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978-1-107-66891-1 - F. D. Maurice and the Conflicts of Modern Theology:

The Maurice Lectures, 1948

Arthur Michael Ramsey

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BY

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THE MAURICE LECTURES, 1948

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PREFACE

THIS book includes the substance and to some extent the text of the Maurice memorial lectures given in King's College, London, in the Lent term of 1948. The lectures corresponded with the second, third and sixth chapters, and they contained also some portions of the first and seventh chapters. The rest of the book has been added since the lectures were delivered.

Though the literature about Maurice is growing, I dare to hope that the distinctive aim of this volume may give it a place within that literature. I have not attempted to provide a systematic account of Maurice's teaching, such as has been given by Dr Vidler in his admirable Hale lectures, but to trace the theological conflicts which Maurice faced and to relate them to the chief theological tendencies of the last one hundred and fifty years. In particular I do not think that any previous attempt has been made to evaluate Maurice's teaching on Atonement and Sacrifice as a whole, or to examine his methods of Biblical exegesis in relation to the subsequent trends of Biblical study. On no two subjects did Maurice more signally anticipate some of the theological work of the present day, and speak in a way which comes home to us with relevance and force.

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In the study of Maurice's character and personality I have found particular help in two sketches of him by contemporaries: the one is by Julia Wedgwood in her *Nineteenth Century Teachers*, and the other is by R. H. Hutton in his *Modern Guides of English Thought in Matters of Faith*, and together they form a valuable supplement to the Biography beloved by every student of Maurice. In the study of the theological movements of the last century there is no lack of older works which share rather naïvely in one or other of the enthusiasms of the time, and of more recent works which are coloured by the violent reaction from everything 'liberal'. By far the most successful attempt to see the whole period in perspective was made, I think, by Dr J. M. Creed in his Hulsean lectures on *The Divinity of Jesus Christ*, and my debt to him is great.

I have to thank the Rev. R. E. Cant, Vice-Principal of St Chad's College, Durham for reading my manuscript and giving me the benefit of his acute historical and theological judgment. And I cannot end without thanking once more the Council of King's College for honouring me with the Maurice lectureship. To lecture on Maurice, within the walls of the College and in the centenary year of the movement of 1848, was to me an unforgettable privilege.

MICHAEL RAMSEY

DURHAM, 1949