In a now well-known essay Werner Georg Kümmel terms as 'accusatory' the contemporary opinion of Lukan theology which finds in Luke-Acts a recasting of the primitive-Christian idea of eschatology, with its dependence upon Old-Testament/Jewish conceptions of election and its emphasis on the near-expectation of the Kingdom, into a secularized (Hellenized) understanding of redemptive history, in which eschatology has been relegated to the temporal periphery. As Hans Conzelmann maintains in his programmatic study, *Die Mitte der Zeit*, the ministry of Jesus is viewed no longer as inaugurating a new age, the cataclysmic dawning of which impends from the immediate horizon. Instead the time of Jesus is an island in the stream of history fixed by divine determination, a time of salvation now succeeded by the period of the church, whose own existence extends forward indefinitely into the future of secular history. The church is thereby confined to its own time, without immediate relation to the 'time of salvation,' whether that of Jesus' life and work ('die Mitte der Zeit') or that which commences with the end of the world.

The details of the larger picture of Lukan theology as reconstructed by Ernst Käsemann, Philip Vielhauer, Hans Conzelmann, Ernst Haenchen, and others who have followed their
lead continue to undergo both refinement and criticism. A detailed development of Conzelmann's ideas on the Lukan notion of divine providence in history was presented by Sigfried Schulz in a 1963 essay, "Gottes Vorsehung bei Lukas". Yet it seems fair to ask whether this contemporary line of interpretation has done justice to Luke-Acts. Kümmel raises this question in a more general way with regard to treatments of Lukan theology current especially within modern German circles of New Testament scholarship. The present paper offers a detailed and critical reassessment from the perspective of a particular aspect, the theme of divine providence in Luke-Acts. From this vantage it is hoped that progress toward a better understanding of the two-volume work as a whole can be made.

I. Previous Investigations

H. J. Cadbury was one of the first to notice the peculiarly Lukan understanding of divine providence:

One feature of Luke's work that might be conscious intention, quite as well as traditional motif or subconscious conviction, is the evidence of divine guidance and control that pervades it... There is a necessity about the course which Luke's story takes, a "must," to use Luke's own favorite auxiliary, rather than a mere predicative "shall"...


Fascher, whose study on δέν ("it is necessary") culminates with his treatment of Luke-Acts, opens his article with the observation that the term is frequently employed in Greek-Hellenistic usage to

---