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BARON VON HÜGEL AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO CHRISTIAN THOUGHT.

THE last of those famous study-conferences associated with the ministry of Dr. Alexander Whyte, of Edinburgh, fittingly consummated a life devoted to the causes of Christian freedom and catholicity. A company of like-minded men were gathered together in his Free-church Manse to hear an address by his friend Baron Friedrich von Hügel, the Catholic modernist. The venerable Free-churchman was exemplifying his life-long conviction that in the present divided state of Christendom the whole of Christian Truth cannot be found in any one section of the Church, and that we may therefore exercise a valid liberty in welcoming any good that comes to us from any part of it. And the great Catholic scholar was true to his own declared attitude of—

“recognition, persistent, frank, and full, of elements of real truth and goodness, as more or less operative within all the fairly mature and ethical forms and stages of religion throughout history and the world.”

This friendship between a beloved Greatheart of Nonconformity and an eminent Valiant-for-Truth of Catholicism was an arresting sign of the times, especially as regards von Hügel. Few Roman Catholics have been catholic enough to give sympathetic consideration to the claims of our Established and Free Churches, or frank enough to acknowledge their indebtedness to Anglican and

Nonconformist divines. Yet Baron von Hügel not infrequently did these things, and was in consequence regarded as suspect by many in his own Church. Nevertheless he probably did more than any other scholar of recent times to prepare the way for that larger reunion of Christendom which shall accomplish a synthesis of the severed portions of Truth to be found in the Roman Catholic Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, and the Churches of Protestantism.

The comprehensiveness of his sympathies is evident in all his writings, and notably in his volume "Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion," a collection of papers read before such varied societies as "The Birmingham Clerical Society," the secretaries of the British branches of the "Student Christian Movement," the Junior members of Oxford University, the "Religious Thought Society," and a Summer School at Woodbrooke (Quaker); papers subsequently published in journals as diverse in outlook as the "Church Quarterly Review," the "Homiletic Review," the "Constructive Quarterly," the "Modern Churchman" and the "Quest."

In addition to his writings his influence was extended by a remarkably wide correspondence with scholars in many countries, and by a genius for forming friendships with men and women who, like himself, were trying to reconcile intellectual freedom with ecclesiastical authority. If they were unable to solve this baffling problem at least they learned that both freedom and authority have their places in a fully-developed corporate Christian life; and that even an ineffectual struggle to reconcile them may have its own spiritual value.

He was a remarkable figure as he moved among the vital thinkers of his day, stimulating some of them to an intellectual daring that occasionally made Rome and Canterbury tremble for the safety of their arks. We get glimpses of him as the animating spirit of a circle of scholars of different schools of thought known as "The London Society for the study of Religion"; or among the Italian mountains "having a grand time" he writes "spending three full days with H. J. Holtzmann, and seeing eight other men of a similar type." He was often seen in Kensington Gardens having an afternoon walk and

talk with men to whom he could unreservedly offer the gathered treasures of his thought and experience. One of these privileged companions has recalled his way of gesticulating with his umbrella in moments of earnest declamation, much to the astonishment and amusement of nurses and children. And here is a characteristic note to George Tyrrell:—"I was 57 yesterday, and am giving myself a set of newer geological books, a geological hammer, and a set of geological type specimens. So expect you to tramp about with me to gravel pits and quarries, please!" And when Tyrrell died he was one of the few Catholics who had the courage and loyalty to stand beside the grave of his friend who had been condemned and refused Christian burial by the Roman Catholic authorities.

Friedrich von Hügel was born at Florence in 1852, the son of Baron Karl von Hügel, a distinguished Austrian diplomat, who married Elizabeth Farquarson, a Scotch woman of noble birth. He himself married a Scotch lady, a daughter of Lord Herbert, of Lea, who (as Sidney Herbert) sent Florence Nightingale to the Crimea when he was war-minister. Von Hügel became a naturalized Englishman, living for many years in Kensington. St. Andrews conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws in 1914; and in 1920 Oxford made him a Doctor of Divinity. His last years were largely occupied in the development and preparation for publication of his projected Gifford lectures, which were not delivered owing to ill-health. He died in January, 1925.

