

**THE PREACHING OF
THE OLD TESTAMENT
TO THE AGE**

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The Preaching of the Old Testament to the Age by George Adam Smith

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GEORGE ADAM SMITH

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BY

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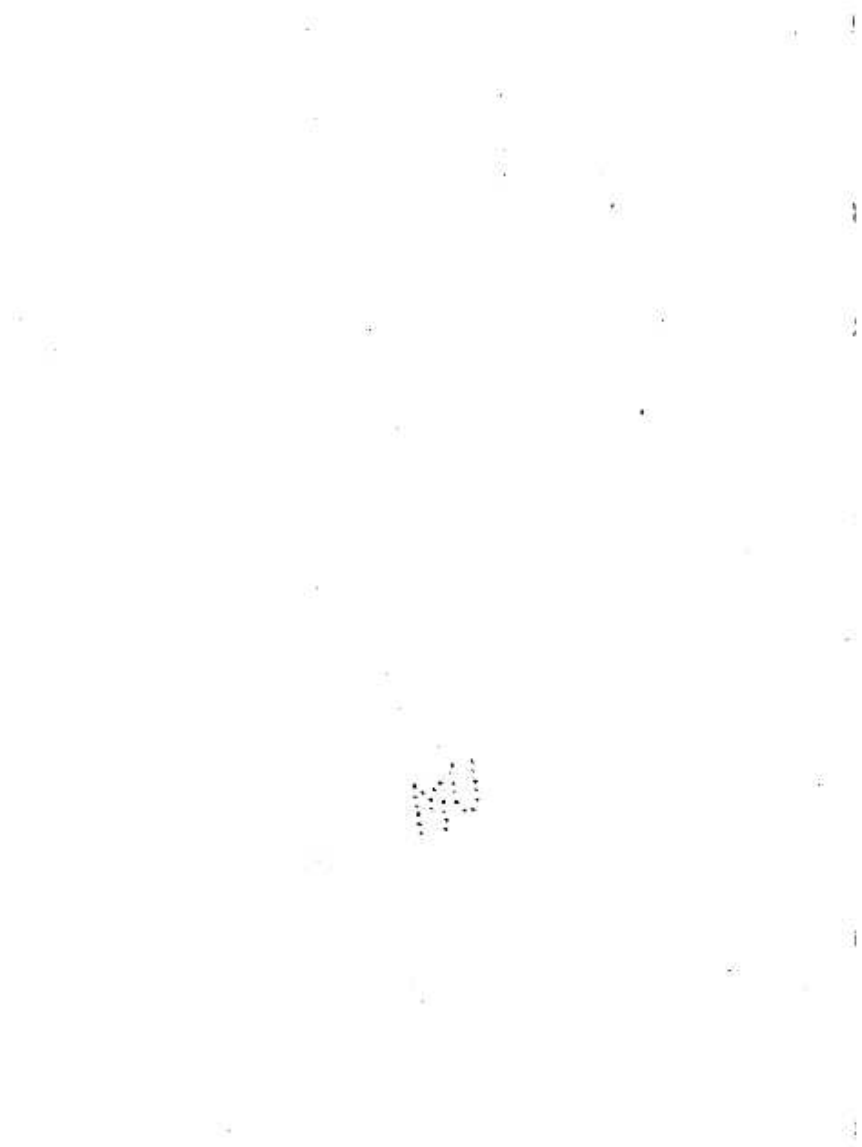


London

HODDER AND STOUGHTON

27, PATERNOSTER ROW

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MDCCKCIII



1-30-39

2-24-39 V.A.

This Lecture was delivered as an Inaugural Address on the author's induction to the Chair of Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis in the Free Church College, Glasgow. Some personal allusions have been omitted, some paragraphs which were omitted in delivery have been retained, and some notes have been added.

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FATHERS AND BRETHREN, FELLOW STUDENTS,—The present condition of Old Testament science offers many opportunities for such a general review as forms the usual subject of an inaugural address. For a long time past, every relevant science, every possible school of belief, have shot across the Old Testament their opposing lights, under which there has been the most extraordinary exercise of individual labour and ingenuity. It is commonplace to say that no other literature of equal size has been so fully explored and de-

bated. And the result is that to-day there may be reached, almost everywhere upon it, points of view from which we can survey what is already settled, and prospect the inevitable directions of our advance across what is not.

I feel, however, that to a beginner like myself these points of view form temptations rather than opportunities, and that to-day it would be better if I gave you something within my own experience—the rather that this coincides with what is, after all, the main purpose of the Old Testament through us who are its students.

It has been the custom of the Church of Scotland to call to the chairs of her colleges, those who have already been practical preachers of God's Word. In this way, of course, the interests of scholarship have been set at some disadvantage —

seldom discounted even by the numerous opportunities of science which the Church offers to her students before their entrance upon the ministry. But, on the other hand, as we all recognise with gratitude, the system effectually prevents both professors and students from forgetting that the final end of our colleges is the equipment of preachers of God's Word and pastors of His people—that in them the most perfect scholarship of which we are capable is indeed to be coveted earnestly, along with all other best gifts, but only for the sake of the practical ministry of the Church both at home and abroad. And for myself, I should like to say that if my call to this chair were a call away from practical work, I would not be here. I have not left a pulpit, which I loved and found frec-