's arrival at that city, the multitude had cried out, "Away with this man" (Luke xxiii, 18), and when, years afterwards, Paul entered Jerusalem, the crowds uttered the same hostile words, "Away with him" (Acts xxi, 36), repeated soon afterwards on the same day with added vehemence, "Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live" (Acts xxii, 22); for other instances see Luke xxii, 42; Acts xxi, 14, etc.

Stephen is introduced in the Acts towards the close of his life. He was indeed filled with the Spirit (Acts vi, 5, 10; vii, 55, see also vi, 3); special attention is therefore drawn to his statement, that the Jews always resisted the Holy Ghost (vii, 51), of Whom the book of Acts testifies so fully.

The account of the death of Stephen therefore brings before us the rejection of the Third Person of the Trinity by the Jews, and it strongly reminds us of the record of the rejection of our Lord Jesus Christ at the Crucifixion by the same people, told in the Gospels.

#### DOUBLE REMINDERS.

But St. Luke, in his second book, has further reminded us of our Lord's earthly Ministry by what we may call a doubled process: he has told us of various events in the history of two very prominent Christian leaders, which not only show a strong resemblance to each other, but they also unite in reminding us of our Lord's career on earth.

In the Acts, Luke tells the doings of Peter, and, much more fully, those of Paul. It is interesting to notice a few of the number of similar occurrences in the history of each, which Luke has chosen for record, reminding us of corresponding events in the life of our Lord. Some are resemblances, some are contrasts. Both apostles had power to heal the sick (iii, 1-10; xiv, 8-10); both had also a personal curative power; so that the shadow of one (v, 15), and handkerchiefs or aprons from the others (xix, 12), cured the sufferers. Both also raised the dead: Peter restored Tabitha to life (ix, 36-42), and Paul Eutychus (xx, 9-12). Both had divine worship offered to them: Peter by Cornelius (x, 25-26), and Paul by the people of Lystra (xiv, 11-18).

But now we come to contrasts with events in our Lord's life ; for both apostles very rightly refused the proffered homage. There is only the slightest account of the ancestry, and none at all of the birth or death of either of these apostles. The antecedents of each, shortly before he began his work of proclaiming the Gospel, had been sad and humiliating. Peter had denied his Master in His time of deepest trial, as we have just seen, and Paul had savagely persecuted the weak infant Church, and had taken a leading part in the death of the first martyr, Stephen (Acts vii, 58 ; viii, 1). Both had been unwilling to undertake the work of preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, and both were granted a special vision, and a divine message ordering them to obey (x, 9-16 ; xxvi, 9-20).

The events in our Lord's Ministry to which these doubled records call our attention, either by similitude or by contrast, are well known, and need not be enumerated.

### THREEFOLD REMINDERS.

Not only, however, are Gospel incidents recalled to the reader's memory by the narration of isolated events and also by doubled records in the Acts ; but our author has adopted an even more elaborate plan. The Acts and the Gospel of St. Luke resemble each other in containing triplications emphasizing the main subject of the book to which they belong. Those in the Acts *also* point back to events in our Lord's Ministry, each of them corresponding with a triplication or triplications in the Gospel of St. Luke. We shall only consider those parallel to the six in the Crucifixion section which we have already investigated ; see *right-hand column* of the Table, p. 175.

It is thus claimed that the methods of St. Luke's two books are exceedingly harmonious and elaborate. At the same time, the arrangements are so very skilfully carried out that they are not apparent without considerable investigation. Can we wonder that divinely inspired writings need careful study before all their beauty and earnestness are fully revealed ?

We shall now examine each of these triplications, Nos. (15) to (20) in the Acts in detail, in order to demonstrate the existence of the very close parallelisms with Nos. (21) to (26) in the third Gospel (see Table, p. 175).

(15) *Peter's boldness on three occasions*, and (16), *a Roman officer saves Paul's life on three occasions*.

In striking contrast with the doublet of triplications, Nos. (21) and (22) in the Gospel, of Peter's sad denial, and of Pilate's failure to save our Lord from death, we find two parallel triplications, Nos. (15) and (16) in the Acts, which tell of Peter's *boldness*, and of a Roman officer *saving* the life of St. Paul.