In mid-life he had openly expressed his mind to his own Church on questions of Biblical criticism, and had also corresponded with the Presbyterian Prof. Briggs on the authorship of the Pentateuch. He became a bold critic of Rome's conservative attitude towards matters of textual criticism, and in 1906 published his correspondence on the question under the title: "The Papal Commission and the Pentateuch."

But he is better known through his writings on philosophical aspects of religion, particularly his lengthy study of "The Mystical Element of Religion," a work which, when it ran out of print, sometimes fetched four

times its original price in the second-hand market. It was re-published in 1923.

In approaching the study of his writings it is well to make some attempt to adopt his own attitude in the search for Truth.

“I assume you,” he writes to a distressed friend “to be athirst for wisdom, not cleverness; to be humble and simple; to be just *straight*, and anxious for some light, and ready to pay for it and practice it.”

And he adds that one must not expect the deepest things to be concretely clear to the mind, but rather vividly real to the soul. He was fond of insisting that Reality is “not clear, but vivid; not simple, but rich.” And one must be patient in considering the unfamiliar.

“Have you ever kept tree-frogs?” he once asked an audience. “The frog will seize a cricket, hard, long, and thin, and will push this struggling down it’s throat. The cricket insists upon dying within the frog crosswise, but the frog pats his white abdomen from each side, till he gets the cricket into proper conformity with the inside of the frog himself. I am now asking you to leap forth to seize and to assimilate as well as you can, a mass of spiritual food which may well at first lie uncomfortably athwart your minds. Be patient, before the end I hope greatly to relieve the situation. We shall then *pat our minds*; and the food, so unwieldy at first, will I trust, find it’s proper place and will truly feed us.”

In making a rapid survey of his writings, and noting some of his leading ideas, the famous introduction to his study of “The Mystical element of Religion” will naturally come first into view, for in it he has given to Christian thought one of his most widely accepted contributions. The religious consciousness is analysed as a complex of three elements:—the Institutional, or authoritative; the Intellectual, or speculative; the Mystical, or experimental. These elements have a psychological basis, and may be seen unfolding themselves in the religion of Childhood, when sense, memory, and tradition are most marked; in Youth, when question and argument predominate; and in Manhood, when intuition, feeling, and volition are more

or less supreme. In every mature religious life these three elements will be found, though not always ranging themselves in the same order of value. And in organized religion they largely determine our main ecclesiastical divisions—the Institutional element finding its expression in various forms of Catholicism: the Intellectual in Unitarian and other liberal theological movements: the Mystical in certain phases of Pietism and Evangelicalism. Each element has some fundamental value, and whenever one wholly cancels out another, the religious life, whether individual or corporate, suffers loss. It is surely one of the greatest tasks of Christian education to secure recognition of the permanent values of these vital elements of religion and endeavour to find place for them in a reunited Christendom.

I shall take these three elements of religion as points round which to gather the various leading ideas scattered throughout von Hügel's writings.

I.—As regards his contribution to the Institutional or authoritative elements of religion he has rendered invaluable service in insisting on the necessity, for the Christian soul's development, of life within the organized church. It may be true that our Lord said very little concerning the Church, but the idea is implicit in His words and acts. His teaching implies a spiritual fellowship within which the soul can express its life and carry out the precepts of its Master. The Beatitudes, the parables, the teaching concerning the Kingdom, the calling of the disciples, and the commission of the apostles, all imply the Church conception of religion. It only needed the passing of the obsession of an imminent second advent, and the discipline of trial, to make explicit Christ's doctrine of the Church. But it needs to be realized that the Church exists not only for purposes of propaganda and progress, but also for the discipline and training of the Christian himself. As there could be no society without the individual, so there can be no worthy individual life apart from the opportunities and obligations of fellowship with others. The personal soul and the organized church need each other; and even the limitations and tribulations of life within a church fulfil an intended spiritual function in Christian growth. The desire for a perfect community, living in a peace undisturbed

by controversy or unspoiled by onesidedness, is a vain hope since the Church is made up of fallible human beings. To escape from the Church because of its imperfections is to flee into the greater impoverishment of a self-centered individualism. As Von Hügel says:—

“We can trace a certain incompleteness in a man’s humility so long as it consists in humility before God alone.” And he adds that “there can be no Church for us on earth if we will not and cannot put up with faulty Church officials; and again, that we shall never put up with such faultiness sufficiently unless we possess or acquire so strong a sense of all we have to gain from church-membership as to counter-balance the repulsiveness of such habits.”

