

**A HISTORY OF THE NEW  
TESTAMENT  
TIMES: THE TIME OF  
THE APOSTLES. VOL. I**

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A History of the New Testament Times: The Time of the Apostles. Vol. I by A. Hausrath

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A HISTORY  
OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT TIMES.

BY  
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THE TIME OF THE APOSTLES.  
VOL. I.

TRANSLATED, WITH THE AUTHOR'S SANCTION, FROM THE SECOND GERMAN  
EDITION, BY

L. HUXLEY, B.A.

WITH A PREFACE BY MRS. HUMPHRY WARD.



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## PREFACE.

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IN these four volumes the work of translating Dr. Hausrath's "Neutestamentliche Zeitgeschichte," originally undertaken by the Theological Translation Fund some seventeen years ago, has at last been completed. Vol. I. appeared in 1878; Vol. II., in 1880. Both dealt with "The Time of Jesus," and offered an instalment of the whole work sufficiently complete in itself to stand alone. But for those whose interest in Dr. Hausrath's work had been awakened by his clear style, his direct and vivid method, and his attractive personality, it still remained eminently desirable that the later parts of the book, dealing with "The Times of the Apostles," should be added to the earlier English volumes. And this has now been done by Mr. Leonard Huxley's translation printed in the following pages.

IN these few words of preface I may perhaps be allowed to express some of the thoughts which Dr. Hausrath's brilliant picture of the first Christian times has stirred in the mind, not of an expert, but of a consenting and sympathetic reader. These later volumes, then, as it seems to me, have the same qualities as the earlier,—the same conspicuous merits, and perhaps, here and there, the same weaknesses. The admirable survey of Palestine with which the first volume opened—a piece of writing which had many of the qualities of Renan, and especially that quality which enabled the great French

critic to make literature out of the minutest and exactest historical or linguistic material—is paralleled in these later sections by the descriptions of Alexandria, Tarsus, Corinth or Ephesus, descriptions where all that literary or archaeological knowledge has to offer is pressed into the service of a remarkable *visualising* faculty, on the part of an author who is determined to make his reader also see the towns where Philo or Paul walked, as clearly as he sees them himself. The intelligent analysis of social and moral conditions, conveyed in a singularly flexible style, and carried through with the true historical freedom and courage, which gave value to the earlier sections on "The Sanhedrin" or "The Synagogue," on "The Sadducees and Pharisees," on "The Economical Condition of Judæa under the Romans," or "The Messianic Expectation," is here applied to the institutions and circumstances of a later day; while the same narrative power shown in the former picture of Herod the Great finds here ample scope in carrying on the stories of Herod Antipas and Herod Agrippa, in the reproduction of Philo's vivid account of his embassy to Caligula, or in treating the drama of the Jewish War. And the same eager sensitive thought which spent itself in the former volumes upon the analysis of the parts played by the Forerunner and the Master in the vast transformation of the time, is here concentrated with equal ardour and patience upon the great figure of St. Paul.

At the same time—if one is to be allowed a perfectly frank opinion—these later volumes betray here and there, as I have said, the same weaknesses which might have been noticed in the earlier. These weaknesses are indeed the defects of Dr. Hausrath's qualities. He is not only a *gelehrter*; he is also a writer and a man of letters; a South German besides, or at any rate a member of a great South German University which has always possessed

a wide and varied literary tradition. The result is that, like Renan, he writes not only for his *Fach*, but for the public, and obeys both an inner and outer need when he endeavours to make his narrative as living and as effective as possible. The temptations of the position are of course obvious. A man determined to make a *book* out of such difficult material as the relics of Christian antiquity afford, can scarcely avoid at times straining his points and forcing his authorities beyond what the strict historical spirit allows. Such a straining of points and forcing of authorities is the besetting sin of orthodox interpretation. And the critical school, especially when it wishes to be read, does not escape it. Every careful reader of these interesting volumes will make his own comments in this sense as he goes along. Especially perhaps will he notice that Dr. Hausrath's exposition of disputed matters is occasionally least satisfactory when he is most anxious to be fair to the arguments of opponents. For instance, there is a passage in the section headed "The Early Career of Paul" where the writer discusses the knowledge which Paul may be supposed to have possessed of the teaching and personality of Jesus. Evidently the thought in Dr. Hausrath's mind is that some critics have gone too far in minimizing or denying this knowledge. His instinct towards fair statement accordingly makes him admit all he can; and the result is a string of references to the Pauline texts which can only set a reader wondering that so vital a point should be even discussed—much less decided—on such evidence.

