THE FIRST EPISODE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
THESSALONIANS.

The Salutation.
1 PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timothy, to the assembly of Thessalonians, in God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ! Blessing and peace to you.

The Apostle's Thanksgiving.
2 We give thanks to God always concerning you, mentioning you continually in our prayers; remembering your faithful work, your loving labour, and your hopeful endurance in the path of our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father; recognising, dear friends, your selection by God.
3 Because our gospel came not as mere talk among you, but with power and with a holy spirit, and a grand result; as you know by means of yourselves what we were among you. And you became imitators of us, and of the Lord, accepting the message in great suffering, with the delight of a holy spirit; so that you were models to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For from you the message of the Lord has been echoed abroad, not only throughout Macedonia and Achaia, but in all parts your faith towards God has extended, so that we had no need to speak anything; because those about us announced what an entrance we made in to you, and how you turned from your idols to God, to serve a living and true God; and to await His Son from the heavens, Whom He raised from the dead—Jesus, our Deliverer from the terror of the future.

Their Faith Acceptance of the Gospel.
2 For you yourselves, brethren, know that our assault upon you was not ineffectual. But although previously tortured and insulted in Philippi, as you know, we were bold enough in our God to speak to you in great agony, the Good News of God. For our exhortation is not from imposition, neither with corruption, nor with deceit; but as we have been proved under God to be believers in the Good News, so we speak: not as pleasing men, but, on the contrary, God, Who proves our hearts. For we were never flatterers in speech, as you are aware; nor hypocrical seekers of wealth—God is witness—nor yet seeking honour from men, neither from you, nor from others, although able to assert our dignity as apostles of Christ. On the contrary, we were as gentle when among you as a mother fondling her own child. We loved you so much, that we thought good not only to give you the Good News of God, but also our own lives; because you became so dear to us. For you may remember, brethren, our labour and toil; we worked night and day, so as not to be any burden to you, when we preached the gospel of God among you.

You and God are witnesses how purely, righteously, and blamelessly, we were with you believers: for you are aware that even as a father his own children, so we encouraged and cheered and entreated each one of you, to conduct yourselves worthy of the God Who called you into His glorious kingdom.

And for this especially we thank God continually, that having received a reason for listening to us concerning God, you accepted it; not as a human reason, but as it truly is, a Divine reason, and which operates upon the believers among you. For you, brethren, have become exactly like the believers in the assemblies of God in Christ Jesus who are in Judea, since you suffer the same under your own countrymen as they from the Judeans: who wearied to death the Lord Jesus and the prophets; and drove us out; and are displeasing to God, as well as contrary to all men; prohibiting us to tell to the heathen that they could be saved—everywhere
filling up their sins; but their fury will at last come upon themselves.

His Affliction for them.

17 But we, brothers, having been separated from you for the space of an hour in person—not in heart—have striven very eagerly with great
18 desire to see your face. Indeed, we wished on two occasions to come to you, that is, I, Paul; but Satan prevented us. For who is our hope, or joy, or crown of triumph—if you are not—in the presence of our Lord Jesus,
19 when He will appear? You are certainly our boast and delight.

20 So, enduring it no longer, we decided to be left alone in Athens; and sent Timothy, our brother and fellow-labourer for God in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage
21 you in your faith, so as not to be shaken by these sufferings, to which you are aware that we are exposed.
22 For, indeed, while we were with you we foretold that there would be troubles; and, as you see, they have come.
23 Consequently, without delay I have sent to learn about your faith, fearing the Tempter had over-tried you, and that our work had been for nothing.
24 But when Timothy came from you to us, and reported the good news of your faith and love, and that you always retained a pleasant memory of us, wishing to see us, just as we do you; then we were consoled, brethren, by you, by your faith, for
25 all our hardship and suffering. For now we live, if you stand in the Lord.
26 For what thanks can we render to God for you—for all the delight with which we rejoice for you in the presence of our God? Night and day earnestly wishing to see your face,
27 and to supply the requirements of your faith. May our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus, facilitate our journey to you! And may the Lord fill you to overflowing with love to one another, and to all, as
28 we indeed are to you; to establish your hearts in spotless holiness before our God and Father, at the appearance of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

On Purity of Life.

