

triumphant victory over their oppressors, who outnumbered them by many thousands. That is the kind of performance we call a golden deed, and so here we have another part of the message of November. Endure hardness and you will become able to do a golden deed.

But history tells us that when the men and women of a nation show themselves of this spirit, they arrive at what is known as *The Golden Age*. When Peter the Great was Czar of Russia, he worked so hard and learned so much for the benefit of his people that the country made greater advances than it had ever done before. They call it the Golden Age in Russia.

The great time which put the British Navy in command of the seas was the time of Queen Elizabeth. Sailors like Raleigh and Drake endured every kind of hardship in order to bring glory to their native land. For that, among other reasons, Elizabeth's reign is known as England's Golden Age.

There is a favourite book of mine which is called

by this name, 'The Golden Age.' It tells of the happy days of childhood and youth with all their fun and laughter and brightness.

But, you may ask, what can there be for us in this message of November? Well, think of it this way. I have known of boys and girls being tempted in various ways, sometimes by others like themselves, sometimes by a voice inside. They were tempted to be disobedient or unkind or selfish—or in some way to do what they knew to be wrong. Now it is easy to do wrong, and hard to do right. You have to be brave and bold to refuse to yield to the tempter. Sin is often made to look so pleasant and enticing that it is difficult to say 'No.' But November comes round and it whispers, 'endure hardness.' Look at the golden flower; that is *its* motto. Make it *yours*, and you will be led on to do golden deeds,—and if you are always brave and truthful and obedient, your heart will be kept innocent and clean like that of Jesus, and so the days of youth will be for you The Golden Age.

## The Importunate Widow and the Alleged Failure of Faith.

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It is quite usual to treat Lk 17<sup>20</sup>–18<sup>8</sup> as practically a connected discourse, divided into its parts, no doubt, but dealing with a single subject. There seems to be no sufficient ground for this. The whole material from 17<sup>12</sup>–18<sup>30</sup>, it is true, belongs together as recounting incidents of the journey 'through the midst of Samaria and Galilee' on the way up to Jerusalem (17<sup>12</sup>). Some of the incidents recounted occurred also, as we know from Matthew and Mark,<sup>1</sup> in immediate sequence, though this is not notified in any case by Luke. Some of the paragraphs in this section, moreover, are internally connected by the common lesson which they inculcate;<sup>2</sup> and there is no intrinsic reason why

the three paragraphs which make up the section 17<sup>20</sup>–18<sup>8</sup> might not be similarly bound together. In point of fact it seems possible to trace in them a certain, if not exactly sameness, yet community of teaching; and this perhaps accounts for their preservation by Luke together. But on the face of them they give us three distinct utterances of our Lord, different alike in subject and in reference. The first of them, drawn out perhaps by a testing inquiry of the Pharisees, has to do with the Kingdom of God, and declares it either spiritual in its nature or a present fact in the world, according as we interpret its key-phrase, 'The kingdom of God is within—or among—you' (17<sup>20, 21</sup>). The second treats of the 'days of the Son of man,' and declares them definitely in the future and not a thing the signs of the coming of which are anxiously to be watched for (17<sup>22-37</sup>). The theme of the third, as Luke expressly tells us in its

<sup>1</sup> Those recounted in 18<sup>15-17</sup> and 18<sup>18-30</sup>; cf. Mk 10<sup>17</sup>, Mt 19<sup>15-18</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> The teaching of the last three paragraphs, 18<sup>9-14</sup>, 16-17, 18-30, is alike to the effect that the Kingdom of God is a gift, not an achievement.

preface, is the necessity of persistent prayer (18<sup>1-8</sup>). The Kingdom of God now present in men's hearts; the Second Advent to come unexpectedly in the undefined future; the necessity of perseverance in prayer: we could scarcely find three subjects of discussion which would seem more distinct. They appear to have in common only a tendency to withdraw the mind from engagement with the future and to focus it upon the duties of the present life.

