

**A COMMENTARY ON
THE BOOK OF THE ACTS
OF THE APOSTLES**

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WILLIAM GILSON HUMPHRY

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BY
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VICAR OF NORTHOLT, MIDDLESEX; AND
EXAMINING CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.

SECOND EDITION, REVISED.

Ἄρα γε γινώσκετε ἃ ἀπαγγέλλομαι;

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1854.

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P R E F A C E

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

I N preparing the present edition for the Press, I have consulted with much advantage the valuable and comprehensive work on the *Life and Epistles of St Paul*, by the Rev. W. J. Conybeare, and the Rev. J. S. Howson, (London, 1853). In revising the Notes on the twenty-seventh Chapter, I have chiefly followed the interesting and able treatise on the *Voyage and Shipwreck of St Paul*, by James Smith, Esq. of Jordan Hill, (London, 1848). Mr Smith has applied the recent surveys of the Mediterranean to identify the localities of the voyage, and by careful researches and reasonings has placed the various details of the narrative in the clearest light.

I have every reason to be satisfied with the favourable reception which has been given to this work ; and I trust that the numerous additions which have been now made to it, as well as the cheaper form in which it is republished, will render it still more acceptable and useful to the student.



P R E F A C E

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE following pages were commenced while the Author was engaged in the duties of Tuition at Trinity College. An attempt to illustrate the Book of the Acts will not be considered unnecessary by those who, like himself, have been occupied in giving instruction on this part of Holy Scripture. To them at least a work on this subject would not be unwelcome, which should briefly and in due proportion 'bring forth things new and old,' on the one hand applying the researches of modern critics, and on the other having regard for the authority and piety of the ancient Fathers.

The Book of the Acts has of late years received frequent and careful attention from English and German scholars. The difficulties which have been overlooked by them, or which admit of a new solution, are happily few in number, and, except in two or three instances, not material. But it has become a necessary task to reduce and make a summary of their labours; to gather up what is useful, and cast aside what is trivial in the writings of each; to sift the mass of their quotations, and verify such as are found appropriate; to give to the materials which are thus obtained a concise and commodious, yet not a dry or spiritless form.

From ancient sources the diligent reader of Scripture may derive two kinds of assistance; the incidental illustrations scattered up and down the writings of the Antenicene Fathers, and the more direct and systematic expositions which are generally of a later date. The former constitute not a large, but an important element in our Annotations: they are highly valued, not only for the light which they throw on Scripture, but for the testimony which they offer to its genuineness and veracity. The latter class forms a considerable body of commentary, from which it has been attempted to transfer into the present volume such passages of sensible, terse, and thoughtful exposition, as could without violence be separated from their context.

Some occasions have arisen in the course of the work for illustrating the doctrine and discipline of the early Church; but it has not been the Author's object either to go over the ashes of extinct controversies, or to enter the flames of those which are still active.

It is necessary in commenting on the original Greek, to keep our Authorised Version continually in view; not for the purpose of directing attention to its many and obvious excellencies, but in order to point out with gentleness and reverence its occasional defects; and it is interesting if not useful sometimes to observe the sources from which the inaccuracies may seem to have been derived.

It will be seen from the foregoing remarks that this volume is almost entirely exegetical. Questions connected with the genuineness of the text have only

been noticed where the variety of reading materially affects the sense.

The Author has ventured here and there to introduce a short meditation, which may serve to remind the student that he is on holy ground, and perhaps to put him in the way of meditating better for himself—the true aim of a commentary in this as in other respects being not to supersede, but to give direction and encouragement to the reflections of the reader.

The Author has thought it advisable thus to state the objects which he has endeavoured to keep in view. He trusts, however, that the value of this imperfect attempt will not be estimated by a reference to the standard which he has proposed to himself. Such a comparison could not fail to be in every way greatly to his disadvantage. The question for the learned reader will be, whether the volume now submitted to his judgment is a step in advance, an improvement, a substantial contribution towards a more comprehensive and perfect work hereafter to be accomplished by some abler hand.

Oct. 18, 1847.