4 Therefore, for the rest, brethren, we ask and exhort you in the Lord Jesus,

that since you learnt by us how you ought to walk and please God—even as also you do walk—that you may progress further. For you know what 2 commands coming from the Lord Jesus we gave you. For this is the 3 intention of the God Who purified you, that you keep from fornication:
that each of you should know how 4 to keep his own vessel in purity and honour, not in a passion of lust, like the heathen who know not God;
5 neither outrage nor deceive your 6 brother in this matter: for there is an avenging Lord for all these, as we indeed told and bore witness to you. For God called you not to impurity, but to purity. Consequently, 8 it is quite certain that the offender outrages not man, but God Who gave you His Holy Spirit.

On Brotherly Love.

But concerning brotherly love, you have no need to be written to; for
9 you yourselves are Divinely instructed to love one another: and, indeed, you 10 practise it to all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we beg you,
11 brethren, to progress still further: and be ambitious of quietude, and to attend to your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we have before taught you; so that you may 12 be well conducted before the outsiders, and have need of nothing.

The Coming of the Lord.

We desire you not to be ignorant, 13 brethren, concerning those who sleep;
so that you may not grieve, as the rest who are without a hope. For if 14 we believe that Jesus died and rose again, thus also God will, by means of Jesus, restore with Him those who are asleep. For we say this to you 15 as a message from the Lord, that we, the living, the survivors until the appearance of the Lord, will not precede those who sleep. For the Lord Himself in command, with the voice of an archangel, and with a signal from God, will descend from heaven; and first the dead in Christ will rise again;
then we, the living remnant, shall at the same time be carried up in clouds for an introduction by the Lord into the eternal condition, and then we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore console one another with these truths.
II. THESSALONIANS.

5 But about the times and the seasons, brethren, there is no need for writing to you; for yourselves know well enough that the day of the Lord comes like a thief at night. When they say, "Peace and security," then, suddenly, destruction seizes them, as the agony of a woman with child; and they cannot escape.

4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that that day should seize you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are neither of night nor of darkness. Consequently, we do not sleep as the rest; but we keep guard and are sober.

7 For the sleepers sleep at night, and the drunkards are drunk at night. But we, being of day, are sober, clothed in a breastplate of faith and love, and a helmet—a hope of salvation. For God appointed us not for passion; but, on the contrary, for the acquisition of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for our sakes, so that, whether watching or sleeping, we may live together with Him. Therefore comfort yourselves mutually, and build yourselves up into oneness—as also you do.

The Divine Life.

12 And we request you, brothers, to recognize those labouring among you, and leading you in the Lord, and instructing you; and esteem them with special love, because of their work.

14 Be at peace among yourselves; but we beg of you, brethren, correct the disorderly; encourage the timid; help the weak; forbear with all.

15 Guard against any returning wrong for wrong to any one; on the contrary, always follow good, both to one another, and to all.

16 Rejoice at all times;

17 Pray unceasingly;

18 Give thanks for everything; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

19 Quench not the Spirit;

20 Nor despise preaching;

21 But, examining everything,

22 Secure the noble,

And refrain from every appearance of wickedness.

23 And the God of peace Himself purify you perfectly, and keep your spirit, and the soul, and the body, spotless for the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ. He Who called you is faithful, and He will effect it.

24 Pray for us, friends.

25 Give regards to all the brethren with a holy kiss.

26 I charge you by the Lord to make this letter known to all our friends.

27 The blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

(Addressed to the Thessalonians by Paul, in the name of himself, Silas, and Timothy, from Corinth, in the earlier part of the year 53 A.D.)

Note.—This letter was evidently of later date than 53 A.D., and, from internal evidence (see 2. iii., v. 1), was written from Athens during a visit not recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. The old chronology put to the Epistles is often wrong, and was the estimate of comparatively modern transcribers.—F. F.

THE SECOND EPISODE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

Greeting.

1 PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timothy, to the assembly of Thessalonians, in our God, Father, and Lord Jesus Christ: Blessing and peace to you from God our Father, and Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle's Thanksgiving.

2 We ought rightly to give thanks to God always for you, friends, as it is fitting; because your faith abounds beyond measure, and love fills all of you mutually: so that we ourselves boast in the assemblies of God.