Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:

https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology

https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb

PayPal https://paypal.me/robbradshaw

A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

is differently articulated. Here the disciples are represented as asking two questions, and, as I read them, the answers are as clearly marked off from each other as are the questions. The first question is as in the other two Gospels, 'When shall these things be?' and the answer (vv.[4-35]) corresponds with the clear answer noticed above as to the approach of the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. But St. Matthew puts a second question in the mouth of the disciples, 'What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?' and as I read it St. Matthew quite clearly gives as our Lord's reply to this the pronouncement that this is unknown to any one but the Father. This interpretation is based upon what I am convinced is the correct translation and interpretation of v.[36]. This should begin a new paragraph, and THAT DAY in it does not refer to the time of the fall of Jerusalem, but is, as often elsewhere, a phrase to describe the end of the world. If this view be accepted in regard to St. Matthew, it naturally carries with it an alteration in our understanding of St. Mark's words, so that with him, too, a new paragraph begins with the same words as in St. Matthew and deals with the end of the world, and St. Luke's warning,[1] that the Christian must watch, has reference likewise to the end of the world.

If this view be correct, we may notice that our Lord's human consciousness read the signs of the times (as indeed He told the Pharisees that they should be able to do), and He was convinced that Jerusalem must fall within a generation. On the other hand, His human consciousness could not judge when the end of the world should come: that was known to Deity alone, and in His time of self-humiliation was unknown to Him (as Man) no less than to all created men.

Lastly, it is to be noticed that on this interpretation St. Mark associates the Lord's coming with the fall of Jerusalem (v.[26]) as well as with the end of the world (v.[34])—the first coming giving premonitions of its approach, the second taking men by surprise. St. Matthew does the same, and it is to be observed that in his statement of the questions put by the disciples (v.[3]) he introduces the idea of the Lord's coming in an ambiguous position, so that it cannot be said whether it refers to one or the other of the two events. On the other hand, St. Luke appears to interpret the Lord's teaching on this occasion as identifying His coming with the end of the Jewish Church. Although in other passages (*e.g.* 12[35-40]) he gives teaching of our Lord which implies that His return will be unexpected, in this particular connexion he does not speak of our Lord's coming, but merely of THAT DAY coming as a snare, and of the need that men should watch so that they may be 'accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.'

T. NICKLIN.

Hulme Hall, Manchester.

[1] In Lk 21[34] I should translate '*but* take heed' (not *and*), just as in the other two Gospels the new topic (as I read it) is introduced with a '*but*.'

Entre Nous.

Temple Gairdner of Cairo.

'He was at Oxford with Sir John Simon, Lord Birkenhead, and Hilaire Belloc, and he was the greatest of them all, and the most richly endowed.' That is the considered opinion of a man who was up at Oxford with William Henry Temple Gairdner. His biographer says: 'His countrymen never at any moment in his career showed any inclination to "thrust greatness upon him," and the category which he determined upon for "achieving greatness" was not that of the publicist or politician. "Man," he once said, grasping a friend by the arm, and staring out to where a glint of moonlight lay on Morecambe Bay—"man, the only thing in the world worth living for is to find out the will of God and do it."'

Miss Constance E. Padwick, a colleague of Canon Gairdner at Cairo, has written a life of Gairdner, which we have no hesitation in saying is one of the outstanding biographies of the season, and one that should certainly be read. It has just been published by the S.P.C.K.—*Temple Gairdner of Cairo* (7s. 6d. net). It is not a biography which confines itself to external happenings. You get at the real man with all his gifts, his graces, and his humour. Temple Gairdner wrote once to his son, 'Whatever may be said for good or ill about my work in Egypt, it has not been the

sort that makes at all an effective biography, or one that is called for, or that the public would be interested in . . . very small beer.' It is true there is not much incident in the biography, no great happenings to record. But if there are no outstanding events there is a life which is in every way outstanding. 'And without his knowledge, "the house" of the Church in Egypt "was filled" with the fragrance of his life, which some called wasted, in such measure that wafts of its beauty were felt in many lands.'