In No. (15) triplication in the Acts, St. Peter's action under very difficult and dangerous surroundings is recorded. Our Lord had gone, but the Holy Spirit had come upon him in power: Peter had preached the Gospel with great blessing in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, and three thousand were added to the Church. Peter and John then miraculously cured a lame man, thus provoking much opposition and persecution against themselves. The priests and others who had arrested and caused the death of the Master, laid hands on the servants, put them in ward until the next day, and then brought them before the assembled rulers, who repeatedly threatened them (Acts iv, 17, 21).

Their position now seemed much worse than on the night before the Crucifixion, when our Lord was with them. But now we read that the rulers, elders, scribes, high priests, and others, before whom Peter and John were arraigned, beheld their *boldness*, and they marvelled, perceiving "that they were unlearned and ignorant men"; they noticed also "that they had been with Jesus" (Acts iv, 13), Who had been publicly put to a shameful death as a malefactor only a little more than seven weeks previously, when it is not unlikely that some of those present may have heard Peter's sad denials. This striking exhibition of boldness in Acts iv, 13, forms the first component of the triplication No. (15) in the Acts corresponding to No. (21) in the Gospel of Luke.

The second component of this triplication in the Acts is formed by the faithful prayer of the assembled believers, who asked with one accord that they might be granted "all boldness" to speak the Lord's Word.

The last component is formed by the gracious answer to this prayer, when those present "were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness."

The same Greek word *παρρησία* (boldness) is used on each occasion: it forms the thread running through this triplication; it is only used in two other places in the Acts.

Not only does No. (15) in the Acts contrast with, and correspond to No. (21) in the Crucifixion section of the Gospel, but it strongly supports the main triplications of the book to which it belongs, because it emphasizes the strength and vigour given to the believers to win souls for Christ; it therefore draws marked attention to the main subject of the book, the growth of the Church.

We also find a contrast to No. (22) in the Crucifixion section of the Gospel of St. Luke in No. (16) triplication in the Acts, which tells of Paul's life *saved* on three occasions by a Roman officer from the deadly plans of hostile Jews.

In the first component Paul was said to have defiled the Temple at Jerusalem by taking Greeks there; the Jews consequently were seeking to kill him; but tidings came to the Roman chief captain, who rescued Paul by his soldiers from the Jewish crowd.

The second component is formed by the events of the next day, when Paul was brought before the council of the Jews, and a great discussion arising, "the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should be torn in pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the castle."

The third component is formed by the events of the following day, and the succeeding night. Paul, being confined in the castle, and beyond their reach for the time, a number of Jews bound themselves under a great curse to taste nothing until they had killed him. But this plot came to the ears of the chief captain, who again saved Paul's life by sending him at the third hour of the night, on a rapid march, under the protection of a large armed party to Cæsarea.

This triplication not only points back to No. (22) in the Gospel, but it also emphasizes the main subject of the Acts, which was manifestly closely connected with the preservation of St. Paul's life.

*(17) The testimonies of three sets of Roman rulers to Paul's faultlessness, and (18) the same testimonies from three other groups.*

We now come to the consideration of a pair of triplications, Nos. (17) and (18) in the Acts, of testimonies to St. Paul's character, which are parallel and similar to a pair, Nos. (23) and (24) in the Gospel of Luke, that our Lord was faultless. The

reader is thus vividly reminded of events immediately before and during the Crucifixion of our Lord.

In No. (17) in the Acts, three sets of Roman rulers, Claudius Lycias, Festus, and Agrippa with Bernice, all testified that Paul had not committed anything worthy of death.

In No. (18) in the Acts, three other sets of witnesses, the town clerk of Ephesus, some scribes of the Pharisees' part in Jerusalem, and Judæan Jews writing to their countrymen in Rome, also testified that Paul had done no wrong.

The components of the triplications emphasizing our Lord's innocence were all given close together, at about the time of His great atoning Work, at His Death upon the Cross. But the testimonies that Paul had not broken human laws were distributed over the much greater period of time, occupied by *his* work of preaching the Gospel to many peoples in different lands.

This pair of triplications also serves to support the main object of the book of Acts, the record of the growth of the Church among the nations, because they emphasize the fact that the great Evangelist St. Paul possessed one of the necessary qualifications of a Christian leader, "a good testimony from them that are without" (1 Tim. iii, 7).

*(19) The three dying sayings of Stephen, recorded by St. Luke.*

Triplication No. (19) in the Acts, composed of the dying words of the first martyr Stephen, irresistibly carries back the memory to the three sayings of our Lord on the cross, see No. (25) in the Gospel of St. Luke.

