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FREDERICK MAURICE AND THE BROAD CHURCH.

A GENERATION has passed since the world lost all that part of the influence of a great and holy mind which depends on its visible nearness; and it cannot be said that the present hour offers any special opportunity for commemorating that influence. Nevertheless that is the object of this essay. The distance of time seems appropriate for such an endeavour, a further delay would render it impossible. Few survive who remember that influence at its height, of those few only a small proportion stood sufficiently apart from it to recall it critically, and of that small number none have a long time to pass in this world. The suggestion that before it is too late some attempt might be made by one of those few to attempt this estimate has come from without, but the response, though diffident and hesitating, is not reluctant. I turn gladly to speak of one revered by all who remember him, beloved by almost all—outside the circle of his own dearest and his immediate disciples by none more than by me. I cannot call myself a disciple. But I speak of him as of a teacher associated with all that was elevating, inspiring, purifying, one in whose presence all that was ignoble withered away. And I speak of him, too, as the representative of Christianity to the latter half of the century that has just closed. Many no doubt would protest against any single person being chosen as such a representative; much in his own writings enforces such a protest. Christianity was one of the words to which he entertained what

I venture to consider a somewhat superstitious dislike, and I hardly remember his using it. But if it be conceded that any one man should be chosen as representative, in our own country and our own time, of faith in God as revealed in Christ, I cannot think that any name would come before or beside that of Frederick Denison Maurice. It is worth making an attempt to understand the influence of such a spirit from different points of view—to seek to realize both its strength, and its limits.

Yet I cannot deny that one among many causes for diffidence in making such an attempt is that it was one with which, in any similar case, he would have had no sympathy. He disliked criticism. Our object in contemplating any human spirit, he thought, should be always to discover whatever in it was positive, constructive, or fruitful. What was negative, destructive, or barren was, he thought, better passed over. Of course, he would not have denied that protest and judgment had their place in mutual duty. But it is only etymologically that we can identify the judge and the critic. A criminal is a person who has lost his right to the freedom of an average human being; a judge decides on the fitting substitute for such freedom. There is, in the position of the critic, nothing analogous to this. There is much more, and much less. The judge makes no attempt to decide on the absolute merit of the condemned person before him, whether in the circumstances and with the hereditary influences of the thief or murderer he himself would have committed theft or murder he does not consider, at least if he does he is neglecting the proper duty of a judge. The thing he has to decide is what in the interests of society is the proper fate of a person who has broken the law. The critic has no practical decision to make, but on the other hand the decision he does make is in one sense more ambitious. "So-and-so is a second-rate poet" is a more

penetrating judgment than "The prisoner at the bar is a murderer." By what right does a person who could not himself write even third-rate poetry decide that somebody else's is only second rate? "You may say without arrogance"—so I imagine Maurice arguing—"'This man has committed murder.' That is a question of evidence, and if we declined to act upon such certainty as we can attain here we should decline to take any important step whatever. But where is the necessity, where is the value, of this judgment by which the small decide on the rank of the great?" I never heard him say this, and nothing like it occurs in his writings, still I believe it to be a fair summary of what he might have said if vague feeling had been formulated in definite argument. He said of me once that I was like Iago, "nothing if not critical," and though I can imagine the kindly, humorous smile with which the words were spoken, and cherish the mention with unmixed amusement and pleasure, still I know it was not a habit of mind he wished to encourage in any one. And although I think the dislike to criticism narrow; the recollection of how he would have felt with regard to any attempt, such as the present, to criticise one as worthy of reverence as he was does add to the many causes of diffidence and hesitation which I overcome now.