Temple Gairdner was born in 1873 at Ardrossan, the son of Sir William Gairdner, professor of medicine at Glasgow University. He was the third of a family of nine. He was educated at a preparatory school at Moffat, and then at Rossall, and in October 1892 he went up to Trinity. 'Oxford made him her own; he wrote as one of her lovers, "Was oppressed to-day by the beauty of Oxford"; or the service at Magdalen was "*cruelly* beautiful." His first term was all delight and expansion. He put four Greek statues and a piano into his panelled room (on staircase 14 in the Garden Quadrangle at Trinity) and plunged into many welcoming joys.'

Those were the days when the Oxford Inter-Collegiate Christian Union—the O.I.C.C.U.—was full of burning zeal. '"We were prigs and smugs, we really were," says W. E. S. Holland, who was one of the tiny group, "but Archbishop Lang always said that we were much the *livest* group in Oxford when he was a don."' Gairdner at first stood outside the O.I.C.C.U., and we are told that it was one of its members who, when he came into his rooms for the first time, after staring fiercely at the four Greek statues, said, 'Smash 'em!—smash 'em!' No later than the end of his first term, however, we find that Gairdner, in spite of much natural shrinking from what was distasteful to him in the Movement, had become a member. Many years afterwards when a boy of his own was troubled by the more intrusive type of evangelism Gairdner wrote to him: 'Yes, truly, the language of that sort of layman is often crude and extreme and narrow to a degree. . . . They see a few things clearly, and other things not at all. . . . But, I say again, these people have to be reckoned with. Was I not in the midst of them, and one of them at Oxford? And as I look round the world I see everywhere that it is *these men* (perhaps mellowed and developed now) who are doing the big things in the world—the big things for mankind, and God, and the Kingdom of Christ: A. G. Fraser, J. H. Oldham, W. E. S. Holland, to take only those known to yourself.'

Gairdner had very considerable musical gifts. 'Your husband has a genius for music, and given training could have gone any length,' a Jewish musician once told Mrs. Gairdner. Music was the first thing that had to go at Oxford. The days were not long enough for the necessary reading and for all the activities connected with the O.I.C.C.U.—daily prayer meeting, 'Biblers,' and personal evangelism. And Miss Padwick is soon speaking of the O.I.C.C.U. as 'the movement to which he had given his Oxford career, for, contrary to all expectations, Temple Gairdner just missed getting his first in Greats.'

In 1897 Temple Gairdner was definitely accepted by the Church Missionary Society. 'You are appointed to join Mr. Douglas Thornton in Cairo with a special view to work, when your experience qualifies you for it, among students and others of the educated classes of Moslems.' About this time there is an entry in his diary with a delightful touch about it—'Let me love every man, woman and child I meet and be Jesus to them and see Jesus in them. Not I, but Christ loveth in me. Actually loved the waiter at the hotel.'

When it was known that Gairdner was going to Cairo there was general disappointment amongst his friends. If ever there was a man made for a full life that was Temple Gairdner, and he had chosen to be tucked away in a corner where the chances were that he would have no opportunity of making his mark. And the choice was not an easy one to make. 'I have found ambition dreadfully difficult to cope with,' he wrote to his sister.

And so Cairo became his city. 'He loved this city of international jostlings because he loved men; and, because he loved her, he hated part of her life. He hated the shoddiness of the invariable stucco buildings in the new town, and the imitation of Brussels in its architecture and gilt-legged furniture. He feared that to live in a world of stucco must bring contentment with insincere work, and the son of Glasgow and of Oxford longed for stone. He grew sick with Cairo's demimonde, its vice, and the jealousies and antipathies of national or religious groups. . . . "Cairo is a subtly deadening place," he said.' Under the guidance of Thornton and himself work developed in many directions—a literature depot was established; a magazine in Arabic, 'Occident and Orient,' begun, which ultimately reached a circulation of 3000; and, most exacting of all, educational work started among the young English-speaking effendis, and in Arabic among the Quran-educated sheiks. 'To conduct a difficult dispute [Gairdner said]

with masters in the art of disputing, in a difficult imperfectly-known language, and in circumstances highly trying to the temper, is perhaps the severest task to which any missionary can be called.'

