

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 *Journal of Theological Studies* (old series) can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jts-os_01.php

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

Father Schmidt, are providing valuable material for those who take a more historical view of the growth and development of religion, and are more awake to the course of intellectual development and the needs of the age.¹

S. A. Cook.

FRIEDRICH VON HÜGEL²

BARON VON HÜGEL left two books, begun but uncompleted. One was to have been his Gifford Lectures for 1924-1925 and 1925-1926, for which he accepted the invitation in 1922 and worked at, in spite of serious illness and failing strength, for two years before he died. He set down as title of the whole, 'The Reality of God: Concerning the Reality of Finites and the Reality of God: a Study of their Interrelations and their Effects and Requirements within the Human Mind.' This was to be divided into three parts—Epistemology, Ethics, Institutional Religion. A few, more or less finished, chapters and a considerable quantity of fragments of the first two parts have been selected and arranged with excellent judgement by Mr Gardner. Of the last part Mr Gardner found nothing that could be used except this final dictated sentence—he quotes it in his Preface, and it shall be set down here, as key to the plan, method, and temper of the whole destined work:

'What a happiness, what a joy it is to be *quite* sure that there is a God, not anything built up by mere human reasoning, no clever or subtle hypothesis, nothing particularly French or German or English, but something as infinitely more real than the air around us, and the pollen of the flowers, and the flight of the birds, and the trials and troubles and the needs of our little lives stimulated and enriched by the lives of creatures so different from ourselves, touching us continually all round; and the fundamental assurance is not simply one of variety or even of richness, it is an assurance accompanying and crowning all such sense of variety, of a reality, of the Reality, one and harmonious, strong and self-sufficing of God.'

The other book is also incomplete, but not fragmentary. It forms the second part of this volume and fills nearly half of it, being a real part of the continuous argument and vivifying the whole. Baron von Hügel began this intimate study of his friend Sir Alfred Lyall in 1912, after the publication of *Eternal Life*. He intended to call it '*Agnosti-*

¹ Cf. the criticisms *J.T.S.* xxvii 333 sq.

² *The Reality of God and Religion and Agnosticism*, being the literary remains of Baron Friedrich von Hügel, member of the Cambridge Philological Society, Hon. Ll.D. (St Andrews), Hon. D.D. (Oxford), edited by Edmund G. Gardner, Fellow of the British Academy. (J. M. Dent & Sons, 1931.)

cism and Faith, as exemplified in the religious opinions and writings of Sir Alfred Lyall'. The book was laid aside in 1915, and lacks the concluding section in which Baron von Hügel, done with criticism, would have launched into the deep of his friend's mind, as he believed he sometimes clearly saw it and always, almost, touched it. We cannot but regret that these chapters were never written. But anticipatory allusions are not unfrequent, and bearing the significance of these in mind throughout, we can very thoroughly enjoy this philosophic and humane study, while our gratitude to Mr Gardner accumulates for the immense pains and faithful conscience with which he has adorned the memory of not only one, but two rarely noble minds.

The dictated epilogue pictures the character of the Gifford Lectures as these might have been. *Ces favoris de Dieu sont les prophètes*. No other but Baron von Hügel could have dared to deliver, and been able to win audiences for, such Gifford Lectures. Yet Lord Gifford surely desired such; for these are frankly for Religion, what it is, not what its history has been. Science and philosophy have justly laboured in the foreground of most of the great—and some, especially of late, very great—series of Gifford Lectures. But it was fit that an uncommon kind should interrupt the judicial or argumentative succession, if the fit lecturer appeared; one, learned and thoughtful so as to be trusted, but authoritative by the persuasive weight of accumulated conviction. And Baron von Hügel's authority may be described almost in the terms in which he himself describes Reid (see p. 177): 'Here, in Reid's most careful analysis of sense-impression . . . very real clearness of expression, solid good sense . . . above all, a slow, dogged, soberly subtle penetration and delicately rich result and exposition, which had a genuine right to measure themselves against the brilliant . . . but less natural. . .'