It is a much smaller cause for such diffidence that I have made the attempt before. When his biography was published, now nearly twenty years ago, I tried to express what in my view was his claim on the gratitude of his survivors, and his place in the history of his church, and his country. But I spoke then from a different point of view from that which I would occupy to-day. I aim now at an egotistic presentment of his influence which would have been then unsuitable. No truer picture of one mind can be given, I believe, than an accurate account of its influence on another mind, and I cannot think he influenced

any mind more than mine. I came under his influence as a pupil at Queen's College (his own creation), at its first opening, now nearly fifty-five years ago, and remember his preliminary lecture. I do indeed just remember a still earlier glimpse, when as an unnoticed child I accompanied a friend of his first wife's to ask after her in her last illness; the visit remains in my memory as something solemn and awe-inspiring, beyond anything that the few common-place words I can have heard would account for, and I feel sure that his countenance, in its profound and controlled sorrow, must have impressed my childish imagination even then. And afterwards, for many years, I listened to every word he said and read every word he published, and such opportunities of intercourse as occurred were prized by me, I venture to say, bold as is the assertion, at their actual value. It was he who first urged me to write, whose value for some imperfect attempts remain with me still as a pledge that they were not wholly worthless. What he was to me he was to many. His was the friendship that "roots itself in benefits bestowed," it followed the track of need, not merit, and the friends of such a one will be numerous. I do not mean that his friendship was limited to such cases. Many causes swelled the number of those who, whatever their differences, found a centre in their love for him. I have often wondered how many middle-aged "Maurices" record ardent longings and prayers at the baptismal font that they might commemorate his influence as his name. We should have to reckon in the list some who know little about him, but not one with whom the ascription was otherwise than from the heart.

In this sense his friends would almost coincide with a list of those who ever came near him. But if we take the word in a more specific sense, and indicate by the word that atmosphere of preference which makes one person nearer to us than another, apart from any particular esti-

mate of either merit or need, we shall find them, perhaps, less numerous than we might expect. He had his likes and dislikes, but less than most people. He did not dwell much in that region. Intercourse with him was sometimes disappointing for the moment. His greeting was indescribably heart-warming and inspiring. It always had something of the same effect as a meeting with a fellow-countryman in a foreign land. The sweet smile, the warm handclasp expressed his attitude to humanity; one saw, in that reception, what every human being was to him. But nobody likes to be merely a human being, and when one got beyond that first greeting one was sensible at first of a certain flatness. The first welcome was not more satisfying than the communion of close intercourse; but the moments of greeting are soon over, while the opportunities of close intimacy are in the nature of things rare; and in the intermediate stages something seemed lacking. An admirer might come back from an eagerly desired evening in his company having listened only to some tiresome bore, who had held forth to the assembled guests, him among them, without any interruption from him. This would be mainly the result of a humility that would not recognise his own intellectual rank and a kindness that refused to inflict a moment's mortification, but perhaps in some degree also of a want of readiness in striking a keynote which would have been a relief to all. Hence he was never a social figure in the way that Kingsley was. The lack that we escape either by falling back on the universal or by going forward to the closely individual may seem not worth mentioning, but as a matter of fact the bulk of average intercourse goes on in the interval between these two regions, and a person who can expand only in them, while he may give all that is most truly valuable in the commerce between one soul and another, yet fails to satisfy the instincts that build up what we call society.

In saying that he was not a social figure I mean something more than that he was utterly unworldly. I mean that too. He seems to me to have cared as little for all this world can give and take away as is possible in a state of things where its favour is the condition of so much valuable influence; perhaps, indeed, less than any one would, who fully realised how much this is the case. No churchman of equal importance and influence, I should imagine, ever received so little notice from Government; this was so insignificant a circumstance to himself that he somehow made it seem not worth notice by others, and reference in any reminiscence of him seems irrelevant. But also I should say that his social attitude marked the lack of something which might have made his teaching more valuable. What told as shyness or absence of mind always seemed to me to curtain off some understanding of average men and women which would have enabled him to enter more sympathetically into their difficulties. Anything that he felt as a promise of human culture or happiness awakened his keen and immediate interest, and at the focus of all else there burnt the steady flame of that hope wherein, he believed, centered all the true welfare of humanity. But the facts of life have often no bearing that we can see on the love of man and the trust in God, and unless he could see that they had that he regarded them with slackened attention, and when he spoke of them was somewhat commonplace. I think it was partly some sense of this lack in himself which made Kingsley's very different neighbourhood so delightful to him, and I suppose he was the person, beyond his own innermost circle, whom Maurice loved best. There were some who never felt this lack in him. I remember another intimate friend of his, F. J. Hort, could not understand what I meant when I once spoke of it to him. Still I am sure that it was the experience of

