

MATTHEW X 11-15.

THE literary questions raised by the Charge to the Twelve are many. But there is one which has hardly received due attention. The following suggestions are made, not confidently, but in order to invite criticism. It is well known that the Marcan account (vi 7-11) is closely followed by Lk. ix 1-5, but that the longer account in Lk. x 2-6, which is connected with the mission of the 'Seventy(-two)', is derived from a different source, while Matt. x 5-16 contains a combination of the two sources.

Matt. x 11-14 contains injunctions as to the behaviour of the Apostles during their missionary tour. In Mk. vi 10, 11 there are two explicit commands: (1) In any house that they enter they are to remain until they leave the place, (2) as they depart from any place that refuses to receive them they are to shake off the dust under their feet as a witness against it. But since they are to lodge in the same house all the time that they stay in a town, they must select it carefully. This selection is commanded in Matt. (v. 11^a) only: 'Into whatsoever city or village ye enter, investigate (*ἐξέτασατε*) who in it is worthy.' In order that nothing may be lost from his Marcan source, the compiler appends loosely, 'and there abide until ye go forth', *ἐκεῖ* referring to the house of the man who has been found 'worthy'.

The difficulty lies in the following injunction (vv. 12, 13): 'As ye enter the house, salute it,' &c., in which it is contemplated (v. 13^b) that the house *may not be worthy* (*ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ᾖ ἀξία*), although by their *ἐξέτασις* they have previously discovered that it is.

The usual explanation is that the investigation as to who in the city was worthy was to be made by enquiries among the inhabitants of the place; 'hospes fama eligendus est populi et indicio vicinorum' (Jerome). Having been received into the best-recommended house, 'the guest may at first be unknown, but he then reveals himself as a missionary, and thereupon experiences varying treatment' (Wellhausen).

But what, then, is the meaning of *ἀξιος*? The inhabitants could say whether a man was respectable and likely to take in visitors; and if pressed they might say further whether he was considered religious from a Jewish point of view. But the adjective clearly means more than that, 'because, according to the above explanation, it is not till *after* the householder has taken them in, that the Apostles find that he is not *ἀξιος*, and his house not *ἀξία*. The meaning of 'not *ἀξιος*' is surely defined in v. 14: 'and whosoever (*ὃς ἄν*, contrast Mk. *ὃς ἄν τόπος*) will not receive you, nor hear your words.' The account in the first Gospel may therefore be explained thus: v. 11 is the general injunction—'Find out who

is worthy, and stay with him during your whole visit.' *Vv.* 12-14 describe the procedure to be followed during the ἐξέτασις (which must mean the enquiry from one householder after another whether he would 'receive them and hear their words')—'As you enter the house (τὴν οἰκίαν) where you propose to make enquiries, before making them, give the house a salutation (*v.* 12). If the enquiries prove satisfactory, i. e. if the householder will receive and listen to you, the greeting will have its effects; if not, it will return to you (*v.* 13). In the latter case, as you emerge from the house, shake off the dust of your feet (*v.* 14).' It is in keeping with this explanation that in Lk. x the command ἐν αὐτῇ δὲ τῇ οἰκίᾳ μένετε κτλ. (*v.* 7) follows, instead of preceding, the injunctions as to the salutation (*vv.* 5, 6).

But at this point a disturbing element is introduced by the words ἡ τῆς πόλεως which occur after τῆς οἰκίας in Matt. (*v.* 14). In Lk. x, after the commands dealing with the missionaries' reception in a house (*vv.* 5-7), there follow others which bear upon their reception or rejection by a city as a whole (*vv.* 8-11). It is not to the present purpose to dwell upon the difficulties in this. But it seems probable that the intrusion of ἡ τῆς πόλεως in Matt. (*v.* 14) is due to harmonization with Lk.

The remaining difficulty offers itself in *v.* 15 ('Amen I say unto you, it will be more tolerable . . . than for that city'), which stands in the corresponding position in Lk. x 12. What is its relation to Matt. xi 20-24?—a passage which corresponds to the continuation of the Charge in Lk. x 12-15. In Matt. xi, (a) Chorazin is contrasted with Tyre and Sidon (*v.* 21), and (b) ἀνεκτότερον κτλ. follows (*v.* 22). Then (c) Capernaum is apostrophized and (d) contrasted with Sodom (*v.* 23), and (e) ἀνεκτότερον κτλ. follows (*v.* 24). In Lk. we have similarly (a), (b), and (c), but (d) is omitted because (e) is transposed to precede (a). That is to say, Lk. x 12 was placed where it is because it formed an impressive continuation to the saying about rejection by a city. When, therefore, we see this verse standing where it ought in Matt. xi, but where it ought not in Matt. x, we gather that in Matt. x it is an insertion later than Lk. Like ἡ τῆς πόλεως in the preceding verse it is a scribal attempt, and a peculiarly unfortunate one, to harmonize Matt. x and Lk. x—an attempt earlier than any known MS or version. If these references to a city can be eliminated, Matt. gives a perfectly consistent tradition as to the procedure that the Apostles were bidden to follow in discovering a householder who would shew himself 'worthy' by consenting to take them in and listen to their preaching.