Yet he advocated no mere passive submergence of personality within the Fellowship. He himself exercised to the full the right of challenging even the so-called infallible pronouncements of the Catholic Church. He regretted Rome’s reluctance to accept soundly verified scientific discoveries; her preservation of legends long since dismissed as false by historical research; he frankly admits that

“all the world knows how apparently impossible of dying is the Roman Curia’s thirst for the old Temporal Power.”

And he forecasts another possible conflict greater than that of the 16th century.

“Providence may allow that the ruinousness of such a combination (i.e. of spiritual and temporal power) for this later age of the world shall be demonstrated even more fully and at greater cost than heretofore in one more bitter experience of mankind.”

It needed courage for a member of a priest-ruled church to insist on the value of the layman in saving and guiding her.

“Zealous believers, even laymen, may arise who will successfully aid the return to a wider and richer, a truly Catholic action. After all Rome depends upon its subjects as truly as its subjects depend upon Rome; and Rome will live, and deserve to live, only as the expression of the fullest religious life.”

II—Perhaps Von Hügel's most valuable contribution to the Intellectual side of religion was his reiteration of the truth that the Christian life originates in a *given* Revelation accepted by the believer, who remains for ever a debtor to God. He overstrains language in his endeavour to press home his intense belief in the need for the rediscovery of this attitude. We live to-day in an age of discovery, and have developed a mental temper that makes it easier to appreciate the adventure of discovery than realize the blessedness of being discovered. Yet it may be a greater thing for the soul to be found of God, than for the mind to conquer the powers of Nature, great though this achievement undoubtedly is. The Christian life, Von Hügel reminds us,

“begins, proceeds, and ends with the GIVEN. Primarily it is not rational, but Revelational; not natural, but Supernatural.”

Christianity is not the conclusion of a process of philosophic thought, but the acceptance of a supernatural Gift. Neville Figgis put it tersely in a sentence:—

“You cannot search for religion merely from the side of intellectual inquiry, and arrive at a Christian result.”

It was this conviction that made Von Hügel distrust and dislike all forms of Hegelianism which sought to approach Christian Truth from the starting-point of reason; advancing through ascending categories of thought towards the Absolute. He expressed his agreement with Troeltsch's observation when he pointed out “how slender is the religious power and fruitfulness of all Hegelian interpretations of religion.”

Such interpretations tend to regard the Christian Faith as an intellectual discovery rather than an accepted gift, and so lack that sense of debt out of which is born the spirit of love. In the preface to the recent re-issue of his “Mystical Element of Religion” he reiterates his conviction that

“the Otherness, the Prevenience of God, the one-sided relation between God and Man, these constitute the deepest measure and touchstone of all religion. And if this be so it follows that religion has no subtler, and

yet also no deadlier enemy in the region of the mind than every and all Monism."

In his book "Eternal Life" Von Hügel made another useful contribution to Christian thought by making a clear distinction between Immortality and Eternal life, stressing its qualitative aspect rather than its quantitative, since its special nature lies not in duration, but intensity, and such fullness of life may begin here and now.

"Eternal Life in this sense," he says, "precludes not only space and clock-time, but even duration, time actually experienced by Man. It precludes space and clock-time because of the very intensity of its life. It is the fullest of the supreme Richness, the unspeakable Concreteness, the overwhelming Aliveness of God."

Such an interpretation may help to replace the doubtful doctrine of Conditional Immortality by the undoubted truth of Conditional Eternal Life. Immortality as mere survival may be inherent in every soul, whether Christian or not, but Eternal Life as a spiritual experience and enrichment of the soul, which not even death can destroy—this *is* conditional upon faith in God.