ordinary acquaintance and of some friends. And it seems to me worth dwelling on because it was no mere accident of temperament or circumstance—not indeed that these can ever be void of moral significance—but had a close connexion with much that was found difficult in his teaching even by those who listened to it earnestly and reverently. Whenever people had nothing particular to say about him in his lifetime they said he was difficult to understand. Very often, I suppose, they meant merely that it was an arduous thing to follow out a line of thought on the ultimate subjects of human attention ; but it is true that there was something baffling in his treatment of these subjects which there is not in all attempts to deal with them, and I should connect this difficulty partly with his lack of exercise in ordinary, undidactic, superficial but real intercourse between human beings. It must not be thought that he was himself indifferent to any form of intercourse. I remember an instance of his strong feeling on the other side. A person in whom he was interested was inclined (for reasons good as far as they went) to withdraw wholly from society and lead what might be called a recluse life. Maurice had a great—perhaps even a somewhat morbid—horror of taking up anything like the position of a director. He shrank from anything like interference with another life more than everybody does. But on this occasion he overcame this shrinking and spoke with remarkable distinctness and emphasis of the danger of any exceptional line, dwelling on the advantage of the *commonplace* in intercourse with a force that might seem to make what I have just said untrue. I think it true all the same, and even feel this pleading an illustration of it in some sense, but I fully allow that the latter seems to go the other way. Nobody could have put the case for the ordinary, even the conventional, better than he did. But the truth was, I believe, that something in him—not his

conscious judgment, but some deeper instinct—awakened to a sense of his own dangers, and his generous spirit flung aside taste and prejudice in his desire to save another person from them. He shrank from everything separating, and if there were a name for the opposite of a Pharisee it would be applicable to him.

The notion that there was something unintelligible in his teaching, so common among those who listened to him, has disappeared from the criticism of those who know him only from his books. Of course the contemporaries of a teacher find him more difficult to understand than the succeeding generation, he has taught to very little purpose if they do not. But I think many of those who made the remark in his lifetime were under a delusion as to what the difficulty of following his teaching really was. They supposed that if he would put his meaning into clearer words they should understand it. Yet his words were always perfectly simple, and he wrote excellent English. Every single sentence was intelligible to any one of average understanding; it was only when a hearer or reader gathered them up and tried to summarize their drift that he was sensible of some chasm over which the teacher had floated where foothold was lacking for any follower. And no explanation, I am convinced, could have bridged that gulf. It was not a different dialect that was required, but a different logic. He saw difficulties, for a moment, with a keen eye, sometimes he stated them as clearly as those who felt them overwhelming could do. But it always seemed to me that he mistook the statement for the explanation. And not only he, many of his hearers, finding their doubts and perplexities put so forcibly side by side with some statement entirely ignoring them, felt as if they had been answered, when the fact was they had been merely stated and dismissed. If they had been consciously dismissed, as

problems which must await solution in another stage of being, almost all would have been done that can be done with the great perplexities of life. Those help us most with them who can say, in some form or other, "I see all in this world which seems to protest against the idea of God, and I still trust in Him." But Maurice said rather more than that, and also less. His recognition of the difficulty of tracing this world to the decision of a holy will always melted into a confession of the sins of man, especially of priests, as an explanation of that difficulty, and his own utterance of trust was accompanied with something disputable. "I said some words to you yesterday," he wrote to a friend nearly forty years ago, "which it has grieved me to recollect because I fear they gave you pain. They were spoken as my words generally are about myself, and against myself. I feel all the incapacity to believe which you speak of, in my case I can only describe it as *reluctance* to believe, even when it is mixed with much desire. I, therefore, spoke of belief having to do with the Will. The bondage I groan under is a bondage of the Will, and that has led me to acknowledge God so emphatically as the Redeemer of the Will. It is in that character He reveals Himself to me. I could not think of God at all as the living God if I did not regard Him as such a Redeemer. But if of my will then of all wills; sooner or later I am convinced He will be manifested as the Restorer, Regenerator of the spirit that is in us. I believe that [it is in] this same spirit that I can walk across the street, that I know any friend or relation, that I can understand the words they speak—this is often hard work. But He who enables me to believe so far can enable me to believe anything that is true. And if me, why not every one? What is there to dissociate me from any one else? I become devilish when I do not confess myself human. God saves me because He saves every fellow-