Baron von Hügel is, of course, deeply read, a master of men's minds and books. And some of the most memorable pages in these fragmentary lectures are those on which he criticizes the 'School and succession of Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume'; or appreciates that other succession: 'Plato, Plotinus, Aquinas, Spinoza, Kant'; or touches off by phrase or epithet 'most theistent of pantheists Spinoza' or 'that impoverishing sceptic Hume'. And chapter iv, 'Hegel and Darwin', is so shapely in its three existing pages that any addition would almost spoil it. But books are not his authorities. He knows certain kinds of natural science—botany, geology, birds—what used to be called Natural History—for himself; and modern books on psychology have been but food for the healthy observation and reflexion of his own intelligence. He does not borrow other men's oracles about atoms, cells, electrons, but calls up things known and seen by himself, all is *sub dio*, and therefore freshly impressive, a plainness like Homeric epic. Thus he

recalls his memory of the black crickets at Florence to illustrate the sequence of his own mental development—analysis and science coming after immediate impression, and the whole a vital process, involved in a given reality from the first continuously. These recollections, these concrete, personal—in short, these ‘real’ events, among which his and others’ lives are nourished, are his argument, presented, re-presented, elaborated, and above all, enjoyed. The summary at the beginning of chapter xi (‘Moral perfection conceived as a becoming like to God: how and in what sense can this be true?’) is an index to the whole set of lectures:

‘In the first section I strove hard to establish a certain very real likeness to God, as a mind and a producer of all distinct existents, on the one hand, and ourselves as minds and apprehenders of such existents, on the other hand. I also strove to trace a similar relation between God, as a Spirit possessed of a sense of beauty and leaving traces of such beauty in all His works, on the one hand, and the mind of man as apprehensive of such beauty on the other. I want in this chapter to try to do a similar piece of thinking with regard to God, as an All-holy Will and as leaving in His works, not only traces of the power which has made them to exist, and of a sense of beauty which has given them delightful qualities of various kinds, but also as a good, a perfect, a just and yet also merciful Will and Character.’

And so he goes to Florence again and his childhood there; and recalls his earliest sense of the real and beautiful world around him, and how the moral sense woke later, yet was already in him to awake. And here a peculiarity may be noticed: before the moral sense woke he already delighted in the churches of Florence: ‘I can remember quite plainly that already then, at five or six years of age, I possessed a sense not only of God in the external, especially the organic world, but of a mysterious divine Presence in the churches of Florence. Thus historical religion was with me, together with metaphysical (and natural) religion, from the first.’

This prepares us for a good deal which follows and culminates in chapter xiii, ‘The need of institutional religion’. This chapter opens with the antithesis: ‘As a matter of sheer historical fact, Religion derives all its chief power and passion from tradition and institution, in which we invariably find a most strong insistence upon the here and now, upon a particular place and a particular time . . . yet very certainly the fundamental reality apprehended by Religion is God, and in proportion to the purity of its apprehension does it apprehend Him as in every place and in all time, and yet the vehicle, the form of this conviction, seems surely, superfluously at least, to insist most strongly upon the when and the where.’

Then he insists upon the 'vehicle' as the uniquely vivifying, the pledge of reality: 'If we look back on History, we shall see with regard to this matter, not one thing but two, and the two things in their several ways spell the same most definite tale. There is the actual constructive original Religion, this in its most characteristic means and form always full of the here and now; and there is the attempt to rationalize Religion and get it well within the limits of the human mind, to have it something which we hold rather than something which holds us; here the fear is lest we should be run away with it, lest it should master us, lest it should be beyond our managing of it. And the result of all the process, in proportion to its relentlessness, is something devoid of dependence, of *creatureliness*, of *givenness*. If we look at the various constructions, and indeed, the at all characteristic constructions of the eighteenth century, and also off and on since then, we find this strange, abstract, man-made religion, a thing made to measure, strangely empty of those endless concrete decisions which in the historical religions do no doubt, sooner or later, raise up grave difficulties, but, at their best, give life and movement and practical application to what otherwise remains thin and abstract.'

This is the last chapter of Gifford fragments. On p. 153 we pass to Sir Alfred Lyall. He has been already introduced in an earlier chapter, and the affectionate admiring tenour of that passage may well be kept in mind if some excess be felt in the austerity of the sequel. We must also remember that the conclusion of the study is lacking, in which Baron von Hügel would have let himself go in displaying what he considered the true profundity of his friends' convictions; and that the study of the person is (like the study of S. Catharine in *The Mystical Element of Religion*) a centre round which principles of universal range are to be displayed.

