

**THE WITNESS OF
GOD AND FAITH:
TWO LAY SERMONS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649485888

The Witness of God and Faith: Two Lay Sermons by T. H. Green & Arnold Toynbee

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

T. H. GREEN & ARNOLD TOYNBEE

**THE WITNESS OF
GOD AND FAITH:
TWO LAY SERMONS**

THE WITNESS OF GOD

AND

FAITH

TWO LAY SERMONS

BY THE LATE

T. H. GREEN, M.A., LL.D.

FELLOW OF BALLIOL COLLEGE AND WHYTE'S PROFESSOR OF MORAL
PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

BY THE LATE

ARNOLD TOYNBEE, M.A.

Tutor of Balliol College, Oxford

LONDON

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

1886

c

All rights reserved

PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
LONDON



41,439

P R E F A C E .

THE two Sermons composing this volume, though previously printed for private circulation, are now published for the first time. They were delivered in a college lecture-room to undergraduate members of Balliol College, Oxford. The first sermon was read at the beginning of 1870, shortly after Mr. Green had been made a tutor of the College. He was the first layman who had filled the office of tutor, and he had to consider whether he would follow a custom maintained by former clerical tutors, of speaking on a religious subject to their pupils on the evening before the administration of Holy Communion.

After some hesitation he resolved to use the opportunity to meet some of the religious difficulties which haunt the minds of men who are beginning the study of philosophy and the laws of historical evidence. He met these difficulties not merely by the statement of a metaphysical position, but by enforcing, with all the impressive energy of a non-sacerdotal teacher, the practical character of the Christian life. The reader of these sermons, perplexed, perhaps, by abstract argument, may not at once detect the buried life of spiritual passion which burns beneath, but those who heard the first sermon have never forgotten the power with which the speaker dealt in a few words with the common theme of sin and vice.

Though not present when the first sermon was delivered, I well remember the delivery of the second ; the prayer which preceded it, and the stillness with which, for not far short of two hours, we listened to a discourse

which, even in its most metaphysical passages, seemed to summon us to a new spiritual life. The second sermon was written in 1878, not for Mr. Green's pupils alone, but for the senior members of the whole College. At this time, though taking a less active part in the tuition of the College, he was still deeply interested in meeting the religious wants which he had tried to satisfy eight years before. The use of Biblical phrases in his first sermon he found had caused some perplexity; and though the intellectual position of the two sermons is the same, in the second he purposely discards Scriptural language. Much as he revered the Bible, of which he once characteristically said it was the only book he really knew well, he was determined that his devotion to it should never, even in appearance, overpower his intellectual conscience.

Like more than one famous book of the present epoch, these sermons have for their

aim the separation of the spiritual from the supernatural. Mr. Green sought to establish in them an intellectual position for the Christian faith which should not be called in question by every advance in historical evidence and in physical science. It is with no eagerness to impair the existing religious creeds that he insists on the incorrectness of the theories on which they are professedly based; other thinkers have assailed the orthodox foundations of religion to overthrow it, Mr. Green assailed them to save it.

[NOTE.—Mr. Green in his last illness left the two sermons which are here printed in the hands of Mr. Arnold Toynbee, his friend and former pupil, to be dealt with at his discretion. Within a year Mr. Toynbee has also been taken away. It had been his intention to publish the sermons with an Introduction, elucidating such parts of them as might be difficult to readers unaccustomed to metaphysical thought and language. This Introduction he was never able to complete, but at

the beginning of his illness he expressed the wish that the publication of the sermons should not be delayed, and that as few words as possible of his own should be prefixed to them. The above Preface is an extract from what he had written.—
C. M. T.]