creature." The words, which I copy from an old letter, surely illustrate alike his strength and weakness in dealing with doubt. In giving it this wide expansion he lost the sense of its special incidence. And then, so far as he found it originate in any *reluctance* to believe, he stood apart from the anguish of those who have thirsted after God, and have found the experience of this world a barrier against the belief in Him. I confess I do not know what he meant by the assertion that he felt any reluctance to believe, and I accept it only from the compulsion of trust in his absolute sincerity. He meant something important by it, I am certain; but something I should vainly strive to put into other words or echo in his own.

To Maurice, if to any one, the *sense of God* was a wider, deeper and more penetrating thing than the sense of evil; if either must be surrendered as an illusion it would be the last. But he thought that in setting forth the declaration —God sent His Son to redeem the world—would be found the true answer to all the perplexities of mankind. To many minds, my own among them, the belief in that declaration enormously extends such doubts and perplexities. To believe that such a world as we see was made by Omnipotent Love is hard enough; but to think that it remains what it is after the stupendous fact which we name Redemption—this is a difficulty which we can escape only through the hope of a spiritual maturity to us in this world not only unattainable but inconceivable. Maurice always shrank curiously from any attempt to still the pain of life's perplexity with a mere promise, however sure. He would not link Eternal Hope with anything that depended on time, and the word he most disliked next to Religion was, I think, "Heaven." When Newman's Apologia was fresh in all our minds I remember citing to him that wonderful list of the ills of humanity which I always re-peruse with the satisfaction of feeling that there

the worst is said, and said by one who still sees God. I do not think it expressed anything valuable to him. "Yes, Newman sees Death, and I see Death, but I see Life too," was all I can remember his saying, rather in the tone of a person turning from some unnecessary and distasteful point of view. Perhaps this picture of the ills of humanity, made by one who still felt the greatest suffering without sin a less evil than the smallest sin without suffering, jarred on Maurice as much by its resemblance to his own feeling as by his remoteness from it. The semitone discord, we all know, is much the harshest. His life was spent in a ceaseless battle with the evils of the world. Institutions still flourish among us which owed their initiative to him, quite apart from the greatest aim of his life (I need only mention the Working Men's College); he believed that in all such attempts Christ was his captain and comrade, and that was enough for him. He thought this might be the experience of any one; he could not endure the idea that this possibility belonged to the region in which one man differs from another.

I remember well, after an interval of years which does not clearly define itself but which covers more than a generation, a vehement outburst of my own against what I felt his unreasonable optimism, the occasion for which, if there were any, escapes my memory. It was winter, and we had come in from a walk together; perhaps it was merely the contrast of the bitter weather outside and the pleasant warmth within, and the remembrance of those for whom such a contrast was unattainable—but I turned upon him, as if he gave too little thought to the misery of the world. How could he ever speak as if we had only to open our eyes and look around to see God?—something like that I must have flung at him, for I know how his teaching always stirred some protest to that effect, but I can only recall his few gentle words of answer, of which the tones are still in

my ears: "I assure you it all looks very black to me"—words identical (it is strange to remember) with some I once heard from Ruskin. We did not pursue the subject, those words indeed were all I wanted; to have gone further would have re-opened differences, for the thing that looked black to him was different from what looked black to me and to most people. The horror of the world, to him, was its alienation from God, its refusal to accept that gift of Redemption which was offered in Christ. So far as that was accepted, he thought man entered on his true vocation, suffering became transfigured, death lost its terror, the path lay clear before the pilgrim, the unseen Comrade was ever at hand. That seemed to me the view of a person living in a different world from ours. This feeling always came out with regard to physical ills. I remember well one Bible class where we were reading the account of the Gospel miracles of healing, at which I and others tried to put before him the difficulties we felt in making the application, to him easy and natural, of these "mighty works," as expressive of our Lord's antagonism to all evil, in a world where trust in Him had so little traceable influence on health of body. Nobody had heard of "Christian science" forty or fifty years ago, but one has only to mention it now in order to summon up the kind of difficulties roused by any recollection of the miraculous cures in face of the incurable, or even the curable disorders of humanity. He waited until we finished our objections, and then repeated with added emphasis, as if they had strengthened it, his conviction that physical ill was the shadow of sin on the physical world, and beyond that we could never advance a step.