Luke introduces the Parable of the Importunate Widow and the Unjust Judge without any intimation of close connexion with the preceding paragraph. He presents it only as a further item of Jesus' teaching at this general time. He says simply, 'And He spoke a parable to them. . . .' Even were the 'also' genuine, on which stress is sometimes laid as a proof of a close connexion here,<sup>1</sup>—'And He spoke *also* a parable to them,'—that conclusion would not follow. The meaning would be only that Luke was adjoining this parable to what he had already recorded, as an additional item of Jesus' teaching.<sup>2</sup> Much less is a close connexion implied in the mere 'to them'—'And He spoke a parable *to them*'—as is also sometimes pleaded.<sup>3</sup> This 'to them'—which no doubt could have been omitted (as at 13<sup>6</sup>)—merely intimates that the parable was spoken, like the item of teaching immediately preceding it, to the disciples rather than to the Pharisees, say (17<sup>20</sup>), or any other special circle (18<sup>9</sup>). Nor is there anything in the contents of this paragraph to suggest a close connexion with that which precedes it. It has been argued, indeed,<sup>4</sup> that it presents itself as the conclusion of the preceding discussion by showing that despite the delay in the coming of the Son of Man, intimated in 17<sup>22</sup>, the longing of those who are looking forward to it for the vindication of God's elect shall ultimately be gratified. But this rests on an interpretation of the application which Jesus gives the parable (vv. 6-8), which brings it into apparent conflict with its preface,<sup>5</sup> which finds no point of departure for itself in the parable itself, and which does not seem in itself necessary or even indeed possible.

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* by Godet and Göbel.

<sup>2</sup> On the frequency of *δὲ καὶ* in Luke, see Plummer on 3<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.* by Plummer.

<sup>4</sup> So, *e.g.*, B. Weiss; cf. Holtzmann.

<sup>5</sup> Accordingly B. Weiss remarks: 'On this very account the reference which Luke gives it in v. 1 is much too general (against Meyer, Godet).' Cf. Holtzmann.

In introducing the parable Luke gives it a quite general reference. 'And he spake a parable unto them,' he says, 'to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint.' There is no intimation that this inculcation of perseverance in prayer has special reference to prayer for the Second Advent. It has the appearance, on the contrary, of being entirely generally meant. And with this general reference the parable itself perfectly accords. It presents simply a vividly drawn picture of persistency in petition, with the ultimate issue of its granting. If, then, the Lord in His application of the parable gives it a narrower reference, there is an appearance at least of conflict between His application of it and the announced reference of the parable, with which its substance accords. It is, of course, open to us still to say that in His concluding remarks our Lord does not intend to develop the whole teaching of the parable, but only wishes to apply its general lesson of importunity in prayer to the special case of the Second Advent. The language of these remarks, which is at their hinge-point derived directly from that of the parable, does not, however, encourage this interpretation of them. The fundamental question, in any case, remains whether these remarks are rightly read as applying the parable specifically to prayer for the Second Advent. They run, as they are given in our Revised Version, as follows: 'And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge saith. And shall not God avenge his elect, which cry to him day and night, and he is long-suffering over them? I say unto you, that he will avenge them speedily. Howbeit when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?' The passage bristles with difficulties. But there are some things about it which seem tolerably clear.

The phrase which is translated 'avenge,' is derived from the parable and must obtain its interpretation from it. There we read in our Revised Version that the widow's importunate demand took the form of 'Avenge me of mine adversary!' while the judge's meditation ran in the words: 'Because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her.' 'Avenge' is, however, an unfortunate rendering of the Greek phrase here, and pre-occupies the mind with wrong suggestions. What the widow was seeking was not fundamentally vengeance on her adversary, but rather relief from his oppressions. No doubt there was punishment

