

THE "HIGHER CRITICISM"

AND THE

VERDICT OF THE MONUMENTS.

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BY THE

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PREFACE.

I AM well aware that the pages which follow will satisfy neither the "higher critics" nor their extreme opponents, and that every effort will be made to dispute or minimise the archæological evidence which they contain. But the great body of the religious public happily consists neither of "higher critics" nor of uncompromising "apologists," and is honestly desirous of knowing what is the actual testimony which the marvellous discoveries of oriental archæology are giving to the antiquity and historical character of the Old Testament. I have therefore endeavoured as it were to take stock of them, and to indicate the conclusions to which they point. I have aimed at writing as an archæologist rather than as a theologian, treating the books of the Hebrew Bible as I should any other oriental literature which laid claim to a similar antiquity, and following the archæological evidence whithersoever it may lead. Whether I have been successful in thus putting aside all those prepossessions in favour of a peculiarly divine origin which an Anglican priest might be expected to feel for the Scriptures of his Church is for my readers to decide.

That the evidence is imperfect the archæologist will be the first to admit. But so too is the evidence