This made him sometimes unsympathetic. A cry of anguish, I should think, never reached his ear without attracting sympathy so rich, so liberal, so sustaining, that for the moment the pain, whatever it was, loosened its grip

on the heart. There must be still some living who felt this, and to them perhaps my record will seem unjust. But strange to say—strange at first sight—the egotistic had more claim on him than the disinterested suffering. The sympathy poured out in a flood which sometimes abashed the individual sufferer was not proportionately forthcoming for one to whom no private grief weighed as did the problem —God sees this, and does nothing to hinder it. He was fenced against that point, to some extent, by his life-long activity. Where he saw an evil he strove to remove it; he felt that God was on the side of all such effort, and the consciousness of the battle and the leader was enough for him. He never entered into the *thoughts*—I do not say the feelings—of those who come in contact with the irremediable ills of the world, and have to conclude—"For us, here and now, these things are God's will." He would not associate God's will with any form of evil, not even one which was transient, and a saviour from evil far greater.

What has all this to do with the Broad Church? it may be asked. Quite as much, I should answer, as he had. He belonged to it only as you might say a man going to America who got into a carriage at Euston Station with a party going to Willesden belonged to that party. The proportion of their and his common aims and beliefs was not greater than the ten minutes in the train to the journey across the Atlantic. His remoteness from the Broad Church party was less evident than it might have been, because all parties, as parties, were distasteful to him. From "platitudinarian, latitudinarian and attitudinarian," as the epigram ran some forty years ago, he had an equally decided shrinking, but I think in reality the latitudinarians were furthest removed from his sympathies. He did not argue against them, but a teacher is much more remote from those he ignores than from those whom he most passionately denounces. An evangelical, writing against him in the

Record, was nearer to him than the ordinary Broad Churchman of to-day. That movement of thought which we may call Progress, or Evolution—that movement which has made the invisible world remote, which has focussed attention on the seen world instead of the unseen, which has set us to save bodies instead of souls, and to dread disease more than sin—this movement, to the minds of many among us, as inevitable as the change from winter to spring, was, by him, quite unforeseen, and hardly recognised when he was in the midst of it. The Broad Church gathers to its fold the spirits leading on this change, and accepting its result as the Divine will in some other sense than that in which we must say an epidemic or a famine is the Divine will. I do not know how Maurice would have answered any one in that state of mind, it was one to which he never approached near enough to disagree with it. He could not conceive of the position of any human soul to which its relation to God was a question simply unmeaning, or uninteresting, and he thought one who believed himself to feel thus was a victim to some superstition taught by priests, an unconscious witness to the truths he seemed to deny. If working men, or scientific men, were deaf to the message of the Church it was because her ministers had been unfaithful in the deliverance of her message. One hesitates to put it that way because thus baldly stated the statement, at this time of day, seems to ascribe to him a want of sense. To suppose that a view of the Atonement, disentangled from distorting superstition, would have converted Huxley and Tyndall into churchmen brings in a sense of absurdity far indeed from anything that was ever possible in listening to him. Nevertheless the belief of which that absurdity is a mere application does seem to me characteristic of him. A deep modesty and a great reluctance to judge would have kept him from any interference with another man's belief if all his taste and impulse had not gone against that tendency;

and he had always when I knew him—it may not have been so in his youth, and perhaps some mistake then inclined him afterwards in an opposite direction—a sort of superstitious respect for the mere secular nature, just because it was so unlike his own. There was in him something of that centrifugal generosity, which often leads to injustice while it keeps off the worst injustice. His words were, as he says in the letter I have quoted, always spoken against himself primarily, and then against his order; and thus it happened that his sympathy and his harshness ceased together. I think it is as dangerous to declaim against one's own spiritual kindred as against any other kindred, and that under the deceptive "we" a good deal of antipathy sometimes steals into the seeming confession. And I think, too, that this kind of inverted self-reference generally leads to irrelevance in addressing an individual mind. Nevertheless it is in the form it took with him possible only to a noble nature, and I record it with reverence.

