

**BIBLE PROBLEMS AND
THE NEW MATERIAL
FOR THEIR SOLUTION**

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Bible problems and the new material for their solution by T. K. Cheyne

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NEW MATERIAL FOR THEIR SOLUTION

A PLEA FOR THOROUGHNESS OF INVESTIGATION
ADDRESSED TO CHURCHMEN AND SCHOLARS

✓
BY

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PREFACE

THE present Volume is an expansion, with elucidatory notes, of the Lecture which I delivered before the Churchmen's Union, at the Church House, on June 16, 1904. It was addressed to Churchmen who took an intelligent interest in the Bible, and wished to know how critical Bible-study was affected by recently discovered facts, but for that very reason it also appealed in a secondary degree to special scholars. For there are notoriously at the present time great differences among scholars, caused by a difference of mental attitude towards new facts. This work is partly an exposition of the new facts, partly a plea for a bolder style of Biblical criticism, justified and invited by those facts.

It may possibly be called a specimen of advanced criticism, but it is not as such that I offer it, for my only object has been to make it as thorough as the occasion allowed. If in order to be thorough I have sometimes been compelled to go beyond my fellow-scholars, such unsought originality may perhaps be pardoned.

Some of the subjects here treated of are closely related to the Christian faith. They have been taken up under a strong but animating sense of responsibility. It will at least be recognized that their tendency is not subversive, but, in so far as the affirmations of the general Christian consciousness are concerned, conservative. Should any one of those whose gift is that of steering the Church find time to look into this book, I would venture to suggest that the part which it most concerns him to test is the account given of these affirmations, because they seem to determine the sense in which ordinary thoughtful Churchmen use certain statements of the Apostles'

Creed. On the other hand, students of the history of our religion will, I hope, take a special interest in the view given of the origin of the forms in which those affirmations are expressed in the Creed. It is hoped that fresh light may have been thrown on the true meaning of the Biblical passages on which these forms of statement are based. Should this be the case, it will be largely due to Professor Gunkel's researches, as summarized in the recent tractate mentioned below. At the same time, it will be clear to the intelligent reader that I have preserved my own independence of judgment even while I learn from him; and I may say once more that on the line which Professors Gunkel and Zimmern have taken as mythologists, I have been to some extent their predecessor and fellow-worker.

In the above I have referred especially to Part II. of the Lecture. In Part IV. I have devoted myself to new facts bearing on the Old Testament. I trust that no one will

accuse me of assuming as proved what is still *sub judice*. I have endeavoured to distinguish between facts, which may be ignored, but cannot be argued away, and the inferences which follow from those facts. At the same time, no one, I hope, will blame me for holding that some of my inferences are too well-founded to be safely denied. Some other facts, for which further evidence is still to be desired, are given in one of the appended Notes.

I have no wish to enter into any of the current theological controversies. In delivering this Lecture, and in expanding it for the press, I have felt myself in a world where "beyond these voices there is peace." But I may perhaps express the hope that the tone, and, in one important respect, the method, of this book may make it useful as a corrective to Mr Mallock's ably written but controversial, and, as I think, in its main conclusions, misleading article, "Free Thought in the Church," *Nineteenth Century and After*, September 1904, pp. 386-401.

To facilitate study I have prefixed a Summary of the Contents of the Lecture, giving those of the first two parts with special fullness. May I add the request that the Notes may be perused by those who are interested in the Bible with not less care than the Lecture?