On the problem of pain Von Hügel has pointed out that though Christianity offers no final intellectual solution of its mystery, yet it has done two things of even greater value. It has first of all "immensely deepened and widened the awful potency and baffling mystery of sorrow, pain, and sin." It has, so to say, been surgical in its attitude to as ick world, exploring and probing its wounds, and by quickening human sensitiveness has made humanity more alive to the agonies that afflict it.

But it has also increased man's capacity for bearing pain, and transmuting it into glorious gain for the soul. Instead of offering us a philosophy of pain it has shown us the Son of God upon the Cross, and has encouraged the soul to sob itself out in fellowship with His sufferings, That Christian experience is a greater gain than any mere intellectual solution could be. On questions of eschatology Von Hügel stands almost alone among modern scholars in his attitude towards the Final Advent of Christ. Our Lord, without doubt, taught the approach of some universal

cataclysm and regeneration of the world under his personal control, and *this doctrine of the Parousia is an original conception of Jesus Himself*. The apocalyptic prophecies of Daniel had never before been interpreted as referring to the second coming of the Christ. Von Hügel asserts very definitely that "no trace of such a conception can be found in any documents previous to His enunciation of it." But this sudden coming of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven, with its attendant spectacular happenings, presents a problem to a mind that has come under the sway of His grace and truth unfolded so naturally and spontaneously as He lived among men. This seeming paradox is, however, a fundamental factor in our Lord's life, a life that manifested both the prophetic and apocalyptic elements. In His earlier days there is a leisureliness of mind, a tender love of nature and a genial friendliness with all sorts and conditions of men. But this is only one of two aspects of His life and teaching. To quote Von Hügel:

"Thus, as before Cæsarea Philippi the kingdom as conceived prothetically—as a relatively slow and peaceful growth; and from Cæsarea Philippi onwards it was conceived apocalyptically—as a sudden and violent irruption; so also before Cæsarea Philippi the Messiah appears most lowly, radiant, and with all-embracing hope; and from Cæsarea Philippi onwards as coming again upon the clouds of heaven with power."

These two aspects need to be insisted on to preserve present-day preaching from a one-sided Second Adventism and also from a vague evolutionary optimism. How to accept and reconcile these two aspects of Christ's life and presents us with a problem that cannot honestly be escaped by denying either element—both are undoubtedly there. "I do not know any direct and simple solution of it," says Von Hügel, but he indicates the great service which the doctrine of a Final Advent has been to Christianity in saving it from degenerating into mere pantheism and mysticism.

"The interaction, the tension, between these two elements or movements is ultimately found to be an

essential constituent and part of the mainspring of Christianity, of religion, and (in some form) even of all the deepest spiritual life."

There is only space for a brief reference to Von Hügel's position with regard to the relation between Science and Religion. He took the view that the sciences have their own independent laws and rights with which even religion cannot interfere. Thus:—

"The phenomena of Astronomy and Geology, of human Physiology and Psychology, of Philosophy and History are, and ought to be in the first instance, the same for all men, whether the said men are religious or not These sciences cannot accept the claim of religion to be immediately and simply all, for they are fully aware of being themselves something also. They cannot accept her claim to dictate to them their own domestic laws, for they are fully aware that they each, to live truly at all, require their own laws and their own, at least relative, autonomy."

The acceptance of such a position would save the Church from much useless controversy concerning the authority of Scripture in matters upon which it has no special qualifications for settling scientific questions.

III.—Concerning the Mystical aspects of religion Von Hügel has written profoundly and at great length, but it is probably wrong to regard him as a mystic himself; indeed, the result of his study of the Mystical element of religion is to undermine much popular mystical doctrine. His great work on the subject is one long protest against isolating and developing unduly a subjective pietism which would separate itself from the world in an endeavour to find unity of thought and peace of soul by a process of abstraction. He condemned a spurious mysticism and put a valid mysticism in its true place as but one of three elements in a mature Christian life.

"There are," he writes "few sadder and at bottom more deeply and uncreaturely, un-Christian attitudes than that which would seek a measure of perfection in and by the greatest possible abstraction from all those touching contingences which God has vouchsafed

to our nature—a nature formed by Himself to require such plentiful contact with the historical and visible.”

