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daughter when it saw that she would slay the mother with a deadly kiss.'

Jesus believed He was the Messiah and was sure that the Kingdom of God was near. Had He not held both beliefs, He could never have taught His extremist and individualistic ethics, fitted only for the needs of the oppressed and the down-trodden in that terrible epoch when 'all the nations were writhing in the claws of the cruel and voracious Roman eagle.'

All this means at least a great clearing of the issue. It is much gained that we know how the story of Jesus seems to a Jew of the ability, the

learning, and the fine type of mind that this book reveals. It is much that Dr. KLAUSNER, speaking with an authority which does not always lie behind such statements, acknowledges that 'in his ethical code there is a sublimity of distinctiveness and originality in form unparalleled in any other Hebrew ethical code.' In view of the past and present attitude of a large part of Christendom to the Jews, can we wonder that men like Dr. KLAUSNER approach the study of the Christ with the conviction that any creed that would weaken the bonds that hold together this wonderful people, that would tend to their absorption among the Gentiles, is *ipso facto* self-condemned?

The Parable of the Pounds.

BY THE REVEREND J. G. SIMPSON, D.D., CANON OF ST. PAUL'S.

THE Parable of the Pounds, according to Luke, who alone records it, was spoken by the Lord at Jericho between the incident of Zacchæus and the resumption of His interrupted progress towards Jerusalem. The figure may have been originally suggested by a palace which Archelaus had built in Jericho, and which remained to meet the observant eye of Jesus many years after the territory of this unfortunate son of Herod the Great had been absorbed in the Roman province of Syria. All commentators agree in pointing to the 'ambassage' sent by the disaffected citizens of the nobleman to resist his claims as recalling the Jewish deputation which in A.D. 4 went to Rome, whither Archelaus had himself gone to obtain imperial recognition as successor to Herod the Great. But, however suggested, the idea remained in the mind of Jesus throughout the closing days of His ministry. The point of attachment to the historical incident disappears after the first parable. We hear no more of the nobleman seeking a kingdom and his subsequent dealing with the citizens. It is the purely imaginative development, concerning the relations of the master with his household, that finds further application, not only in the Parable of the Talents (Mt 25¹⁴⁻³⁰), but in that of the Household (Mk 13³⁴⁻³⁷), and in

the similitude of the slaves waiting with loins girt and lamps burning for the master returning from a wedding feast (Lk 12³⁵⁻⁴⁰).

In considering the Parable of the Pounds it is important not to omit the two narratives, by which our Lord enforces the obligation of a dutiful vigilance. The one comes from the entirely independent tradition of Mark; and neither can by any stretch of imagination be treated as a variant of the Pounds. With the Parable of the Talents it is otherwise. The superficial reader, familiar only with the one parable, would not be unlikely to suppose, when confronted with the other, that he had read it before. True talents are not pounds. And if, as is probable, Matthew has been read first, Luke seems to break the unity of the narrative, by inserting what looks as though it ought to form the subject of an independent parable, the irrelevant account of the citizens. The rest, however, it is not unnatural to think, must be just one story assigned to different contexts.

When we turn from the superficial impressions of the casual reader to the careful investigations of the scientific critic, certain phenomena are exhibited, as the two narratives are set side by side and minutely compared one with another, for

example, in Rushbrooke's *Synopticon*. For some two-thirds of the way the verbal correspondence is not great. Moreover, the whole of that portion of the Lucan narrative which deals with the citizens may be set aside as having nothing remotely like it in Matthew. But, apart from this, the verbal correspondence of the last third of the two narratives, dealing with the final reckoning and the conversation between the master and the unprofitable servant, is so close that both must be held to incorporate the same source. This would, of course, be the document commonly called Q. The former part of the narrative, when the divergence is too great to admit of derivation from a single source, is explained by one of the latest writers on the Synoptic problem, Canon Streeter, on the theory that, while Luke's Parable of the Pounds represents Q, the compiler of our Matthew, in giving the Parable of the Talents, followed in the main a source of his own, which he was combining with Mark and Q to produce the Gospel as we know it, and conflated or ran together the two forms of the story that lay before him.

