

MISCELLANEA EVANGELICA : A REPLY.

WHEN my friend, Dr. J. B. Mayor, while acknowledging a copy of my *Miscellanea Evangelica*, communicated to me his proposal to send to the EXPOSITOR a criticism of the chapter entitled "The Disciple that was known unto the High Priest," I replied, expressing my gratification, and adding that if he would explain in it why the Synoptists omitted all mention of any one else, besides Peter, as following Jesus from Gethsemane to the High Priest's palace—whereas the Fourth Gospel mentioned also "another disciple"—I should hail him as a benefactor.

I could not therefore but feel some disappointment on finding in it no attempt at any such explanation. It contains—besides a statement of objections to my view—an attractive exposition of the popular view, namely that the unnamed disciple is the son of Zebedee; and it is illustrated by extracts from various sources bearing on Peter's denial and Judas' remorse. But, while reading through it, I have been unable to keep myself from constantly repeating: "Mark, traditionally recognised as the Petrine Gospel, says '*And Peter [had] followed Him afar off.*' The parallel Matthew and Luke say the same thing in nearly the same words. Why do they not add, '*And John followed too?*'—if John really followed?" To this question Dr. Mayor, as far as I can see, neither supplies, nor attempts, an answer. Yet it is a question that bears on the name of the unnamed disciple, besides being of great importance for its own sake.

It is a matter of minor importance that my view has not always been correctly represented. For example, Dr. Mayor says, "I see no possible reason why he, who is in every Gospel described, over and over again, as the be-

trayer of Jesus into the hands of sinners, should here be represented as one who had done nothing to forfeit the friendship of the other disciples, though he had come straight from the garden of Gethsemane, bringing Jesus bound with him." I certainly did not regard Jesus as "here represented" in this light, and I am at a loss to find what I have written that gave that impression.

Dr. Mayor adds, "Imagine Peter . . . selecting Judas as his companion to the Court where Jesus was to be tried, and accepting his help for admission into that court!" I had never "imagined" Peter as "selecting." The imagination appears to me as absurd as to Dr. Mayor. And the expression "accept his help" seems to me to make insufficient allowance for Peter's probable state of mind, and for that of Judas also. I endeavoured to show that Judas, in a passion of suspense and remorse, might have almost drawn Peter into the court, "taking him by the hand"—as Nonnus says—and that Peter, through mingled motives, allowed himself to be thus drawn.

Then Dr. Mayor asks, "Is it true that Judas was the familiar friend of Caiaphas and the intimate partaker of his counsels, as Dr. Abbott maintains on p. 30?" Here I may have failed to make my meaning clear, taking it for granted that my readers would perceive that there was in this passage an instance of that Johannine irony to which attention has been called so often in previous parts of *Diatessarica*. I did not for a moment intend to maintain that Judas *was, truly and literally*, the "familiar friend" of Caiaphas. The notion seems to me, as to Dr. Mayor, ridiculous. I maintained only that Christians, applying the poetry of the Psalms about the treachery of David's "familiar friend" to the treachery of Judas, the Lord's "familiar friend," would describe the latter, in allusive language, as becoming the "familiar friend," not of Jesus

but of Caiaphas.¹ Perhaps I ought to have added, what Dr. Mayor adds, that “ The Gospels tell us plainly that he was merely the instrument employed by Caiaphas to carry out the design of the latter for the murder of Jesus.” That is the fact. And they tell it so plainly that I thought (perhaps wrongly) that it did not need to be told over again.

Returning to Dr. Mayor’s picture of the arrest and its immediate sequel, I cannot help thinking that he deals in assumptions when he says, “ We read in Matthew xxvi. 37 f. that those who had taken Jesus (*viz. Judas with his armed band*) led Him away to the house of Caiaphas, but Peter followed Him afar off. Judas and Peter therefore were separated from each other by a wide interval.” Not one of the four evangelists supports the assertion that I have italicised. They all distinguish—and perhaps deliberately distinguish—the soldiers, who laid hands on Jesus, and arrested Him, and led Him away, from Judas, who is not recorded as doing any of these things.²

The truth seems to be that Judas, at the moment of the arrest, might be regarded in two aspects, either (1) as *coming up* (*προσερχόμενος*) to Jesus along with the soldiers, an avowed traitor, or (2) as *coming before* (*προερχόμενος*) the soldiers, at such a distance in front of them as to give colour to the view that he was a fugitive, running before

¹ *Miscell.* p. 30 : “ His [Judas] comings and goings during these negotiations might naturally give him an entry to the High Priest’s palace, and lay him open to the Christian reproach that he, who should have been the ‘ familiar friend ’ of Jesus, had made himself the ‘ familiar friend ’ of Caiaphas. That was the way in which Christians might apply the words in the Psalm, ‘ It was thou . . . my familiar friend.’ Concerning this utterance Jerome says, ‘ It was the saying of Christ about Judas ’ ; and Origen assumes it.”