On the Quietist movement, with its doctrine of Pure Love, so charmingly expounded by Fènelon and Madame Guyon, he has some penetrating criticism.

“Pure Love alone would, if possible, involve the neglect of numberless other virtues and duties.”

Such simplicity would be purchased at too great a cost.

“Living simplicity is but the harmony and unification the synthesis of an organism, and hence is great in precise proportion to the greater perfection of that synthesis.”

The attempt to achieve such a synthesis will involve considerable tension and stress of mind and will, indeed it may prove to be impossible for most of us, yet this experience of mental tribulation and baffled purpose may be a condition of growth and fruitfulness.

In his preface to a volume of lectures by the Protestant Ernst Troeltsch, entitled “Christian Thought: its history and application,” he has a very characteristic passage:—

“The most ready, yet also the most costly way of learning deeply, that is, of growing in our very questions, and in our whole temper of mind, is to learn in admiration of some other living man, recognised by us more gifted, or more trained, or more experienced than ourselves To confront, even in sheer non-acceptance, this or that position of so great a mind after having repeatedly tried sincerely to adopt it, can perhaps be as fruitful an experience as when he taught us so much in days past.”

The reference is, of course, to his own great indebtedness and loyalty to the late Prof. Troeltsch, but many who know Von Hügel's writings can apply the words to the subject of this paper, whose recent passing from us is so great a loss to the whole Christian Church.

Among the published letters of Edward Dowden is one containing this confession:—

"My former acquaintance of Bourne-mouth, Baron Von Hügel, is a most interesting and most sweet-tempered man, a distinguished Biblical scholar, a Catholic of the best type, a man who has had many interesting acquaintances I felt the charm of the amiable, scholarly Catholic much Indeed I have thoughts of going to my priest at Donnybrook and saying to him: 'I have faith only as a grain of mustard seed, but I can give obedience, and I want to try if through obedience I can grow as beautiful of soul as Fried. von Hügel.'"

On his mortuary card were printed three verses of Scripture—windows through which we may catch glimpses of those deeper spiritual sources which fed the mind and heart of this great scholar:—

"I have loved the beauty of Thy House, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth."

"For what have I in heaven but Thee; and beside Thee what do I desire upon earth?"

"To him that overcometh I will give to eat of the Tree of Life which is in the Paradise of God."

P. FRANKLIN CHAMBERS.



"THIS MINISTRY"—THINGS FOR THINKING OUT. No. 4.

THIS is the fourth, and last, and hardest to be written paper of this series. Each of those already written has been a matter of retrospect and retrospect of something rounded off and to be viewed as a whole. "Days of preparation," the "First days of our actual ministry," the "Great years"—All these for the present writer are things of the past, so that in analyzing and summarizing, and then expressing judgment, he does not

run the risk of hearing "children and fools should never see work half done"—a very wise saying but not applicable here. But the period now to be reviewed, and judged, and written about—can the writer go without condemnation if he dare to say anything about it? He is in it, and not far in it, for mercifully he has been greatly sustained with strength and vigour. I "go softly" as I set about this task.

Let us state with as much exactness as we can the phase of our subject which now confronts us. We are not having in view the "last of life" when "desire fails, and the grasshopper is a burden," but the days which round off and complete the years of "this ministry," years in which "strength is less, but experience more," when the man is still able to do much and surely to do it more wisely, yet is not able to take up so many tasks, nor able to work so many hours, when neither physical nor mental powers show the resillience of earlier years. I write for men in general; a few retain to almost the last all the energy of earlier life. One needs to only say "John Clifford" to illustrate the last sentences, but the majority of men have some years in which it is true "strength is less but experience more." What about these years?

Here we have to note a strange and dismaying fact. Our churches seem to have no place or use for such men. I mention a fact which is not solitary, nor even rare, when I record a resolution duly moved and carried in a church meeting, to the effect that "no man over forty should be considered a candidate for the pastorate" then vacant. "No man over forty" eligible for the pastorate! So that a man who gives at least four years to specific training for "this ministry" and probably enters upon that ministry at about twenty-five years of age, at forty is done with; if he continues in a pastorate the coarser spirits will "gibe and jeer," and if he resigns it will be to find only "shut doors" with the notice on them "none over forty are eligible here." Does any one deny? or point to this and that man as proof that the writer is wrong? Let me anticipate and answer such critic,—let him write down the names and count the number of such men, and then compare the number with the number of men who are affected by what has been affirmed. There is "something rotten in the state of Denmark."