Now this may come to be accepted as an accurate account of the matter, and we need not be concerned to dispute it. It is held that conflation belongs to Matthew's method, and that here we have only one instance of a general habit. What this theory does not establish is that the two parables, conflated though they may be, represent in the first instance independent traditions of a single discourse. When all allowances have been made for the causes which differentiate reports of a single utterance, transforming as they not infrequently are, the divergences in the present instance, which will become apparent as we proceed, are really too wide to enable us to assign two parables, each of which has its peculiar teaching, to a common original. It is here that the other parables, which, though built on the conception of the master and the household, differ too materially from both the Pounds and the Talents to be in any way identified with either, help us to understand the true relation of the latter, the one to the other. The figure common to all four burnt itself into the imagination of Jesus as a telling expression of the situation soon to be established by 'his exodus which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.' Again and again He used it to prepare His followers for the position of trial and responsibility in which, when they least expected it, He was about to place them.

After the first day at Jericho nothing further is said in this connexion about the open enemies of Christ, whose existence is as difficult a factor in the situation to be created by the passing of the Master as the new conditions which this event would impose upon His own disciples. But other parts of the parable reappear to emphasize in the manner of a great teacher aspects which do not sufficiently appear in the first presentation of it. Most conspicuously is this the case in the Parable of the Talents, which appears to retell one side of the Parable of the Pounds only to throw an entirely new light upon the picture. There may have been conflation, assimilating the two narratives. But it is not at all necessary to postulate this in order to account for the striking resemblances in form and language. No one accustomed to public speech can have failed to observe how structure and phrase, once formed in the mind, will reproduce themselves almost without conscious effort in deliverances which recur to the same circle of ideas.

The occasion of the Parable of the Pounds, from which, as we judge, the series starts and which is the widest of all in its scope, is the words spoken of Zacchæus, after he had entertained Jesus in his house. 'To-day is salvation come to this house.' 'As they heard these words,' we read, Jesus 'added' to this significant declaration some further speech, and that speech took the form of 'this parable.' Where was it uttered? Under the roof of the chief publican or in the open street? The phrase 'this house' would suggest the former. The necessities of the situation almost compel the latter. The whole episode of the brief halt at Jericho is dramatic. Word of the approach of the Prophet of Nazareth had reached the city, before He crossed the ford of Jordan, through which what was both a great trade route and a pilgrim way led direct to its gates. Crowds had awaited His coming, attracted not only by the fame of the Nazarene Prophet, but by the rumours of the plot for His destruction already afoot not more than eighteen miles away among the priestly rulers of Jerusalem. Jesus Himself had apparently not intended to stop, but to go straight on with the caravan of pilgrims to the Holy City. As He was 'passing through' He caught sight of Zacchæus in the sycamore and proclaimed His intention of 'abiding' at his house. What now occurred was unpremeditated and impressive because of its dramatic reality. At the end of the great interlude, Jesus resumed His

march. 'When he had thus spoken,' when He had finished the parable, He went on before going up to Jerusalem. We conclude, therefore, that Zacchæus made the confession, which sealed and certified his change of heart not within but before the doors of his dwelling, in presence not of the select company gathered inside but of the whole community, which this man had wronged, and of the attendant crowd, who would see in his conversion a signal instance of the success of a mission the purpose of which was to seek and to save, to gather into the kingdom, the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

The mood of the multitude, the revival of those confident expectations, which the knowledge of what was at that moment proceeding in the official world at Jerusalem had challenged, rendered some further speech on the part of Jesus imperatively necessary. 'They supposed that the kingdom of God would immediately appear.' The hope that the power of Jesus would rise superior to the plots of the hierarchy and that the triumphal procession to the capital preluded the restoration within a few days of the throne of David was destined to be rudely shattered. None knew this better than Jesus Himself. He did not share the popular illusion. 'The Son of Man,' He had said to His disciples, 'shall be delivered up into the hands of men' (Lk 9⁴⁴). That the Lord had shared the apocalyptic hopes of His age, a view that will be familiar to all readers of Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historical Jesus*, seems to be refuted by what He now feels it incumbent upon Him to say. For even if after three days He should rise again, it was no swift and sudden reversal of the fate of death which He anticipated. The people expected that the kingdom would immediately appear. Jesus knew that He was starting on a journey to 'a far country,' 'from whose bourne' in the common experience of mankind 'no traveller returns.' There He has business to transact, which is His immediate concern. Some day He will return. Meanwhile He goes to prosecute His claim and 'to receive for himself a kingdom.'