sought for the evil-doer, and no doubt punishment was inflicted upon him.<sup>1</sup> But punishment was not the main end aimed at or obtained; it was only the means by which the real end of relief and protection was secured. 'Ἐκδικεῖν,' comments Godet; 'to deliver (ἐκ) by a judicial sentence (δική). This term does not therefore include the notion of vengeance, but that of justice to be rendered to the oppressed.' More exactly still, Plummer paraphrases: 'Give me a sentence of protection from; vindicate my right (and so protect me) from.' He proceeds to quote in support Schleusner's 'Assere me jure dicundo ab injuriâ adversarii mei,' and comments thus: The ἀπό 'does not express the *penalty exacted from* the adversary, but the *protection afforded from* him, as in ῥῶσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ ποναροῦ. The meaning is "preserve me against his attacks," rather than "deliver me out of his power," which would require ἐκ.<sup>2</sup> Precisely the thing the widow demanded, and precisely the thing the judge tardily granted her, was accordingly protection.<sup>3</sup> When then our Lord, taking up this phrase in a somewhat more emphatic form of expression,<sup>4</sup> declares, in His application of the parable, that God will 'avenge his elect,' He must be understood not so much as proclaiming the certainty with which the divine vengeance will be visited at the last day upon the oppressors of His people, as giving a gracious assurance to them of the unailing protection of God amid the evils which assault them in this life.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This should satisfy Jülicher's remark (ii. p. 279), that 'the afflicted widow does not merely wish to be quit of her adversary, like the man in 12<sup>88</sup>; she demands ἐκδίκησις, that vengeance should be wreaked on him, he should be punished. . . .'

<sup>2</sup> Similarly Göbel, and Weizsäcker; cf. J. Weiss. Plummer's comment rests partly on Trench's, whose paraphrase is: 'Or, since men go not to a judge for vengeance, but for justice—Do me right on, deliver me from the oppression of, mine adversary.'

<sup>3</sup> Hence James Moffatt, *The Historical New Testament*, 1901, translates: 'And she used to come to him, saying, "Grant me protection from my opponent"; 'Yet, since this widow disturbs me, I will give her protection.'

<sup>4</sup> Jülicher says, 'more solemn.' Cf. Göbel's comment: 'It is self-evident that the fuller periphrastic form ἐκδικησὶν τινος ποιεῖν must have just the same meaning as ἐκδικεῖν previously, vv.<sup>3-5</sup>, therefore="to effect the deliverance of one suffering injustice."

<sup>5</sup> Alfred Loisy's rendering of the several phrases is notably close: 'Do me justice against my opponent'; 'I will do her justice'; 'Shall not God do justice to His elect?' Yet

There are not wanting indications in our Lord's further words which bring support to this conclusion. One of them is found in the clause rendered in our Revised Version, 'And he is long-suffering over them.' It is not easy to be perfectly sure of either the construction or the exact sense of this clause. Its office is in any case, however, to deny that God is indifferent to the sufferings of His people; and in its most natural interpretation it declares that as His ears are always filled with their cries He will not be slow to act in their defence.<sup>6</sup> This declaration is immediately reinforced by the strong asseveration which follows upon the question, returning, with great energy of assertion, a decisive answer to both its inquiries: 'I say unto you, that he will avenge them'—that is, 'do them justice'—'quickly.' A great strength of emphasis falls here on the word 'quickly.'<sup>7</sup> The outcome of the whole question and answer is thus the assurance that God will not—not merely leave His elect unavenged, but—be slow to rescue them from their distresses. He keeps an open ear to their cries and gives them quick deliverance.

It would certainly be difficult to refer so strongly stressed an assertion of the speediness of the even here there is lacking the implication that is strong in the Greek text that this doing of justice issues in relief and protection. Loisy's rendering is closely followed in the paraphrase of *The Twentieth Century New Testament*: 'Asking for justice against some one who had wronged her'; 'I will grant her justice'; 'Will not God see that His own chosen people who cry to Him night and day have justice done them?' Cf. Weymouth's *The New Testament in Modern Speech*: 'Give me justice, and stop my oppressor'; 'I will give her justice'; but in vv.<sup>7-8</sup> 'avenge.'

<sup>6</sup> The right reading is certainly μακροθυμεῖ, and Godet gives in general the right meaning of that reading. Translate: 'And does He delay with respect to them?'—that is, in effect (Plummer remarks of μακροθυμῶ: 'It is almost synonymous with βραδύνω'): 'Is He slack concerning them?' Van Oosterzee comments admirably: 'With μακροθυμεῖ it is not the idea of *forbearance* in general, but *delaying* of help that is to be adhered to, and the second half of the question, v.<sup>7</sup>, is, with Meyer, therefore, to be paraphrased: "And is it His way in reference to them to delay His help?" It appears from this that the first member of the question requires an affirmative, the second, on the other hand, a negative answer; and that the here designated μακροθυμία stands directly in contrast with the ἐκδικ. ποιεῖν ἐν τάχει which (v.<sup>8</sup>) is promised in the most certain manner.' Jülicher (p. 287) agrees in general with this interpretation, and cites for it already Clement of Alexandria, and among the moderns B. Weiss, Steinmeyer, Stockmayer, Weizsäcker, Holtzmann, Nösgen, and, for the main matter, Göbel.

