

STUDENT'S NEW TESTAMENT HANDBOOK

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Student's New Testament Handbook by Marvin R. Vincent

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MARVIN R. VINCENT

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TESTAMENT
HANDBOOK**

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NEW TESTAMENT HANDBOOK

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NEW TESTAMENT HANDBOOK

BY

MARVIN R. VINCENT, D.D.

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PREFACE

I HAVE tried to do for New Testament students in this little book what I wish that some one had done for me many years ago. I mean not only students in theological seminaries, but scholarly ministers who have but little time for critical study.

A beginner in New Testament criticism, plunged headlong into one of the great "Introductions," like that of Bleek or Weiss or Holtzmann, is bewildered, and does not, without much groping and labor, get hold of the cardinal points of the science. It seems possible to prepare the way for his more intelligent and facile use of these larger works, by giving him beforehand a sort of bird's eye view of the field of study.

The first division of this book—"The Field of New Testament Study"—contains a compact statement of the topics of study and of the best sources of information.

Under the head of "The Criticism of the Canon" will be found a brief history of the development of New Testament criticism from the close of the fourth century to the present.

Under the head of "The Criticism of the Canon in Detail," and under each New Testament book, are exhibited the points of controversy raised by the book, the names and opinions of the leading disputants, and the present attitude of criticism.

The second division consists of a catalogue of the best helps to the critical exegesis of the text. Treatises on subjects incidental to the text are, for the most part, classified under their appropriate headings in the first division.

A mere list of commentaries and commentators furnishes no indication of the critical position or school which each represents. Professor Thayer, in his admirable lecture on "Books and their Use," wisely advises students to "read books written by men of opposite antecedents and position," and adds a wholesome caution as to the use of sectarian commentaries. A student will be assisted in carrying out this advice by knowing in advance the commentator's point of view; and such knowledge, moreover, furnishes a key to the commentator's exegesis which greatly facilitates the process of studying him, and which serves to put the student on his guard against false exegesis, whether in the interest of rationalism or of orthodoxy.

By following the name of any commentator, with the aid of the index, through the first division of the book, it will not be difficult to determine his critical latitude and longitude.

In the list of commentaries I have given only a selection out of a multitude, and have included in it those of every shade of opinion.

The complaint will probably be made that so many of the sources referred to are German. Only to such as make this complaint is it necessary to say that Germany furnishes the most and the best, and that no student can hope ever to master the science of New Testament criticism without the study of German authorities in their own language. In all theological seminaries a knowledge of German ought to be a condition of entrance.

MARVIN R. VINCENT.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

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