We recognise the overruling influence on the dying Martyr, for we read that he, "full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." The reader is thus forcibly reminded of the second saying of our Lord on the cross, recorded by St. Luke, to the penitent thief, "Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Luke xxiii, 43); for Stephen's statement attests the accomplishment of our Lord's confident words on the cross, that He would soon be in glory.

The second dying utterance of Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," corresponds to the last of our Lord's, when He commended (*παρατίθημι*) His Spirit to God the Father

(Luke xxiii, 46), quoting Ps. xxxi, 5, in which this word is used in the Septuagint version. Dean Alford gives the rendering "to deliver up"—a meaning which is certainly implied in Luke xii, 48, and II Tim. ii, 2, in which the same word is employed. Stephen, when dying, used the word *δέχομαι*, which simply means receive or admit. The one when dying addressed God the Father, the other the Lord Jesus.

The third and last of Stephen's sayings was the prayer, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge": it resembles the first saying of our Lord on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii, 34).

The death of Stephen not only points back emphatically to the Death of our Lord, but it also marks a very important crisis in the growth of the Church.

For a persecution against the believers arose at the time of the first Martyr's death, and consequently many were scattered abroad in different countries; they faithfully took the opportunity to preach the Lord Jesus wherever they went, "and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord" (xi, 19-21).

The account of the death of Stephen also introduces the reader to the persecuting Saul, so soon to become the Spirit-filled, enthusiastic Paul, who was to be the chief human agent in promoting the growth of the infant Church. The influence of Stephen on Paul must have been immense: one indication of it is shown by the fact that the Apostle's first recorded speech at Antioch in Pisidia (xiii, 16-41) greatly resembles the dying address of the first martyr (vii, 2-53).

### (20) *A triplet of triplications.*

As in the Gospel, so in the Acts, we may group the five triplications into three, thus forming a triplet of triplications, No. (20) in the Acts, corresponding to and pointing back to No. (26) in the Gospel of St. Luke.

No. (20) in the Acts also emphasizes the progress of the Gospel.

The first component, made up of Nos. (15) and (16), strongly indicates the boldness of the believers, and the protection afforded to them at that time by the Romans.

The second component, Nos. (17) and (18), also speaks of good progress, because the leader Paul received such good and such widespread testimony to his character.

The last component tells of the death of Stephen, which

led to a wonderful advance—one of the most marked crises in the history of the Church.

We have thus traced some of the arrangements which Luke has adopted in one portion of his Gospel, and we have noticed the striking correspondences which he has inserted in the Acts. It must be understood that similar correspondences also exist between the first, second and fourth groups of triplications in St. Luke's Gospel with others in the Acts.

The following is a very brief outline: we have no space to quote references.

The first group in the Gospel of St. Luke consists of three triplications of proclamations of our Lord Jesus Christ, making a triplet of triplications. The first group in the Acts also consists of three triplications of proclamations, two being of the Holy Spirit, and one of our Lord Jesus Christ, again forming a triplet of triplications.

The second group in the Gospel consists of sixteen triplications, some of which look forward to the coming Sacrifice, while others deal with doctrines connected with that event. Some of these form two triplets of triplications, one on the Sacrifice and one on Doctrines. These are balanced in the Acts by ten triplications which refer to the growth of the Church, three of which make a triplet of triplications on Doctrines: the Sacrifice of our Lord is also referred to in others.

The correspondences in the numbers of the triplications in St. Luke's Gospel and in the Acts is thus not so close in this case as in the other groups; variations in numbers seem to be required by differences in the conditions, but the parallelism between the arrangement of St. Luke's two books is still quite clear and plain.

The fourth group of four triplications in the Gospel of St. Luke is balanced most systematically by four in the Acts. Each book contains a triplication on (a) Comfort in sorrow, (b) Openings, and (c) Joy; subjects in the Acts which also tell of the growth of the Church, as the "opening" there mentioned refers to the door of faith to the Gentiles. A triplet of triplications is also formed in each book.

Where is there anything in the whole range of literature corresponding to these elaborate and skilful arrangements?

Some of these triplications, such as Peter's denials and Pilate's three failures to release our Lord, and his three testimonies

to our Lord's faultlessness, have always been self-evident ; and many doubtless have noticed the connection between the dying words of Stephen and those of our Lord on the cross ; but it is believed that the existence of the more than fifty triplications in Luke's two books, and their elaborate relations to each other, have not hitherto been observed.

On considering this subject, the thought naturally rises in our minds : as the inspired Evangelist must have bestowed an immense amount of care and skill in the selection and arrangement of the material at his disposal, it surely must be worth while for all who love the Scriptures to study his literary methods carefully.

