below. To that period they refer: viz. to  
the time when he first preached the Gospel  
among them, and the first introduction of  
this period seems to be in the words, **for  
I am as ye are.** Then, I became as you:  
and at that time you did me no wrong,  
but on the contrary shewed me all sympathy  
and reverence. Then comes in the inference, put in the form of a question, at  
ver. 16,—I must then have *since* become  
your enemy by telling you the truth.

**13.] because of an infirmity of my  
flesh:** or,—**on account of bodily weakness**: all other renderings (e.g. ‘*in weakmess,* as A.V.) are ungrammatical, or  
irrelevant. The meaning is, that it was  
*on account of an illness* that he first  
preached in Galatia: i.e. that he was for  
that reason detained there, and preached,  
which otherwise he would not have done.  
On this, see Introduction, § ii. 3: the  
fact itself, I cannot help thinking, is  
plainly asserted here.

**at the first]**  
with reference to that second visit hinted  
at below, ver. 16, and ch. v. 21. See  
Introduction, § v. 3.

**14.]** The  
**temptation** seems to have been the “thorn  
in the flesh” of 2 Cor. xii. 1 ff., whatever  
that was: perhaps something eonnected  
with his *sight*, or some nervous infirmity:  
see below, and notes on Acts xiii.9; xxiii. 1.  
It was *their* temptation, because it tempted  
them to disparage and reject his preaching. The expression, which has been altered  
into “*my* temptation,” is one of those exquisite and delicate touches, which belong  
so peculiarly to St. Paul’s mind.

**as  
an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus]** a  
climax:—besides the freedom of angels  
from fleshly weakness, there is doubtless an  
allusion to their office as messengers—and  
to His saying, who is above the angels,  
Luke x. 16. No inference can be drawn  
*from these expressions* being used of *the  
Galatians’ reception* of him, that they were  
already Christians when he first visited  
them: the words are evidently not to be  
pressed as intended to be accurate in point  
of chronology; they mean, not, ‘as you  
*would have* received,’ &c., but, ‘as you  
would (now) receive.’

**15.] Where  
then** (i.e. where in estimation, holding  
what place) **(is) your congratulation of  
yourselves** (so literally: **the blessedness ye boasted of**, in having me among  
you as your Apostle? This is perhaps as  
good a rendering as the words will bear)**?**  
i.e. considering your fickle behaviour since.

**for I bear you witness . . .]** a proof,  
to what lengths this *congratulation of  
themselves,* and consequently their high  
value for St. Paul ran, at his first visit.  
In seeking for a reference for this expression, y**e would have plucked out your  
own eyes, and have given them to me**, the  
right course will be, not at once to adopt  
the conclusion, that they point to ocular  
weakness on the part of the Apostle,—  
nor, because they form a trite proverb  
(signifying any great extent of self-sacrifice  
for another) in many languages, therefore  
to set down at once that no such allusion  
to a personal infirmity can have been intended, but to judge from the words themselves, and our information from other  
sources, whether such an allusion is likely.  
And in doing so, I may observe that a proverbial expression so harsh in its nature,  
and so little prepared by the context.  
would perhaps hardly have been introduced  
without some notice, or some particle of  
climax. Would not the Apostle have  
more naturally written, “*have plucked out  
even your own eyes?*” Had the “*even*”