The same explanation applies to the words (*ib.* p. 23) “ another disciple who was the bosom friend of Caiaphas.”

² See Mark xiv. 45 *καὶ ἐλθὼν εὐθὺς προσελθὼν . . . κατεφίλησεν αὐτὸν ὁ δὲ ἐπέβαλαν . . .*, and Mark xiv. 53, and the parallels to both passages.

them to warn his Master of their approach.¹ If Judas was playing the latter part, he would probably not accompany the column (as a member of it) to the house of Caiaphas, but might follow in the rear of it, a little before Peter who "followed afar off." Then Judas might go into the palace, while Peter, coming up afterwards, remained outside. There is nothing to necessitate the conclusion that Peter and the unnamed disciple arrived together.²

Dr. Mayor, assuming that Peter and John arrived together, says, "It seems probable that the two leaders, Peter and John, would quickly meet and arrange to follow cautiously after Jesus." But what ground is there for assuming that Peter and John were "the two leaders" ? And does any one of the four narratives—which all place the "following" immediately after the "leading away" —favour the view that there was time for such "meeting" and "arranging" ? And is it "probable" that, if this meeting happened, all the Synoptists would omit not only the meeting and arranging, but even the very name of "John" as "following cautiously after Jesus" with Peter as his companion ?

I quote such expressions as "arranging," and "following cautiously," because they seem to impute to Peter a deliberation that could not possibly have existed, the supposition of which makes it difficult to understand his conduct. We must also carefully distinguish what Peter knew about Judas, when he thought over matters on the morrow,

¹ Προέρχομαι occurs about twelve times in LXX and about ten in N.T. In LXX there are four instances, and in N.T. six, of a variant προσέρχομαι. Mark xiv. 45 and Matt. xxvi. 49 have προσέρχομαι, Luke xxii. 47 has προέρχομαι.

² John xviii. 15, ἠκολούθει δὲ τῷ Ἰησοῦ Σίμων Πέτρος καὶ ἄλλος μαθητῆς might give the impression that Peter arrived first. But it appears to me that Peter is placed first as being first in the writer's thought—the following of the unnamed disciple being added secondarily to explain how Peter obtained admission.

from what he knew about Judas as he followed Jesus to the High Priest's palace. To say that Judas "is in every Gospel described, over and over again, as the betrayer of Jesus into the hands of sinners," is surely not to the point for us, placing ourselves along with Peter at the High Priest's gate. Peter had not then read the Gospels. In theory, no doubt, Peter had been prepared for the treachery of Judas by the "dipping" of the "sop" given to the traitor by Jesus. But that act is described in the Fourth Gospel alone. And that Gospel implies a mystery about it. Jesus did not reveal the secret to Peter, but only to the beloved disciple—who may be presumed, but is not declared, to have passed on the secret to Peter. Even then, says the Fourth Gospel, "no man at the table" knew what Jesus meant when He said to Judas, "What thou doest, do quickly." In the excitement of the arrest and its sequel, when Peter, after striking one blow, was forbidden to strike a second, and saw his Master led away by the soldiers, himself following afar off, divided between bewilderment and despair, is it not readily conceivable that he forgot for the moment that mysterious "giving of the sop" a few hours before? ¹ And then, in that dazed condition, while he was standing at the door of the High Priest's court, if Judas suddenly came out and drew him in, to describe Peter as "accepting his help for admission" appears to me an expression too coldly logical. Peter may have been in no mood for balancing "accepting" against "rejecting." He would naturally be thinking, not of Judas, but of Jesus; and, for the moment, the thought of his Master's fate might well banish or subordinate every other thought.

¹ No doubt, if Peter had heard the words in Luke xxii. 48, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" his recollection of the giving of the sop to Judas would have been quickened. But must he be supposed to have heard them? The parallel passages in the other three Gospels contain nothing like this. Matthew contains something entirely different.