It was during the last years of Lyall's life, when he had finished his Indian career and had settled in England, that Baron von Hügel and he came intimately together. The deepest source of his peculiar influence in India had been his personal relations there with all sorts of natives. He enjoyed mountains forests plains, but still more, men and women. His knowledge was gathered less from duty than from homely intercourse. He was afire with disillusioned sympathy. He, if any one, had a right to hold that a religion could be understood only by those who had lived in the midst of it. All this may have been too like von Hügel's own practice or ideal to be entirely free from seeds of irritation. That is, perhaps, an ungenerous suspicion. Enough that to such a lover of souls the admission must have been really grievous 'that Sir Alfred was predominantly an agnostic, with a great suspicion and irritation against clerics of all kinds, and with a certain specially volcanic

antipathy to Rome in particular; whereas (adds Baron von Hügel) I myself believe, with all my heart, in Theism and its abiding truth and fundamental importance, in historical and institutional Christianity, and, especially, in the great Roman Catholic Church'.

The sources of this study were not only books and letters but much more conversations; and this is what makes it so extremely attractive. If those conversations could be heard—divulged—in full! We brood on what is imparted, and fancies form themselves not unreasonably, and throw back light on the Gifford fragments. We see a cleavage between the two minds. Baron von Hügel is sacramental, living serene life here and now, in satisfied sympathy with environment, recognizing wide faith wherever he recognizes effective faith, trusting all religion everywhere which is of that kind, all the more and just because of his contentment with the one Church which is his own goodly heritage; 'The truly Catholic mind everywhere delights in finding the operation and fruitfulness of the *institution*; . . . There is, indeed, a most real use both in the Hindu temple and the Buddhist monastery; this use consists in the bringing home to many a simple, unsophisticated soul certain truths which are not the less truth because they are mixed with many an error, nor which again are less truths because, compared with the full orb of Christian verity, they do indeed seem small.' Sir Alfred Lyall cannot be satisfied thus. The 'sacrament' of life is indeed powerful with him too; nature and men, and the fidelities of man, touch him with gladness; but he must press beyond the ambiguous vehicle; he cannot say Two when he knows that Spirit (which is All) is One; but what this One Spirit is he does not know: and because he frets to know, his friend calls him Agnostic.

Yet he was brave, tender, happy, most pure in heart, guarding his secret—the Agnostic's unconquerable hope—with ironical humour; to most of his acquaintance a delightful humour, though Baron von Hügel found him too often 'dreary'.

Von Hügel also found the root of the malady in his youthful inoculation to Hume, and blames him, as if almost for a moral fault, that he never tried and tested the one (inferior) treatise of Hume which so early captivated him, *The Enquiry*, by wider reading. We, listening to their silent colloquies, cannot but suspect that Hume was an impulse not an authority, that Lyall would have profited little by such academic probes; that he tested and developed Hume's hints, and Hindu whisperings, and much else, by far wider and more pervasive experience and meditation.

Two pages, on Lyall's Poetry (in *Religion and Agnosticism*) compared with three lines in a letter to Miss Oakeley given in Sir Mortimer Durand's *Life* (p. 397) give pause.

After a touch of 'voluntary humility' in his judgement of poetry, Baron von Hügel denies 'truly classic influence' to Sir Alfred Lyall because his poems do not contain any note 'of affirmation of faith, of joy. It is chiefly the absence of this implied or final positive note, and not only any defect of form, which prevents, to my mind, even the powerful "Theology in Extremis" of Lyall from attaining to quite the first rank; whereas such a poem as Browning's "Fears and Scruples" more directly destructive in its actual enunciations, retains or suggests the positive note, and hence succeeds better than do Lyall's more picturesque verses. And the same Browning's "Rabbi Ben Ezra", "Karshish", and, perhaps above all "The Pope", will live on indestructibly, because of the joyous energy of their strained and storm-tossed, yet strong and ultimately serene, security of faith.'

