THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES AND THE EPISTLES OF PAUL: ARRANGED IN THE FORM OF A CONTINUOUS HISTORY WITH NOTES CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY, A GAZETTEER OF PLACES, AND QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION

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THOMAS MORRISON

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BT

THOMAS MORRISON, M.A., LLD., RECTOR, FREE CHURCH NORMAL COLLEGE, GLASCOW.

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PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION.

A THIRD EDITION of this work having been called for, the author reproduces so much of the original preface as will serve to indicate the general scope and design of the work :---

"For several years past, the writer of the following pages has had to prepare classes of young men and women for a somewhat testing examination on the Acts of the Apostles. To do this in a satisfactory way, he was obliged to enter on a somewhat extensive course of reading, embracing the careful study of the most important works on the subject.

"Whilst we possess many admirable commentaries, either on the whole New Testament or on detached portions thereof, —foremost among which may be named those of Alford and Ellicot, who have placed the Christian Church of this country under the deepest obligations by their devout and scholarly expositions of the Word of God,—we have no work which gives in small compass, and in a way accessible to the general reader, the results of modern investigation into the history of the Acts, and especially the relation which subsists between that history and the Epistles of Paul. There are few, even among those who may be reckoned persons of good education, who have any accurate knowledge of the history of Paul's letters, and of the circumstances which called them forth. And this arises, not so much from want of interest in the subject, as from the fragmentary and disjointed notices on these

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points which appear in the large proportion of our popular commentaries—notices so disjointed as to be practically of little value to the very persons for whom they are intended. The want of a work—at once critical and popular—which he might use in his own classes, induced the author to arrange the material which circumstances required him to prepare, and to put it forth in the shape in which it now appears.

"The general plan of the work is this :--Luke's narrative is assumed as the basis, and everything which is necessary to explain his history is introduced into the text, except in a few cases where this could not be done without having recourse to the original, or to explanations, which, though of importance, were not essential to a right understanding of the narrative. In such cases, and in such alone, notes have been given. As supplementary to the information supplied by Luke, recourse has been had to the letters of Paul; and, in every instance, the circumstances which gave occasion to these letters have been detailed. In this part of his subject, the author has to acknowledge his obligations to the admirable work of Conybeare and Howson on 'The Life and Epistles of St. Paul,'-a work characterised by ripe scholarship, and an appreciation of the oracles of God as hearty as it is reassuring, at a time when the self-styled 'leaders of modern thought' are endeavouring to convince themselves that the theology of Paul will not suit the requirements of the nineteenth century.

"As the right understanding of the history is intimately connected with an acquaintance, more or less minute, of the various places mentioned, a Gazetteer of Places has been appended to the work, in which every locality occurring in the text is noticed and briefly described. It is believed that these descriptive notices, taken in conjunction with the map, will help the reader to realise more vividly the course of events,

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and to follow with greater interest the footsteps of the first preachers of the Cross.

"A series of questions has been given, with the view of suggesting lines of examination, whether the book be used publicly or privately."

The foregoing extracts express with sufficient clearness the object the author had before him in compiling the following pages. It has been his desire to narrate, in clear and simple language, the progress of the Church as detailed in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of Paul. From these two sources of information he has attempted to weave a connected narrative, told in such a way as to serve the purposes both of a history and of an exposition.

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