What needs to be done to bring about a better state of things? Surely something, and something we ought to endeavour, for no one can dare to defend such conditions; and further, such a state of things will bring its own nemesis—when youth finds out that the churches have no use or place for the man who has attained to “forty” it will say, “Well, I love my Master, and I love to preach His great evangel, but I will do it outside the ranks of the ministry until the Churches know how to treat the man who gives strength and time, and toils and tears to accomplish “this ministry.” “No room over forty!” Think of it— A Church of JESUS CHRIST which exists for the carrying on of the greatest, deepest, most difficult work known to men; and wants to be instructed, and cheered and comforted; and is seeking a leader who shall show the way, hearten his people in the way, comfort them when the way seems long and the goal distant. A “man of God” to expound the deep things of God, undertake the cure of souls, awaken the phlegmatic, sympathise with the tempted and tried, hold up the hands that hang down and strengthen the feeble knees, and forsooth he “*he must not be over forty.*” Time was when “days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom,” but now . . . This, of course, is not to decry youth, “once on a time” the writer himself was youthful, and more than that he has to plead guilty to the crime of seeking to keep young—at least in spirit and outlook. Assuredly youth is not to be decried, there is a place and work for the young man, a place for his freshness of vision, his undaunted enthusiasm, his unimpaired strength. Hail to the young recruit, but an army must not be all recruits. Not to displace the young man, but to find a way to retain the man who is no longer young is what we are aiming at. An honourable and honoured place where a man’s hardy-acquired knowledge and ripe wisdom shall have worthy opportunity and scope.

But what CAN be done? To point out the evil is one thing, to prescribe a remedy quite another; so here let me remind you of our sub-title “Things for thinking out.” The writer has no “cut and dried scheme”—the which to prescribe in all its completeness, and by which a revolution complete and full should be brought about—he can only

record his own thinking and let it work, with, however, the hope that others will think and think to some purpose. Wherefore two suggestions.

1.—To the men—my brothers—most immediately concerned. I hope it will not be considered presumption on my part to address myself to them I stand with them. Brothers—let us keep ourselves fresh. Forty years ago the writer knew a man who had for fifty years been a sought-after preacher among “the people called Methodists.” This man passed over at the age of seventy-eight. Till the day of his death he read papers he did not agree with, took magazines that differed in their trend from the way he took, studied books which set forth views far removed from his; his whole life was an exemplification of Jonathan Edwards’ great word “resolved—I will keep an open mind.” Yet he lived and died a humble believer in Jesus Christ, and as long as he could climb the pulpit steps he rejoiced to preach Jesus Christ and Him Crucified. His son has striven to follow in his steps. Let us, my dear brothers, in every way and by all methods, seek to keep fresh, fresh in our outlook, fresh in our sympathies, fresh in our work, let us keep closely in touch with our young people in their reading and in their pursuits; think their thoughts even if we have to correct their thoughts by our own, and so far as possible let us join in their pursuits. Above all let us keep in touch with Him who has ever upon Him the dew of His youth. So shall we best make foolish the scorn of those who have no room for the man over forty. Let us make the best of “things as they are,” and so help to make things as they ought to be.