I have sometimes thought that—contrary to what would have been my expectation—it is not the seer who is the best guide to the events of the morrow. It has been said of Cromwell, that in his foreign policy the dangers of the past loomed larger than those of the present. Maurice, at any rate, seems to me like a person meditating improvement in archery after the invention of gunpowder. The only book in which he dealt with the spirit of scientific denial characteristic of the last half of the nineteenth century, and attaining its meridian before he left the world, was surely the least valuable he wrote, even its name has grown dim to me, and I will not try to recover it. His whole life was a testimony against such a spirit, but when he attempted to address it he could only emphasize convictions which were irrelevant to any perplexities which blocked the way to faith, and even, I think, sometimes raised fresh barriers in its way. And thus I cannot doubt

that he made some sceptics, or at least that he provoked a recoil of disappointment which sometimes made the faith which at any rate would have been quitted the object of a sort of bitter dislike. In the only instance in which he entered into direct antagonism with the critical spirit, his attitude towards Colenso, he showed himself, I cannot but think, actually unjust, and while it was later that he received the recognition of his Professorship at Cambridge, which as a removal of the stigma of heterodoxy meant so much to him, I do not think his influence was ever afterwards quite so great as it had been before. He ceased to be a heretic, and also an inspirer of new and stimulating thought. A teacher he never ceased so be, but in those years at Cambridge what told was rather the influence of a holy character than of a powerful mind.

I have said that he, whom I should mark out as the representative of Christianity to our time, disliked the word Christianity. It was to him a symbol of narrow ecclesiasticism, identifying the influence of Christ with the conscious reception of that influence, and shutting in the Divine life to a transcript of our ideas about it. Perhaps this feeling itself was but one form of a reluctance to see that the truths of eternity, manifested through the atmosphere of time, were themselves, as far as they are objects of our perception, subject to change. He did not deny this. I can even recall striking hints of a possibility of this in his own writings. But he never so far accepted it as to allow it to influence his thought.

Science, he saw, must grow, and growing must change. In the spirit of what I have called centrifugal generosity he was always ready to allow to the spirit of science a kind of advantage with regard to spiritual truth which I should think exaggerated, and yet he never realised how this must influence our views of spiritual truth itself. If, for instance, the lesson we have to learn from apparent dis-

crepancies in the different Gospels be a lesson of humility to ourselves, as he said it was, there is evidently something exceptional in those writings shutting them off from all criticism; and the circumstances which they narrate, therefore, must also have in them something unintelligible and out of harmony with the sequence of history. I repeat that he would not have accepted this as an accurate statement of what he did believe and that we might find passages in his teaching which denied it. But this, I venture to consider, is a fair statement of what his belief became in any logical mind.

"The strait and narrow way" of spiritual truth lies always along the watershed of error. On the one hand we have seen in the past that the Divine influence on humanity has been regarded as confined to a narrow spot of earth and a space of time ending two millenniums ago. The week of creation has been paralleled by the generation of redemption and those centuries of Jewish education which preceded it, and both limitations seen under the light of science must disappear. As the seven days of creation expand into the uncounted ages of mundane existence, so must the few years or centuries of Redemption expand into the eight or ten millenniums of human history. But because no age is shut off from the belief in God are all ages on a level with regard to that belief? Have there been no epochs when insight into the Divine was clearer, the glow corresponding to that light stronger and more expanded? To deny this, it seems to me, is to fall into an error more dangerous, at the present day, than those which would shut the Divine influence into a narrow spot of earth, and a narrow space of time. It matters little, as far as the result on other minds goes, whether we say that God never speaks to man, or that He always speaks with the same distinctness. To deny that the words near and far have a real meaning with regard to Him is just as great a stumbling-block to Faith as

to assert that He once spoke to human ears and is now silent. It is only superficially and apparently that it is less of a stumbling-block to science. We must read history with a strange refusal to attend to its most vital aspects if we refuse to recognise a more and less in the sense of God in the world. But this, no doubt, is the side to which the scientific spirit inclines as the religious spirit inclines towards its opposite. The path from which the traveller surveys both and escapes both is narrow.