Now read the letter: 'What you have written about my "Tennyson" has taken me back to the little book, which I had laid aside on a lofty shelf. I am very glad to have your thoughts upon it, nor am I surprised that your tendency has been to take special interest in the speculative aspect of Tennyson's poetry; for he has put into striking verse precisely the doubts and queries that haunt sensitive and searching minds at the time when life begins to be taken seriously. His 'In Memoriam' struck a deep note for the youth of fifty years ago, and indeed touches chords that will always vibrate . . . I agree with you that it is his strong sense of natural beauty and his interpretation of the subtle affinities between human moods and emotions and our environment, that constitutes the enduring power of his poetry. Whether the idealistic conception of the world of sense takes away the despondency produced by a conviction of man's insignificance I cannot say.'

Browning with his vigorous genius for narrative, his expansive imagination, and submergence of difficulties in a vast sea of good hope, is reflected over the whole surface of the Gifford Lectures. Is it not a rarer appreciation of ultimate, still secret truth that induces fewer souls to go to Tennyson for 'speculative' sympathy? And Lyall puts off the publication of his collected verses for half a lifetime, 'always seeking to strike a deeper note' (see *Life*, p. 268).

A certain word, Richness, comes again and again to von Hügel's pen; another is Costly or Costliness. Lyall had proved the value of Costliness in the Mutiny and by many ambitions forsworn but never talked about. Richness did not attract him. He was athirst for simplicity, the One. He could not reach it, but neither could he be satisfied by approximations (or sacraments) thereof. A *soi-disant* universal church or republic of the world was but let and hindrance to the true unity. 'I myself am inclined to believe', he writes again to Miss Oakeley, 'that the deepest thinkers of all ages do not greatly

differ in fundamental conclusions, however they may vary as to ways and methods. . . . Here we have the solidarity of empire which Chamberlain is striving to cement—vainly, I think, for the world is moving, to my mind, in another direction, against great Imperial associations and towards natural communities linked together, perhaps by some loose and easy federation, but otherwise unshackled, independent, having each its own life and paddling in its own waters’.

Is this ‘the sect spirit’ which Baron von Hügel says ‘is indeed possible to man, what is not possible is really to combine it, in the long run and among men at large, with the Church spirit . . .’? So too, in near context he writes, ‘Many things enter into religion, and religion in return is busy with many things; simplicity is indeed desirable for the motives of the human soul, but, as to the reality it attempts to grasp, a maximum of harmony is its wiser ideal; the very certain fact is that we do not start with a clear apprehension of the whole, but with the confused experience of the parts; doubtless from the first there is a dim sense of the ultimate, of God, but this sense is confused and complicated as are the corresponding senses of the contingent realities around us and within us. A growing articulation, a slowly conquered clearness of the parts, with a whole present and operative upon us from the first, this is the scheme, no doubt, which corresponds to the rich reality of the facts.’

‘A maximum of harmony’, ‘wiser ideal’, ‘dim sense of the ultimate, of God’—that could not quiet the impatience of Lyall: ‘God’ must be more—of another kind—to him than that: and, therefore, Lyall was agnostic while von Hügel was catholic, and Lyall was more inclined to solve the enigma with the Maya of his Vamadeo Shastri than to dilute its bitterness by acquiescence in the rich peace of a large society.

Yet the passage is one of very many which finely vindicate von Hügel’s appeal to the evidence for divine reality in that richness everywhere of natural life. If the Lectures had been completed, filled up, substantiated, this evidence must have stood out impressively. In the sketch which is all we have, the impression evaporates in a recurrent vagueness: we are told again and again how rich the world is, but we get no details of its riches. We are told that the richness involves contradictions, and lines are indicated along which the contradictions may be reconciled. To readers with imaginative good will this is not without charm, the free charm of a sketch which may well endear these last utterances of a noble mind, and make this volume a favourite companion above all the library works of the master: so it will be (let the confession be excused) for the writer of this review. Nevertheless the elaboration of the sketch, the accurate continuation into final con-