<sup>7</sup> Plummer: 'In any case the ἐν τάχει is placed last with emphasis.'

succour which God will give to His distressed children to the ultimate vindication which shall come to them at the Second Advent, along with the final confusion of all their foes. This would be a strong assertion of the immediate imminence of the Second Advent, and an equally decisive reference of all the hopes of God's people in the mercy of God to that event. And that, to go no further, would read very oddly in immediate sequence to the paragraph 17<sup>22-37</sup>, the whole office of which is to teach that the days of the Son of Man are not immediately imminent, and to withdraw the minds of Christ's followers from too great engrossment with their coming. It may not be quite impossible to explain 'speedily' as meaning really 'suddenly'; and the resulting declaration may not be altogether inappropriate to the matter in hand: to promise the elect that the destruction which shall fall upon their oppressors at last shall fall upon them unexpectedly, may have some imaginative value in the way of comfort to them in their meanwhile unalleviated griefs. But all this is manifestly difficult. The term translated 'speedily' does not naturally mean 'suddenly.'<sup>1</sup> Knowledge of the unexpected suddenness with

<sup>1</sup> Jülicher (p. 286): 'The sense of "unexpected," "suddenly," is not established.' Göbel: 'The words can on no account mean the sudden occurrence of an event in opposition to one expected and prepared for.'

which destruction shall fall upon one's tormentors, when they are at length destroyed, goes but a little way towards removing the sufferings which must be meanwhile endured. And, then, we shall still have to reckon with the clause in the question which demands whether God is slow to act in the defence of His elect, to which this strong declaration, 'No, He shall act speedily,' is a response. No doubt a meaning may be found for this clause also, which would bring it into line with the reference of God's promised succour to the Second Advent. But even when that is done, there still remains the conflict of this whole interpretation with the expressed purport of the parable given in the preface, to say nothing of the general difficulty under which it labours of leaving God's people without promise of help in their sufferings here and now—and that, for any generation except that which shall itself witness the coming of the Lord, means nothing less than hopeless suffering to the end of their days. What requires consideration is the multitude of adjustments which need to be made in order to carry this interpretation through. An unlikely explanation of a single element in a statement might be endured. Each unlikely explanation added to this multiplies the difficulty of accepting the proposed interpretation. Can any interpretation survive so many unlikelinesses as are here accumulated?

(To be concluded.)

## Recent Foreign Theology.

### The Old and New Testament.

It is still possible for a man and a German to make a name for himself in the criticism of the Pentateuch. Pfarrer Johannes Dahse has done so. He rejects J, E, and P, those nameless and unknown individuals, and works upon the texts as they stand, beginning with the most recent editors and adapters and working back till he finds what he thinks is the Ur-Moses (if the expression may be permitted). His book, under the title of *Wie erklärt sich die gegenwärtige Zustand der Genesis*, is published in Giessen by Alfred Töpelmann (Pf.40).

Some things about the Synoptic Gospels are settled—their order, for example. But not their

sources. Dr. Walter Haupt has investigated the whole subject anew and has published his investigation under the title of *Worte Jesu und Gemeindeüberlieferung* (Hinrichs; M.7.50). He discovers three distinct sources of a primary nature which he calls Q<sup>1</sup>, Q<sup>2</sup>, Q<sup>3</sup>; and he describes the contents of each source. That, however, occupies only the first half of the volume. In the second half he shows how the Synoptic literature was built up gradually.

For the doctorate of theology in Marburg, Mr. C. H. Watkins wrote a thesis on St. Paul's conflict in regard to the Galatian Christians, and has now published it under the title of *Der Kampf des Paulus um Galatien* (Mohr). It is a work of unmistak-