These were the times when Maurice trod that height and looked across the expanse on either side. He not only saw its dangers, but earnestly and eloquently, at times, asserted them. But he was like an engineer who should carefully fence in some yards of a mountain pass and then, when it became most dangerous, not only omit his palisade but remove stones set up to mark the edge of the precipitous descent. His insistance that in the Bible we should accept what appeared irreconcilable statements as a lesson in intellectual humility was a claim for the writers of the Bible to live in an age when men were under different spiritual laws from that of the Divine government in our own day. And then again when he quitted that point of view and declared that all history was sacred history, he seemed to me to exaggerate homogeneity into monotony as he had exaggerated difference into contrast, and with the same result of seeming to speak of another world from that in which we live. This is how I should describe the limits of his influence, especially, perhaps, as it concerned the Broad Church. But I believe that to him I owe not only some appreciation of the truths he taught, but also much of the power to discern those he ignored, or even (so far as he ever did such a thing) seemed to oppose. And I will conclude by trying, in this belief, to express my own understanding of the meaning of the word Revelation.

There is in the physical world an agency which we know

as Heat, a word familiar enough to us as expressive of a sensation, but which, apart from the arts of human invention and the speculations of science, we might never know as an objective reality. We have discovered in modern times that this agency, if we have only enough of it, becomes dynamic. The chief part of the work of the world is done by steam, and steam is only water transformed by heat. Till it is thus transformed its only power is that it seeks the lowest place; after that transformation the words low and high lose their meaning, its expansion on all sides is irresistible. The change is sudden: in aspect, miraculous. Added warmth does not begin to change a liquid to a gas until we get above a certain temperature. Then we find suddenly, with no preliminary symptoms of such an alteration, that we are dealing with a new force. We can move mountains. We can do what on the plane of our former condition would be a miracle. Is there nothing like this in the spiritual world? All men are sons of God, the Divine life is, as a spark, within the nature of every one. If ever it was within any man as a fire, may not the completeness of that presence which we know always as a yearning and an aspiration equally confer new powers, and raise the natural into the supernatural? The epochs of such transformation are rightly regarded as supernatural and rightly as natural. They show forth the nature of man, they reveal a force above that nature. Why they should be granted at one time and not another is a question which neither science nor theology need undertake to answer. Its whole stress depends on the recently familiar assumption that man's seventy or eighty years here include either his whole existence, or that portion of it which fixes his everlasting condition. When the Divine influence is recognised as the inheritance, to be declared in good time, of every son and daughter of man, the question as to the where and how it shall transform

and expand each human spirit becomes a matter of deep interest indeed, but of an interest unmixed with anxiety or perplexity. Nor should any timid desire to keep the past unique shut off the hope that these eras of revelation are part of a course of evolution; that the Water of Life shall—when and how we know not—once again become steam, and fling its dynamic influence on lives fettered within the province of the things that are seen and temporal. At that hour these outward things shall become intelligible as a language to express the unseen and eternal, the only realities of human life.

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THE OBJECTIVE ASPECT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

A MORE adequate conception of the sacraments is probably one of the most vital desiderata of present-day Protestantism. The ascendancy of Ritualism has compelled many people to think out their position afresh, and to recognize the value of clear and worthy ideas on the subject. Further, the controversy is one which has a great history behind it, rather more closely connected with the form the problem assumes to-day than we commonly find to be the case in doctrinal discussions. For these and other reasons the question of the Eucharist continues to be one of inexhaustible importance.

The purpose of the following pages is to consider briefly the objective aspect of this sacrament. To state the matter compendiously, what is the gift bestowed in communion, and what is the relation of this gift to the elements of bread and wine? This restriction of the issues means, in the first place, that we must leave on one side the critical questions which have recently been raised about the evan-