2.—To all the men in “this ministry” of ours. Are we all completely satisfied? Sure that ours is the best system possible? Our independency, our congregation, our isolated churches and ministers. Is it not possible we might be mistaken? Might have carried our independence too far? Is it quite certain that a bit of connexionalism, a “dash of presbyterianism” would hurt us? This is not to suggest that we throw up our independence or suggest that there was nothing in our contention that any gathering of believing folk were ipso facto a Church of Jesus Christ, but it is to suggest that associations of Churches under similar associations of Ministers might possibly prove to

be an improvement on our present method of working. What the writer has in view is something like this. An Association of three Churches with their attached schools and mission, with three ministers, one at twenty-five to thirty-five, one at thirty-five to fifty, and one at fifty to sixty. Each of these would have his own Church and congregation, but each would share in the preaching in each place, whilst the oldest man could be relieved of many items in the detailed work of the various subordinate organizations. By such a method there would be available in turn for each local congregation youthful enthusiasm, full strength, mellow wisdom, these corresponding to sections found in all congregations of any size and strength, also something more would be accomplished—an invaluable training would be guaranteed to the beginner, association with two men, each his senior, would give him insight into the great work of “this ministry” which nothing else could give, and by which many a mistake may be avoided, and thus the necessity for pastoral apprentices, alluded to in our first article would be obviated; finally this would provide a way by which the larger work of the denomination might be done—the seniors qualified by their years of prolonged and successful work, and by it commended to the whole Church could bring their gifts and their culture to the wider sphere without being overburdened with the necessity for keeping things going in their own individual Church and congregation. That such a system would solve all difficulties and usher in the millennium is not suggested, but that it would remedy some defects and reduce some heart-burning incidental to our present methods seems to the writer to be assured.

CHAS. INGREM.



IN MY GARDEN.

MINE is not a garden after Bacon's ideal. He lays it down concerning a garden—"The contents ought not well to be under thirty acres of ground, and to be divided into three parts; a green in the entrance, a heath, or desert in the going forth, and the main garden in the midst, besides alleys on both sides; I like well" he says, "That four acres be assigned to the green, six to the heath, four and four either side, and twelve to the main garden." No wonder that he prefaces that by the words "speaking of those which are indeed *princelike*."

My garden consists of only a few poor rods of soil, and even these not stocked in "prince-like" fashion, not even after the fashion of T. E. Brown in that lovely little lyric.

"A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot
 Rose plot
 Fringed pool
 Ferned grot."

The "rose plot" and the "fringed pool" are not mine, nor is my garden stocked with bright-hued, fragrant flowers charming the eye and greeting the nostrils with their pleasant odours, indeed by many my garden would be designated poor, and even drab, although some quiet souls have discovered in it a charin, and have called it a "home of peace"; yet even though it may lack some things which many would desiderate, and some would call essential, and though it may even merit the terms poor and drab, it is a place where visions greet and voices sound, and where thoughts are winged to wander through eternity.

For one thing its dimension in one direction is not fenced in and bounded—its length and breadth may soon be paced, but upwards lies the blue immense. True, clouds come and intercept the vision, but they pass and leave the unfathomed deeps of blue to stir you to gaze and gaze, and wonder as you gaze. This in the day, and when the shadows lengthen and the curtains of night are drawn, then through the thin, gossamer-like veil that which was hidden by "excess of light" stands forth revealing and appealing, revealing world upon world peopling the realms

of space, and appealing for awe, and reverence, for wonder and worship; suns and systems moving in their mighty orbits, and stirring the heart to take up the words of that ancient observer and worshipper.

“When I consider Thy heavens
 The work of Thy fingers
 The moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained;
 What is man that Thou art mindful of him?
 And the son of man, that thou visitest him?”

But to look down as well as up, to the grass at our feet as well as to the blue heavens, to the near as well as the far. Shall I say of this that it is awakening, illuminating, thought-provoking even as the other? Here, as there, all is quiet, hushed in seeming stillness, yet only *seeming* stillness. Above and below activities innumerable and intense are going on. Here are the activities of growth, growth so constant and oftentimes so rapid you are compelled to say “You can *almost* see it grow,” you cannot discern the movement, nor hear the rhythmic hum of these so intense activities. The trees that fence you in are growing, so also is the grass that provides the carpet for your feet, and each is whispering the Master’s word—“Thou knowest not how.” Mystery in the canopy of blue, and mystery in the carpet of green, mystery rounding off the little realm in which we say “I know” by the great illimitable concerning which we can only stand in awe and reverence, gasping out our wonder, and saying “Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom” and “power of God.” Baffling, humbling mystery, checking all thoughts of pride, and bidding me “go softly all my years.”