But it is certainly desirable, eminently desirable, that from time to time those who *know* should use their knowledge, not only for students, but also for the large public. In this country Dr. Hausrath's book, with all its learning and charm, and its occasional *parti pris*, ought to be read as an alternative to those



popular English lives of Christ and St. Paul which have learning and charm too no doubt, but also a *parti pris* of another kind, far more marked and less easily to be defended. For Dr. Hausrath's *parti pris* is, after all, the *parti pris* of history and science wherever they appear. He is trying to make his subject intelligible and organic, to bring it into connection with human experience as a whole. He proceeds, as he himself says in his Preface to the second edition of his book, on the conviction that "what is in Philo, Josephus, and the Rabbis, historical theology, cannot immediately become inspiration in the Apostles;" and in his dramatic picture of the thought-conditions whence Christianity sprang, this instinct for the unity of all experience—the predominating instinct of the historian—is perpetually leading him to that translation of ancient testimony into modern terms which distinguishes the Christian interpreter of his class from those of any traditional school, Protestant or Catholic.

On the many controverted points of perennial difficulty and obscurity on which Dr. Hausrath necessarily touches in the course of these volumes, it does not become me to say much. No doubt his particular way of conceiving the forces of personality and environment at work in the primitive Christian community is not the way which is at the present moment dominant in the liberal theology of Germany. A man of genius, Professor Harnack, holds the field; and his disciples find a certain Rationalist poverty and thinness in all that does not bear his stamp. Nevertheless, it is probable that the present book will reach and affect English readers who would not be reached by the great "Dogmengeschichte" which forms the text-book of the prevailing school. Dr. Hausrath's tone of sympathetic realism will on the whole be congenial to us; and in these subjects it is for the present what we want. As compared with

Baur's "First Three Centuries," or Baur's "St. Paul," the present volumes abundantly bear out Dr. Harnack's estimate of the progress made by historical theology since the great days of the Tübingen school. "Richer in historical points of view," he says of the knowledge of to-day as compared with the knowledge of 1835, "we have grown more realistic, more elastic; the historical temper has developed; we have acquired the power of transplanting ourselves into other times. Great historians—men like Ranke—have taught us this."

The words may very aptly be applied to this survey before us of a vast period and the rise of a mighty movement. The writer carries us from scene to scene, from the philosophic schools of Greece, Rome and Alexandria, to the Church of Jerusalem in its early days of ecstasy and passionate hope; from the streets of Alexandria and the study of Philo, to the first preaching of the crucified Messiah in the synagogues of Palestine and the Dispersion, or among the slaves and freedmen of Rome; from the court of Caligula, to the palace of Herod Antipas, or into the midst of the adventures, the successes, the hypocrisies of Herod Agrippa; from the atmosphere of spiritual majesty surrounding the tormented life and indomitable labours of St. Paul, to the carnival of blood and lust which at the same moment filled the palace of Nero; from those murderous days and nights in the Rome of 64, amid which the great Apostle's frail life passes from the sight and hearing of men, to the awful struggle of the Jewish War. The narrative dealing throughout with a mass of detail—endeavouring to make everything count—to leave out nothing, however small, that can help a reader to see or to feel—the work, moreover, of a man penetrated throughout by the human and dramatic interest of his subject,—will often, indeed, rouse our criticism or our protest. There are repetitions; the

note, as we have said, is sometimes forced; there is occasionally the same tendency as in M. Renan to make a certainty that history has denied. But through it all—in comparison with most of the books we read in England—there is, as it seems to me, a wonderful sense of life and reality. Men act, and things happen from intelligible causes; the personalities of the time stand out in true, or at any rate possible relations to what surrounds them; the developing subtlety and profundity of Pauline thought, the mixture of things exquisite and grotesque in the first Christian communities, the clash of interests, and the fusion of creeds—all these are treated with equal freedom and sympathy, with no controversial bitterness, and often with a shrewd plainness, which nevertheless passes easily into the language of “admiration, hope and love.”

This mixture of realistic insight with spiritual veneration is especially remarkable in the portrait of St. Paul in which the book centres. So vivid is that portrait that the reader is in some sort challenged anew by it, as he might have been challenged by the actual presence—the stirring provocative presence—of the living Apostle. As one turns away from it, yet still possessed by it, one asks oneself again the perennial question on which Paul's life and preaching turned, which confronts us to-day, as it confronted him on the agonized journey to Damascus—“*What is it that saves?*” What light did Paul's experience and Paul's thought throw upon the eternal problem? What light do they still throw upon it for us—the children of another age, and other disciplines of mind and feeling? At the risk of repeating much that Dr. Hausrath has said, and said better, let me try and work out something of an answer.

“*What is it that saves?*” Paul's original reply to this question, given in his capacity as Pharisee and Zealot, was of