#### ST. LUKE'S INTENTION IN HIS LITERARY ARRANGEMENTS.

It cannot be that St. Luke has arranged his two books on his elaborate plan with the intention of merely interesting his readers, and inducing them to decipher his arrangements, so that they might admire them when discovered. His object certainly was far higher.

Ruskin's words about the writings of wise men in general are very applicable to those of the inspired Scriptural authors, particularly of St. Luke.

"Be sure," wrote Ruskin,\* "that you go to the author to get at *his* meaning, not to find yours, and judge it afterwards, if you think yourself qualified to do so ; but ascertain it first. And be sure, also, if the author is worth anything, that you will not get at his meaning all at once ; nay, that at his whole meaning you will not for a long time arrive in any wise. Not that he does not say what he means, and in strong words too ; but he cannot say it all ; and what is more strange, *will* not, but in a hidden way, and in parables, in order that he may be sure you want it. I cannot quite see the reason of this, nor analyse that cruel reticence in the breasts of wise men which makes them always hide their deeper thought. They do not give it you by way of help, but of reward ; and will make themselves sure that you desire it before they allow you to reach it.

"But it is the same with the physical type of wisdom, gold. There seems, to you and me, no reason why the electric forces of the earth should not carry whatever there is of gold within it at once to the mountain tops, so that kings and people might know that all the gold they could get was there ; and without

\* *Sesame and Lilies*, pp. 15, 16, Edition 1871.

any trouble of digging, or anxiety, or chance, or waste of time, cut it away, and coin as much as they needed.

“But Nature does not manage it so. She puts it in little fissures in the earth, nobody knows where; you may dig long and find none; you must dig painfully to find any.”

Can we find out St. Luke’s intention in constructing his wonderful system of triplications, and why it has not been recognised before?

He was evidently a highly-cultivated man, and also one who fully recognised Divine wisdom, for he frequently described men as filled with the Holy Spirit. There cannot be a doubt that his elaborate plan of triplications was employed to emphasize important spiritual truths to thoughtful readers.

His writings have been examined recently in a variety of ways, which have not all given satisfactory results. Some men question the accuracy of his records, while others seek to find some new doctrines in them, suited, as they think, to the advanced condition of the human mind; many of both classes of these men neglect the spiritual facts and truths of the Holy Scriptures.

Of late years long-buried inscriptions and archæological records have been brought to light, and carefully studied; they have fully testified to the strict historicity of the sacred records, especially of the writings of St. Luke; apparently they were discovered just at the time when their witness was most required.

In this paper we have investigated a few long hidden, but recently recognised literary plans, which reveal to us some of the workings of St. Luke’s divinely-guided mind—a mind as quick and intelligent by nature as that of any modern critic. These plans have also been discovered at the opportune time to meet the arguments of the present-day advocates of the so-called New Theology, for we find that St. Luke has laid very much more stress than was formerly recognised upon the foundation truths of our faith: while no allusion whatever to any new doctrine can be discovered.

“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein” (Jer. vi, 16).

The subject of this paper will be considered in fuller detail in the author’s book, *The Literary Marvels of St. Luke*, which, it is hoped, will soon be published.

Professor H. LANGHORNE ORCHARD said : They were met together that afternoon with mingled feelings. Regret that their President could not be present—and especially for the cause of his absence—was mingled with glad thankfulness that Lady Halsbury's illness had taken a favourable turn, and with gratitude to the Chairman of Council for gallantly stepping into the breach and giving that interesting, suggestive and lucid paper—a paper well deserving their unanimous thanks.

St. Luke's system of triplication was so remarkable, the parallelisms between the Gospel triplications and those in the Acts were so numerous, and the correspondences so close, that this alone might lead a thoughtful reader to conclude that the two books had one and the same writer.

Especially noticeable were the "memory" triplications in Part II of the Paper.

He concurred with the author in thinking that St. Luke's purpose in his triplication method was to *emphasize* spiritual truth ; and thought that all present would agree with the claim (p. 181) that "the methods of St. Luke's two books are exceedingly harmonious and elaborate."

They would also assent to Ruskin's words (p. 187), and he had much pleasure in proposing a very hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman of Council for digging diligently in this mine, and bringing the gold to the surface for their easy and profitable use.

Mr. W. HOSTE seconded the vote of thanks.