But not all is so still—with even seeming stillness; inaudible to our dull ears, but evident to the eye that is keen and observant, a movement is to be found at your feet quite other than the movement of wind-swept grass. Life is here that may not be placed in the category of *still*-life, it is not still, there is no stillness, but rather activity multitudinous, intense, continuous; activity such as Coventry Patmore describes. “Here in this little bay, full of tumultuous life and great repose.” Right athwart the “mown grass” there is a road plain and unmistakable when you are “on the track,” and this road dense with

busy little folk coming and going in thronging multitudes even as their bigger brothers throng the streets of our great city. "The ants' are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer," and here you have them at their toil—multitudinous, purposeful, co-ordinate in their activities. A road, plain as the "milky way" in the skies, can be traced amid the grass, grass which to these little folk must be as "the long grass" of Central Africa to us. Hundreds and thousands, a mighty army, are softly passing to and fro, carrying their burdens (sometimes five times as big as themselves) and suffering no obstacles to deter them. "Go to the ant thou sluggard" is the word of wisdom, and here we are learning the lessons it teaches.

But "in my garden" there is not only the mystery, and the multitudinous life, but a mirror into which we may look, and in which we shall find our own selves reflected. My garden was once a bit of the wild, where unhindered wild things grew, and unrestrained other wild things roamed, until some one's eye lighted on it, some one's hand fenced it in, some one's mind conceived its plan, some one's spade turned up the soil, planting, pruning, weeding, watering, and generally caring for it until it became a quiet restful "home of peace," which if not richly furnished is yet inviting; a place where the birds sing in the early spring-time their songs of love to their mates, and later on their songs of love to their little ones—

"A little garden walled around
Chosen and made peculiar ground,"

fenced in, planned out, the home of peace, an Æolian Hall where the wind sweeps the harpstrings, and bird-vocalists fill the air with song.

Alas! it is not perfect. Weeds are there, the very birds that sing bring them, and the soft summer winds that cool the air waft the weed-seeds from other realms, and blight finds entrance, and decay and death, the hall-marks of all things here, visit this pleasant kingdom, and so "in my garden" the gardener may not take his ease, "The price of liberty" (and the price of life, and beauty, and fruitfulness) "is eternal vigilance." When God made a garden in Eden He set a man in it to keep it and dress

it, and that has been the rule for every garden till this day. It is not enough to select a spot, and fence it round, plan it out and plant it with "pleasant plants" it must be "kept" and "dressed." Weeding, watering, pruning, training, guarding against blight, nourishing the soil that life may not be starved and stunted; all must go on, and continuously, lest the garden should revert to its original condition, and once again be a bit of the wild, and the home of the beasts,

"In my garden" is there not a mirror?
 "Two worlds are ours; 'tis only sin
 Forbids us to descry
 The mystic heaven and earth within
 Plain as the sea and sky."

But time and space fail, or one could say much more, could speak of tragic things that happen, foes that intrude, love-songs hushed and stilled, the home of peace broken up with noise and clatter of strife; but enough

"A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot
 Rose plot
 Fringed pool
 Ferned grot"

and to complete our authors song

"The veriest school
 Of peace; and yet the fool
 Contends that God is not.
 Not God! in gardens! when the eve is cool
 Nay, but I have a sign;
 'Tis very sure God walks in mine."

And not alone in evening's "cool," but all day long
 "from morning's prime to dewy eve."

CHAS. INGREM.



SECRETARY'S NOTES.

WE gladly print in full the article on Von Hügel written by Rev. P. Franklin Chambers in view of the growing interest in Von Hügel's writings, probably due to frequent references to them in theological journals like the "Hibbert" and "Expository Times." Mr. Chambers writes that with the forthcoming publication of Von Hügel's "The Reality of God" this interest will doubtless increase considerably.

We are also very grateful to Rev. Chas. Ingrem for his final article on "Things for thinking out" and commend its careful perusal by our brethren.

We must again remind our members that their subscriptions (2/6) are well over-due. The cancelled Meeting at the Spring Assembly meant that many who usually pay them at that time were not able to do so. Will each member kindly forward his subscription at once or our finances will suffer badly.