If Douglas Thornton had lived—he died at the early age of thirty-four—it is probable that Gairdner's whole future would have been changed, as he was a man of considerable scholarship and with real creative genius, but again and again he had to set aside the work that would have been congenial. Dr. Lasbrey wrote of him: 'I don't know that I would have had him otherwise. His life was something like the life of Jesus. . . . He also spent a lot of time in settling the quarrels of catechists and other petty things, little things which He made glorious.'

Giving in this brief way the main facts of Canon Gairdner's life things are apt to get out of proportion. No mention has been made of his almost idyllically happy married life. Fatherhood meant more to him, too, than to most men. He wrote to a tiny nephew once: 'I am William's and Hugh's and Eleanor's and Douglas's and Patria's Daddy, that's who I mostly am.' And this isn't really far from what he thought about himself. His death came in May of last year. Wholesome and humorous to the last, Miss Padwick says, he fell asleep, and his son, as he looked on the sleeping face, could only say, 'Your joy no man taketh from you.'

Lovers' Meeting.

'"At the very end of the term, however," he told the sister who knew him best, "came the event that set me in a ferment. There was a Congress at Oxford of the Christian Unions of Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities. I went. I heard testimony after testimony of what was being done for Christ by others, and the overwhelming question came home to me, 'What have *you* done? What will *you* do?' And I saw that for me there was no half-way." Years later he told his son of the same event:

'I attended the conference—a *perfectly* new experience for me at that time. I remember that the result of the meetings on me was to focus all the desires and emotions of months into a passionate desire for *service.* Then came the Sunday . . . the last of the speakers, the President of the O.I.C.C.U., a man named Alvarez, now a missionary in West Africa, rose and spoke. What he *said* wasn't much (he told me afterwards he thought he had made an absolute mess of it), but a *spirit* was in him and in his face, tone and words, which was prepared for me, and I for it. A living Spirit—Christ. I was deeply moved but not "emoted"—rather taken-possession-of.

'When I got to Trinity I seemed unrecognizable to myself, and it was as though I was walking on air. I went straight to the room below mine, where my chief pal lived, to tell him about this incredible experience. There were men with him and I merely gaped at him and them—they appeared to me as if one had looked at them from the wrong end of a telescope, phantasms, inhabiting a totally different world from the incredible world I suddenly found myself inhabiting: a new world, breathing new air; all things new. And when I got up the next morning I went straight to Hills and Saunders and put in hand that text which I always had in my rooms and which you may remember in the drawing-room, "Behold, I make all things new."

'It seemed the one text in the Bible for me that day; for I was walking in a world indescribably beautified, indescribably lovely: with my heart exactly as the heart of a bride with her lover, so overmastering was the realization of the Presence—I had almost said the embrace of Christ. Yes, I knew it then: and the embrace was returned! It was wonderful. I avoided all company; I could not bear any. I stayed up a day or two just to enjoy solitude with the unseen Lover. And when I went down to Glasgow, I did not go alone.' [1]

The Ever Open Door.

The last conscious words of Dr. G. H. Morrison were 'the ever open door,' and Mrs. Morrison has chosen them as the title for the volume of addresses which has just been published by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton—*The Ever Open Door* (6s. net). On the paper jacket is written, 'This is the last volume of Dr. Morrison's Meditations.' Most of the addresses, if not all, have appeared in 'The British Weekly,' but many, even of those who have read them, will like to have them in this permanent form. The title is an apt one, for the addresses do, as Mrs. Morrison says, typify Dr. Morrison's child-like faith and attitude towards his Saviour as the ever open door. His talk on the words in Mk 5^{33}—'But the woman fearing and trembling . . . came and fell down before him'—is characteristic. Would it not have been kinder treatment if our Lord had let this woman slip away? Why did He call her forth and make her tell her story? Dr. Morrison finds three loving reasons for it. First, if He had

[1] C. E. Padwick, *Temple Gairdner of Cairo*, 24 f.

let her steal away, 'she would have carried wrong conceptions to her grave. She would have thought she had been healed by magic, and would never have known the loving will of Christ.' Her faith was a strong and conquering one, yet intellectually it was a faith of ignorance. But now 'she would never talk of the wonder of the tassel; she would always talk of the wonder of the Lord. Permitted to steal away without confession, she would have said exultantly, "I've found a cure." *Now* the woman cried, "I've found a friend."'

