834 THE ACTS. XXVIII.   
   
 there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his   
 hand. And when the barbarians saw the [T venomous]   
 beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No   
 doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath   
 eseaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live.   
 5 And he shook off the beast into the fire, and ° felt no   
 harm. 6 Howbeit they looked when he should have   
 ¢ Mark xvi.18 or fallen down dead suddenly : but § after they had   
 Luke x. 19. looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they   
 changed their minds, and said that he was a god. 7In   
 the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the   
 island, whose name was Publius: who received us, and   
 lodged us three days courteously. § And it came to pass,   
 deh. xiv.   
   
   
   
   
   
 T not expressed in the original,   
 8 render, when they were long looking.   
   
   
 Paul had placed the faggot on the fire, Apostles, totally unprecedented in history   
 and was settling or arranging it in its or probability. Besides, did not the   
 place, when the viper glided out of the themselves in this case testify the fact ?   
 heat and fixed on his hand. The verb None were so well qualified to of the   
 in the original implies that the serpent virulence of the serpent,—none so capable   
 glided out through the sticks. of knowing that the hanging on Paul’s   
 fastened on his hand] Thenarrative leaves hand implied the communieation of the   
 uo doubt that the bite did veritably take yenom :—yet they change him from a mur-   
 place. 4.] The natives, who were derer into a god, on seeing what took place.   
 sure to know, here positively declared it Need we further evidence, that the divine   
 to have been a venomous serpent. I make power which they mistakenly attributed to   
 these remarks to guard against the dis- Paul himself, was really exerted on his he-   
 ingenuous shifts of rationalists and semi- half, by Him who had said “ they shall   
 rationalists, will have us believe either take up serpents?” Sce below on ver. 8.   
 that the viper did not bite, or if it did, The fact that St. Luke understood what   
 it was not venomous. No doubt this the natives said, is adduced by Dr. Words-   
 man is a murderer] “They saw his fetters.” worth as another proof (see his and my   
 Bengel.—The idea of his being a murderer note on ch, xiv. 11) that the Apostles and   
 is not to be accounted for by the member Evangelists commonly understood unknown   
 which was bitten (for this would fit any tongues. But such an inference here has   
 crime which the hand could commit),—~ absolutely nothing to rest on. Are we to   
 nor by supposing the bite of a serpent to suppose that these “barbarians” had no   
 lave been the Maltese punishment for means of intercourse with Greek sailors ?   
 inurder ; it is for by the obvious- 6.] Both these, the inflammation of   
 ness of the crime as belonging to the most the body, and the falling down dead sud-   
 notorious delinquents, and the aptness of denly, are recorded as results of the bite   
 the assumed punishment,—death for death. of the African serpents. 7.) The   
 Vengeance} or Nemesis, What the chief, or first man of the Melitsans, was   
 Pheenician islanders ealled her, does not probably an official title: more so, as   
 appear; but the idea is common to all Publius can hardly have borne the appel-   
 religions. 5.] “Luke does not so much Jation from his eséates, during his father’s   
 as hint, that any divine intervention took lifetime. Two inseriptions have been found   
 place.” De Wette—True enough: but in Malta, at Citta Vecchia, which seem to   
 why ? Because St. Luke believed that the establish this view. If so (and his Roman.   
 very dullest of his wonld understand name further confirms it), Publius was   
 it without any sueh hint. According to legate of the Pretor of Sicily, to whose   
 these rationalists, a fortunate concurrence province Malta belonged. us] Hardly   
 of accidents must have happened to the perhaps more than Paul and his companions,