This is an announcement which cannot be made in specific terms. They will not be understood. Nor will the position of affairs admit of plain speech. He must use the familiar method of parable, that such only as have ears to hear may hear, and that, when the catastrophe comes, all may recognize that it was not unforeseen. The scope of the

parable takes in the whole of the situation which will be created by Christ's parting. There are the followers whom He leaves behind and the foes who are responsible for His death. The latter were not unrepresented in the audience. The spirit that refused Him had been manifested in the murmurs which had greeted His entrance to the house of Zacchæus. That neither party shall be omitted is at once secured by the designation of the principal figure in the parable, not as a householder taking a journey, but as 'a certain nobleman' who goes to claim a kingdom. In the subsequent discourses he is no longer so described. They develop only one-half of the original parable, in which the domestic relations are alone material. Here, on the other hand, the two sides are closely riveted not only by their common relation to the leading personage, but by the structure of the story itself. 'He called ten servants of his,' so it opens; 'but his citizens hated him.' And the conclusion presents an intentional contrast between the treatment of the unsatisfactory servant and the implacable enemies. 'Take away from him the pound . . . howbeit these mine enemies . . . slay them before me.'

It is a real misfortune that those insignificant pounds should have given their name to this great parable, to the almost entire neglect of that more tremendous side of it, which has no place in the title at all and has come to be regarded almost as a clumsy interpolation. It is the Parable of the Talents, no doubt, that is responsible for this. But if the first fact to which Calvary testifies is the redeeming love of God, the second is His rejection by His own people. If through death Jesus has passed into the Holy Place, there to appear in the presence of God for us, presenting His claim to the kingdom, it is also true that 'his citizens hated him, and sent an embassy after him.' If the Cross is the symbol of the heavenly intercession, it also abides as an *advocatus diaboli*, the claim of those who in crucifying the Lord of glory declared, 'We will not have this man to rule over us.' The unbelief of the Chosen People was the first and most deadly enemy that the gospel had to encounter. It constituted a problem for the Apostle Paul. If the Cross is still 'a stone of stumbling' to the Jew, the Great Refusal, of which it is the witness, is still 'a rock of offence' to the faith of a Christian. That Jesus looked this fact in the face is to be read in this parable. He was not going to triumph

over it, as by a miracle, when He reached Jerusalem. Faith must endure until the Parousia. In the last sentence of the parable we already feel some of the awe with which the Epistle to the Romans invests the delay of the penalty, which at long last overtakes the man who treasures up for himself 'wrath in the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.'

One thing more remains to be said before leaving this part of the subject. The Matthæan Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen fills out the teaching of this Parable on the side of the citizens, as does the Parable of the Talents on the side of the servants. The citizens are condemned because they sent 'an ambassage.' But were they not entitled to do this? Did not the event justify the Jews in protesting against Archelaus? Their suit was rejected by the emperor, who made the claimant king on probation with the *interim* title of ethnarch. But he had soon to depose him. The Jews, who rejected Christ, were wrong in fact. Yet, if they were not intellectually convinced of His claim, if they were, as they still are, unable to accept the proposition that He is Messiah or Son of God, not to speak of the ecclesiastical dogma of God the Son, is it not the *odium theologicum*, the characteristic vice of churchmen, refusing to tolerate 'honest doubt' and exalting correct belief as the highest virtue, which assigns the Jew to perdition on the score of unbelief? If this impression should happen to be left by the Parable of the Pounds, it is at once dispelled by the Wicked Husbandmen. The sin that crucified Christ was not a mistaken view of His Person, but a moral antagonism to His Spirit. The same evil spirit that persecuted the prophets, beating one and killing another and stoning another, refused to reverence the Son, casting Him out and killing Him. Only in proportion as the nation identified itself with this sin did judgment fall upon it. The only sin that is eternal is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

Turning now to the other and more familiar side of the parable, the first and, in view of the general purpose of the whole, the most important thing to observe is that our Lord does not conceive of His Death and Resurrection as an interruption of human affairs and an arrest of the current of history. From the point of view of the visible world, they are the first stages in His absence. 'He called ten servants (slaves), and gave them ten pounds, and said unto them, Trade ye *herewith* till I come.'

The Parousia is, of course, essential to the scheme, but it is indefinite and must not preoccupy the mind to the detriment of 'the daily round, the common task.' The servants are to make five, ten, or, if it may be, twenty pounds by the diligent employment of one; and this would demand concentration upon the matter in hand. The tendency of the apocalyptic expectation was precisely the reverse. People anticipated a gala. The disciples were distributing places in the coming kingdom. The primitive Christian community 'had all things common,' not because they sought to establish a new social order, but because possessions had for them no long distance values. Even Paul thought it was not good to marry because the time was short, and at Thessalonica some of his converts became busybodies, working not at all. We may not assume that Jesus consciously anticipated the generations that have elapsed, and may yet elapse, before His Coming. But to represent Him as encouraging a habit of mind which sits loosely to mundane affairs either in anticipation of the Parousia or because the things of Time are evanescent in view of the things that are eternal, is to neglect or misinterpret the impressive teaching of this parable.