Then, second, had she been allowed to steal away, 'she never would have been quite sure of Jesus. She would have been haunted, to the last hour she lived, by the suspicion that she had done something wrong. You will notice that when the Saviour summoned her she came to His blessed feet with fear and trembling. It was not her dread of the crowd that made her tremble; it was something deeper in her woman's breast. It was her fear that she had stolen something; that she had filched a cure and acted surreptitiously; that she was going to hear the accents of rebuke.' It was because Jesus wanted to think of her as happy that He insisted on confession. He was not content that she should only be healed. 'She must hear Him saying to her, "*Daughter*." She was the only woman to whom He ever gave that title.'

'Lastly, if He had let her have her way this woman would have been powerless for service. And nobody is healed just to be happy; we are saved that we may save. In a brief space of time He would be dead, and dead, where were His garments now? What Roman soldier had them in his chest, to be carried home to his family in Britain? The garments were gone, their wearer had been crucified, and what testimony had *she* to bear for Christ to the children of disappointment and disease?'

Job 8[21].

One of Dr. Morrison's meditations is on laughter, and he quotes Professor Davidson's remark about Muhammad that 'he had that indispensable requisite of a great man; he could laugh.' 'St. Francis, for whom to live was Christ, and who felt the infinite sorrow of the world, went gaily like any singing troubadour. One does not usually associate laughter with our rugged Scottish Covenanters. Certainly Sir Walter Scott did not. Yet some of them, like William Guthrie, had an infinite sense of the drollery of things, and laughed with the same zest wherewith they prayed. . . . Dr. Johnson in his own sturdy fashion maintained that laughter was a judge of men. A man might disguise himself in the raiment of his speech, but never in the ripple of his laughter. And lovers of Livingstone will not forget how thoroughly he agreed with Dr. Johnson—he always trusted the savage who laughed heartily.'

We might add indefinitely to Dr. Morrison's list. Dr. J. H. Jowett occurs at once, the man who was described by a London journalist as a 'flame in ice.' Mr. Arthur Porritt in his biography of Jowett says that his home resounded with his hearty laughter, and Jowett himself once said that a 'sense of humour was essential to a Christian minister.' 'If our equipment for the knowledge of man is to be even passably complete,' he told the theological students at Yale, 'we must exercise a genial sense of humour, by whose kindly light we shall be saved from pious stupidities and from that grotesqueness of judgment which sees tragedy in comedy, and griffins in asses, and mountains in molehills.' 'I have always preached,' he said at Carr's Lane, 'that laughter is a part of piety.'

Dr. Barbour, in his life of Dr. Alexander Whyte, says: 'No portrait can fully represent the smile which often lit up his face. To those who knew him best, it spoke of that steady habit of retirement and of meditation on eternal things, which he pursued amid the most varied surroundings, and which gave him his power both to speak the word of faith and to bring hope into broken lives. "Towards this contemplation all the currents of his outward service in sermon and congregational worship now converged, as into one central stream, and the perfect smile was perhaps its only outward expression."'

This illustrates the argument in one of Dr. Morrison's paragraphs. Laughter, he says, is not a word of the New Testament. 'The great word of the New Testament is *joy*. It creates a glorious gladness in the soul through its message of redeeming love. Having done that, it leaves the matter there, knowing that man will find expression for it, whether in laughter or in singing or in service.'

There is the old-time question, whether our blessed Saviour ever laughed. . . . 'Twice,' says Dr. Morrison, 'we read, He wept; on no occasion do we find Him laughing. Are we then driven to the one conclusion that He never laughed at all?' And he answers: is it not more likely that His laughter went unmentioned like other common things? 'Why, when He spoke about His joy, did His own never betray the least astonishment?