vergence of those lines was the task due, and what we have here sometimes appears too easy-going. Thus an ingenious analogy twice serves to suggest a solution of the antithesis of rest and motion, parts and whole, simultaneity and evolution—the analogy of the concentrating spokes of a rolling wheel. But such analogies prove nothing. What is rather required, since all language is more or less metaphorical, is full enunciation and arrangement in words as uncoloured as words can be. Aphorism even is more effective than analogy, and if we turn back from Baron von Hügel's wheel to Aristotle's definition of God, source not only of motion but still more of rest, in the *Ethics*, we find our minds not less but more stimulated to clear thinking about the perennial problem. More might indeed be said to-day. One of the most intriguing questions, echoing from the new Science, is whether there is any antithesis at all, any passing into another kind, between evolution and eternity, and what the term 'sacramental' truly means. No doubt that question would have been answered at large in the completed Gifford Lectures, and the analogy of the wheel would have fallen into proper proportion with the rest. As the book stands we take it with a tinge of holiday exhilaration, dreaming out its hints and confidences.

Baron von Hügel notices that St John of the Cross, 'great mystic', is 'full of the principle that God is a pure Spirit and that only what is purely spiritual can consequently be the adequate means of union with Him'. In some parts of his writings, indeed, 'we have the other strain of the *Incarnational* outlook, where the concrete sensible as well as the spiritual existent and life of Jesus is a great incentive, means, and measure of holiness: and again there are other places in which he feels himself pulled up by this or that Church ordinance and practice, as that of the veneration of holy images, and then he makes his peace with this ordinance as quickly as he can, so as to get back to what he really understands and what he spontaneously loves, the purely spiritual means of union, the purely spiritual God. Thus in his practice and, indeed, in his temper of mind the great Spaniard remains, taken as a whole, deeply Christian and entirely Catholic, and yet I do not see how these epithets could be claimed for the *purely spiritual* current in his teachings. The fact of course is that, in the question of the human soul's union with God, we readily fall short of any adequate apprehension of the problem if we insist upon regulating all according to the nature of God.'

Sir Alfred Lyall was a mystic. That is Baron von Hügel's own reverent estimate of him. 'More than a rationalist, he was an Agnostic; and, more than either, he was at his best, a mystic—a mystic of a kind that (at bottom) shrank from Gnosticism and

Pantheism, and that can only be adequately described as personalistic and Christian.'

Like Nicodemus—winner of the Indian people's heart—he came, by night, yearning for the How of what he knew must be, yet was not his: 'How can a man be born again?' The answer was as it had been, 'The Spirit bloweth where it listeth'. . . . Perhaps his friend did not trust that answer quite absolutely; perhaps the conclusion of his book would have shewn he did.

A. NAIRNE.

BARNABAS AND THE DIDACHE¹

DR JAMES MUILENBURG is Associate Professor of the History and Literature of Religion at Mount Holyoke College, and he presented this thesis as a Ph.D. Dissertation at Yale University as long ago as 1926. If it has not yet received the public attention it deserves, that may be because the work, notwithstanding its unexciting title, might necessitate, if its conclusions be adopted, very serious reconstructions in current views about early Church History and Worship.

Readers of this JOURNAL will remember the article by Dr Armitage Robinson called 'The Problem of the Didache', which appeared in April 1912. It was reprinted in the book called *Barnabas, Hermas, and the Didache*, which formed the Donellan Lectures of 1920. Professor Muilenburg's general conclusions are much the same as those of the Dean of Wells, but it is the singular merit of his Dissertation that he keeps steadily to one point out of the many questions at issue. Throughout the 170 pages of his book he is occupied in proving that the Didache is dependent upon Barnabas and not *vice versa*. Both documents he holds to be extant in their original form: the original Barnabas contained chaps. 18–21 as well as chaps. 1–17, and the original Didache contained i 3 b–ii 1, often called 'the Gospel (or, the Christian) Interpolation'. He finds no trace of the use of a hypothetical Jewish manual for proselytes in either document.

In the matter of text, the most important question about the Epistle of Barnabas is the value of the Latin version, which is preserved in the Corbie MS now in Leningrad. The final chapter (21), as well as chaps. 18–20 (which contain the 'Two Ways' material parallel to the Didache), is omitted in this Latin text. But it is elsewhere paraphrastic and given to omissions, and Muilenburg points out very well (p. 135) that chap. 21 is entirely in the style of Barnabas, while its connexion with chaps. 18–20 is undoubted. The whole section, pp. 113–135,

¹ *The Literary Relations of the Epistle of Barnabas and the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, by James Muilenburg, Ph.D. (Marburg 1929).