No doubt, if Judas "had come straight from the garden of Gethsemane, bringing Jesus bound with him," Peter would have shrunk from him. But the attribution to Judas of the act of "bringing Jesus bound with him" has no more basis in the Fourth Gospel than in the Three. That Gospel mentions in detail "the band" and "the chief captain" and "the officers of the Jews" as "seizing" and "binding" Jesus and as "leading" Him to Annas. The writer might have added, as he did earlier, "And Judas was standing with them." But he has not done so. He has left us free to suppose that Judas, after the arrest, passed into the background, and merely "followed" in the rear of the column that led Jesus to Annas.

And now to pass to the positive and constructive part of Dr. Mayor's comment. It seems to me to be based largely on an explanation of γνωστός, "known," as implying "known" *in consequence of a customary commercial connexion*. We may almost say that the High Priest is regarded as one of John's commercial patrons, and John as one of his "customary" tradesmen. At all events, Dr. Mayor renders what Nonnus says about the unnamed disciple thus: "a well-known acquaintance of his customer, the high priest (literally 'the customary high priest') (ἐθήμωνος ἀρχιερέως)."

Now in the first place, as to the meaning of Nonnus' word ἐθήμων, is there any instance of its meaning "customer," or of its being applied to commercial connexion? I can find none, either in Nonnus or in the Greek *Thesaurus*. Hesychius, among other synonyms of ἐθήμων implying similarity of habits, gives the word συνήθης. This is a word used by Symmachus to mean "companion" in the passage where the Psalmist speaks of his "*companion and familiar friend*." ¹ It means something very different

¹ Ps. lv. 13 LXX, ἡγεμών μου καὶ γνωστὸς μου, Symm. συνήθης καὶ γνώριμος μοι.

indeed from "customer." For the most part it implies a similarity of habits and tastes together with habitual and familiar intercourse.

In the next place, as to the fact, Dr. Mayor says, "I see no difficulty in supposing that John, at any rate before he was called to be an apostle, might have carried about for sale fish caught in the sea of Tiberias." But "before he was called to be an apostle" implies (in the Fourth Gospel) some three years ago. At that time, John, if he lived (as Irenaeus says) into the reign of Trajan, would be (as he is traditionally represented) little more than a youth. Are we to suppose that, by means of this piscatorial connexion, discontinued three years before, this youthful and not very wealthy fishmonger—the younger son of a father owning (as far as we know) but one out of some three hundred and thirty¹ fishing-boats on the Sea of Tiberias—had become "a well-known acquaintance of his customer, the high priest," with such permanent results that the portress of the High Priest's palace, presumably the same portress as in old days, still recognised his right of entry?

This and other difficulties attending the popular view—but most of all, the silence of the Synoptists about John's accompanying Peter into the High Priest's court—appear to me greater than the difficulties (though they, too, are great) attending the hypothesis that the unnamed disciple was Judas, or at all events was regarded by the Fourth Evangelist as Judas. For these reasons I still adhere to the belief that the clue to the Johannine narrative—so far as concerns the expression under consideration—is to be found in the above quoted words of the Psalmist, mourning over the treachery of one whom he calls his "*familiar friend* (*γνωστός*)." We have seen that Origen and Jerome applied the passage to Judas. Now Jesus would be re-

¹ "Three hundred and thirty" See Josephus, *Wars*, ii. 21, 8.

garded by all Christians as their High Priest. The Epistle to the Hebrews repeatedly applies that title to Him, and also calls Him "the High Priest of our Confession." Judas, who might have been, and had been chosen to be, "a familiar friend," in the true sense, of Jesus the true High Priest, chose for himself to be "a familiar friend," in the false sense, of Caiaphas the false High Priest, by whom the true one was condemned to death. This tragic contrast, imbued with Johannine irony, appears to me to underlie the Johannine tradition that we have been discussing.

There are difficulties in this view, great difficulties. To deal with them adequately would be impossible within the limits of this article. Here I will only say that they do not seem to me at present so great as those presented by the hypothesis that "the Disciple whom Jesus loved" was described by the author of the Fourth Gospel as the *γνωστός* of Caiaphas in either of the senses above mentioned—either as his "familiar friend," or as his customary supplier of fish.

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