It is instructive to compare the Parable of the Pounds with that of the Talents, in respect of the trust committed to the servants and the issues resulting from it. In the former there are ten servants, of whom only three, taken as typical, ultimately function in the story. The latter acquires greater symmetry, as would be natural in the retelling of a tale, by dismissing the superfluous seven. Both exhibit the man, who declines the venture, as the only failure. But we reach a more important distinction when we come to consider what in each case is the nature and amount of the trust. Each of the ten receives a *mina* (tr. 'pound'), equivalent to some £4 sterling. The sum is first of all small. It is actually described in the story as 'a very little thing,' as though the Lord were content to assume the trivial character of all earthly things. And secondly, the sum is equal in every case, and therefore arbitrary. In reality we are not equal either in opportunity or capacity. These two facts taken together, the triviality and the arbitrary character of the amount involved, place all the emphasis upon the issue, the proportion between the result achieved here, and, not so much the reward, as the responsibility

to be conferred hereafter. Life is thus presented as a test of character, as what Butler calls a state of probation. If this does not by any means exhaust its values, to produce men and women 'who make some conscience of what they do' is incomparably its most important aspect. Work as in the great Taskmaster's eye.

If, however, this teaching stood alone, it is obvious that by the undiscerning it might be developed in the direction, not of gospel freedom, but of Pharisaic legalism. The balance is restored by the Parable of the Talents. Here the man, 'going into another country,' calls his servants and delivers to them, not mere test money, but 'his goods.' He turns over his affairs to their management. This brings us back to reality at once. We are not merely submitting to a trial of character, but are carrying on for God. Present opportunities may be contrasted with larger ones yet to come, as 'few things' with 'many things,' but they cannot be described as the infinitely small, because they all belong to the 'one increasing purpose.' In the distribution of these responsibilities we are dealing with talents, with what in terms of English money are hundreds and thousands as compared with three or four treasury notes.

The problems of life have an intrinsic worth apart altogether from their reflex action upon individual character. The zest with which we encounter them depends upon the contribution we are permitted to make to the development of the kingdom, which does not cease while the Master is in 'another country.' Once again, the parable sets us in the real world. Endowment is not equal. 'Each according to his several ability.' And just as the truth here brought out is complementary to what is expressed in the Parable of the Pounds, so is it with the outcome of what in one case is a test, in the other a trust. The fate of the defaulter is represented in a manner which is almost contradictory. In the Pounds he suffers loss, but is himself saved. In the Talents, he is cast into the outer darkness, the faithless and unbelieving sharing the doom of the abominable, of the king's enemies in the other parable. There is a corresponding change in the lot assigned to the successful traders. They who before were admitted to varying degrees of higher service, now enter without difference or inequality into the joy of their common Lord. Fidelity, which is Faith in action, neither asks nor receives any higher reward than a fellowship which itself is the fullness of felicity.

Literature.

THE DATE OF THE EXODUS.

BROADLY speaking, there are three possible dates for the Exodus—about 1445 B.C., or a century later, or rather more than a century later still. Much can be said, or at least has been said, for each of these dates, and the third in particular, about 1225, has enjoyed a large measure of popularity. Mr. J. W. Jack, M.A., in *The Date of the Exodus* (T. & T. Clark; 10s. net), has put in a well-informed and skilfully reasoned plea for the earliest of these dates, and in the course of his argument, which is conducted along many separate lines, critical, historical, archæological, and philological, he traverses with much detail the history of the second millennium B.C. where it impinges upon the story of the Hebrews or their ancestors, and incidentally gives us a living picture of the

complex world of the ancient East, in which Hittites, Amorites, Habiru, Egyptians, and others jostled each other. A vast amount of valuable information is here brought together which could not be so conveniently found elsewhere.

But it is all made contributory to the defence of a date for the Exodus in the fifteenth century B.C. The Pharaoh of the Oppression is not Rameses II. but Thutmose III., and the Pharaoh of the Exodus is Amenhotep II., in whose reign Israelites left Egypt about 1445, effecting their entry into Canaan about or shortly after 1400. The period reflected in the Tell el-Amarna letters (1400-1366) saw the slackening hold of Egypt upon Syria and Palestine, especially during the reign of the reforming king Akhen-aten, and Egypt's inability to stem the invasion of the Habiru who were attacking Palestine from the south, as their kinsmen the SA-GAZ had