Why did no one cry, "Master—your joy—we never saw it—tell us what you mean"?'

'I can do all things through Christ.'

Dr. G. H. Morrison never considered himself a preacher to boys and girls, and his last volume of children's addresses—*Twenty-five Talks with Boys and Girls*, published by Mr. H. R. Allenson; 3s. 6d. net—is also his first. It should be well bought and well prized, for here Dr. Morrison was not a sound judge. We shall tell one of his stories. Speaking to the children one morning on Ph 4^{13} he said: 'I am not going to preach to you, but I am going to tell you a little incident which happened to me long ago, and I am going to tell you how it came back to my mind.

'A week ago yesterday we had a luncheon in Glasgow to a gentleman who has done a great deal for education, and whose name is Charles Cleland. I had to make a little presentation at that luncheon, because I happened to be his oldest friend. . . . As little fellows, we went to school together in the second English class of the Glasgow Academy, and one day we went down to see his father's paper mill, which stood on the banks of the Kelvin, at Dawesholm. . . .

'I don't know if you have ever seen over a paper mill, but if you have not, you ought to try to see one, because it is extraordinarily interesting. Well, here was a great steel roller, and on it was being wound great sheets of paper. It was either cartridge paper, or blotting paper, and as you will all understand, there was a great deal of electricity generated by the friction, and on the wall near the roller there was a gas bracket.

'There was no electric light in those days . . . but here on the wall was a gas bracket with no globe on it . . . and then the workman who was attending to the roller . . . first of all turned on the gas—did not light it but just turned it on, and it came hissing from the burner—and then he put one hand, one knuckle on the roller, and held up his other hand to where the gas was hissing, and to my intense astonishment, with that knuckle he lit the gas. I have never forgotten that all these years. Don't you see, if his hand had been in his pocket, or if his hand had been on my head, he never could have lit the gas, but then, his one hand was on the roller, and though he did not feel anything except a little prickling, tides of electricity were pouring through his body, and with the other knuckle he lit the gas. He had no match, he had no taper.

'I never forgot that, and although perhaps you will understand it better when you get a little older, there are hundreds of people in Glasgow who could tell you that that is exactly what happens when you keep in touch with God. Things you could never do of yourself, lights you could never kindle of yourself, somehow you can accomplish, if with the one hand you are touching the roller, if with your heart you are keeping in touch with God.'

'Leave there thy gift before the altar.'

'At a college in South Africa where the students had gone on strike and the teachers were divided into groups—altogether a distressful situation, Dr. Aggrey was asked to say a healing word. He appealed for reconciliation and mutual forgiveness.

'They tell me (he wrote to his wife) that the most telling illustration I gave that night was the one I gave about you, yes, about *you*. Please don't get excited! Because it went home, and has done wonders. I told them how once at a meal you and sister and I were eating when I said something that hurt your feelings. I knew it, but I was too proud to apologise right then. At night in my room, the middle room, I decided that the manly thing was to apologise. Then the coward in me said, "Slip into her room, wake her up and apologise." But the giant said, "No, you hurt her feelings before her sister and at a meal, go back there as Jesus told the disciples to do—to Jerusalem where Peter had lied, and John had followed afar off, and James had run away, right there to Jerusalem and witness." All night long I wrestled with myself, until by God's help I downed him. So at breakfast, you remember, before sister, I apologised unconditionally—you were touched, sister wept, to see me do what was thought impossible with me. Since then I have not found it hard to apologise. I downed myself . . . I just can't tell you all of it. But I saw men looking at their wives and wives looking at their husbands. One white teacher, lady teacher, came and shook my hand and told me to pray for her. She went and made [it] up, the ice was broken, and others followed suit, and now the groups are broken and they are working together.'[1]

[1] E. W. Smith, *Aggrey of Africa*, 77.

Printed by MORRISON & GIBB LIMITED, Tanfield Works, and Published by T. & T. CLARK, 38 George Street, Edinburgh. It is requested that all literary communications be addressed to THE EDITOR, Kings Gate, Aberdeen, Scotland.