

**RECOLLECTIONS OF  
DEAN FREMANTLE,  
CHIEFLY BY HIMSELF**

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Recollections of Dean Fremantle, chiefly by himself by W. H. Fremantle & William Henry Draper

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**W. H. FREMANTLE & WILLIAM HENRY DRAPER**

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*Photo: A. G. Cabell.*

*your most sincere,  
W. H. Fremantle.*

# RECOLLECTIONS *of* DEAN FREMANTLE

CHIEFLY BY HIMSELF

Edited by  
THE MASTER OF THE TEMPLE

*With Three Illustrations*

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## PREFACE

IN religious thought over long periods of time there is observable, by those who study it, an action and reaction between authority and freedom. When thought has become systematized and traditional, and has embodied in creeds and institutions the reflection and learning of many minds, some of them powerful and well equipped, it takes on naturally an air of importance, if not of majesty, and gathers around it a multitude of persons who first accept and then defer to it.

But after awhile the process is reversed. What has been established and accepted becomes questioned, examined, and perhaps rejected by some later thinker or thinkers who start with a bias towards inquiry. The temper of inquiry is as useful as the temper of authority. Authority itself is enriched and strengthened by inquiry, but it is also changed.

The subject of this short memoir, chiefly autobiographic, was one whose personal bias was in



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favour of freedom of inquiry in matters of thought. And his bias brought him the penalties and the rewards of that temper of mind—a certain antipathy from those whose temper is to defer to authority, yet at the same time a certain sympathy also from those whose bias is the other way.

The reader will be struck, therefore, by a kind of oscillation, not always equal, in the opinions concerning him of Fremantle's contemporaries, and in the degrees of influence which he exercised. Sometimes he was esteemed as an opener of new paths to walk in, sometimes criticized as one who caused others to stumble and miss their way. And these opposite currents of opinion are reflected in some of his more intimate and private thoughts here recorded.

It was a matter of some surprise to the present writer when the Dean requested him to read the notes which for many months he had been preparing at Ripon, with a touching consciousness of their imperfection and incompleteness from an autobiographic point of view. I had never been identified with his intellectual position, for he did not, and does not now, seem to me to allow enough for the organic element in Christianity; but he

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had seen my short memoir of the first Vice-Chancellor of Leeds, and knew that in all matters of religious discussion I was against foreclosing the issue, and had in theological assemblies been a hinderer of what is known as "howling down" any setter-forth of new doctrine, and a favourer of the less Ephesian and more Athenian attitude of willingness to hear such persons again if they seemed to have somewhat to say and not to be mere babblers. It may have been for one or other of these causes that the request was made; and when I saw the material and considered it in the light of the Bampton Lectures and other books which Fremantle had published, it seemed to me worth putting together, if only that it might form part of that quarry which some future historian ought to use who will record the development of the English Church during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

More than one book has been written to build up the memorial of the earlier Evangelical Revival, and of the Tractarian Movement at Oxford, but we still await the historian who will undertake the more difficult labour of tracing the movement which is giving shape to the religious thoughts of

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a new generation, which has to reckon with new discoveries and new methods of investigation in all departments of knowledge.

A Cambridge doctor has lately declared that "the old orthodoxy is in ruins," and that a new one has to be built up. It is a fine rhetorical flourish, but not to be accepted without serious qualification. There is an "old orthodoxy" which never is and never can be in ruins, because it is just the art of thinking right, and which includes the putting new wine into new bottles, so that it may serve the needs of man for a time, and from time to time; that is the orthodoxy of Christ Himself, and it is never in ruins because it rests on the sure principle of the Church as the organ of truth being the Church of all generations, not saying only and always the same old things, but bringing out of her treasures things new and old.

This newness of thought and word, when the need of man requires it, has had its apostles and prophets in different ages, and some of them, though they have had to wait long to be recognized, have at length been justified as children of wisdom. Such justification comes through the clear eyes and true words of fair writers of history.