He thought such a paper as that of Col. Mackinlay both humbling and encouraging ; humbling, because it was a reproach to some of us that we had so little sought to understand the depths of teaching, that cannot but exist in a book "given by inspiration of God" ; and encouraging, because we are reminded that "God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" and that His secrets are open to the patient enquirer.

Mr. M. L. ROUSE then proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, expressing his pleasure that the Institute had found so good a substitute for Lord Halsbury in the latter's enforced absence. Before Prebendary Fox joined the Institute he had so fine a record of Christian usefulness that the members of the Council rejoiced to admit him at once to their number ; and since then he had read

before the Institute a paper of transcendent merit and attractiveness—one that dealt with his own confirmation of the discovery, among the memorial tablets of Cæsar's household, of four names of worthies mentioned in the inspired epistles, and with his own discovery of a fifth, and which he accompanied with reproductions of the same that he was the first to make for an English audience—the worthies being Amplias, Tryphœna, Tryphosa, Julia and Epaphras. "Colonel Mackinlay's paper," continued Mr. Rouse, "was a delightful surprise. I in no wise expected that such a train of important triplets could be found in Luke; and especially pleasing are the triplets found in Acts that contrast with, and as it were, make good those in Luke's Gospel. John, too, has triplets in his Gospel—three statements made by Pilate of Jesus' innocence, three attempts by him to deliver Jesus, three sayings of Jesus on the cross, and three confessions of love elicited by the Lord from Peter corresponding to his three denials. But I know of no other in John's Gospel, nor of any at all in Matthew's or Mark's; and they certainly have none in the story of the crucifixion. The symmetries shown between Luke's Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles in this regard, as now brought out so strikingly by Colonel Mackinlay, are another proof that both the Gospel and the Book of the Acts were written by the same hand, as the writer of the latter distinctly says that they were. The only outside proof that I had hitherto known (and I have thoroughly confirmed it by looking right through Tischendörf's various readings) was this:—Outside Luke's Gospel and the Book of the Acts all texts but B (the *Codex Vaticanus*) practically always spell Ἰωάννης with two *vs*, B spelling it with one *v* throughout the New Testament. Yet throughout Luke's Gospel and the Acts D (the *Codex Bezae*) spells the name with one *v*. This shows that the scribe who made the copy D in the sixth century had before him the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts bound together as one book apart from the other Gospels.

Remarks by Rev. J. J. B. COLES: In seconding the vote of thanks to the Chairman of Council, may I say how well it is for us to bear in mind that the Victoria Institute was founded for investigating in a reverent spirit important questions of philosophy and science bearing upon Holy Scripture.

At the close of the excellent Annual Address we have just listened

to, we are asked whether we can find out what was St. Luke's intention in constructing his wonderful system of triplications.

It seems to me the answer is, that underlying the actual words of the living oracles of God, there is a wonderful system of science and philosophy, of which these triplications in St. Luke's writings are a good illustration.

In God's world of Nature we can trace on every hand indications of latent geometry and of the arithmetic of beauty, in the crystal, in the flower, and in the human form—so it is in a hidden way with His written Word.

In my paper on Theosophy, in 1911, I wrote: "Those of us who have studied the geometrical philosophy of the ancients are aware that Moses, the writer of the Pentateuch, who was well instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, introduced in an esoteric manner into Genesis, the science of geometrical form and of arithmetical numbers."

The trines such as 333, 666, and 888 in the New Testament belong to the hidden "wisdom" which is a complete answer to the perversion of God's truth in the "mysteries" of Paganism.

Dr. SCHOFIELD sent the following: Perhaps I may be allowed to suggest a reason for St. Luke's and other triplets that possibly has not been brought forward.

We live in a world of three dimensions, and men are bounded by this threefold concept. From the glimpses afforded of the spirit-world we find many traces of what would be true of it were it a world of four dimensions.

Scripture is not without evidence of some effort to express this: "Length, breadth, depth, and *height*, etc." I need not give further instances now, as I have elaborated the subject elsewhere. Suffice it to say that a threefold aspect of anything gives completeness and satisfies an intellect, hence the firstly, secondly, and thirdly of our sermons, and the constant presentation of triplets in our material daily life. It is not then in the least surprising that St. Luke, writing as a man for men in his presentation of our Lord as the Son of Man, should constantly give the threefold picture that we find unconsciously satisfies our intellectual need, but it is surprising to find how deeply the Lecturer has dug, and what a number of triplets, and triplets within triplets, he has found.