

**THE THEOLOGICAL  
EDUCATOR. AN  
INTRODUCTION TO  
THE OLD TESTAMENT**

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The Theological Educator. An Introduction to the Old Testament by Charles H. H. Wright & W. Robertson Nicoll

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**CHARLES H. H. WRIGHT & W. ROBERTSON NICOLL**

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THEOLOGICAL EDUCATOR

*Edited by the*  
REV. W. ROBERTSON NICOLL, M.A., LL.D.  
*Editor of "The Explorer"*

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OLD TESTAMENT

BY THE REV.

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## PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

A NEW edition of this "Introduction" having been called for, the publishers have requested me to make such additions to the Appendix attached to the Second Edition in 1891 as might bring the Bibliography down to the present time. Personally I would have preferred to have rewritten the whole work, so as to notice the critical theories put forth since its first publication. Those theories have not, however, in my opinion substantially affected any of the conclusions arrived at in the body of the work. The more important additions to Old Testament literature will be found mentioned in the Bibliographical Appendix, in which the Appendix to the Second Edition has been incorporated.

The enormous advance in recent years in almost every department of Old Testament literature can be seen from a glance at that Appendix, incomplete though it necessarily must be. The progress made

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in English works on the subject in the last ten years exceeds that of any former decade. That rapid advance has been attended with certain drawbacks. On matters of Biblical criticism the pendulum has unduly swung from the standpoint of a narrow traditionalism towards that of an excessive toleration. The most destructive critics are now welcomed as fellow-workers in the path of progress, while there is a disposition to regard all conservative critics more or less as obstructives.

There is, moreover, a marked tendency, even among those who profess belief in Scripture as a whole, to accept all that is merely stated to be the latest results of modern criticism. The spirit of submission to authority is as rampant as ever. Some years ago it was dangerous to question "the authority of the Church," which was supposed to have placed barriers in the way of free enquiry; now it is dangerous to a scholar's reputation in England or elsewhere to call in question "the unanimous interpretation" of the critics. Theologians who but twenty or thirty years ago would have been found in the ranks of those striving to harmonise Scripture and Science, are quite ready, without having made any thorough examination of the matter, to express belief in the latest dicta of critics, however opposed those dicta may be to the truthfulness of the books of the Old Testament. Some, filled with

the new-born spirit of liberality, are willing to admit the narratives of the Old Testament to be a confused mass of legend and fable, of which the less said the better. Histories and prophecies, to which Christ and the writers of the New Testament appealed as of decisive authority, are now put aside as no longer reliable ; while the question has already been debated in Church journals whether our children ought to be taught at all the histories of the Old Testament.

Such a surrender of the sacred books of the Old Testament is not justified by the actual facts of Old Testament criticism. It is unscientific on the one hand, and fatal to truth on the other. The cowardly spirit exhibited in times past by those who were leaders in our Universities, which led them to stifle enquiry rather than answer objections, combined with the apathy exhibited by the Evangelical party in the Churches as to the necessity of a higher theological education, have at the present crisis rendered the Churches comparatively destitute of scholars properly trained in Biblical science and able to uphold the truth as taught by Christ and His Apostles. Some dream that "the authority of the Church" can be relied on as a sufficient support for the theological dogmas taught in the Creeds, and have persuaded themselves that no great danger will accrue to faith by the Old Testament being lowered to the rank of