Common objections to Christianity

Drawbridge Cyprian Leycester
Title: Common objections to Christianity

Author: Drawbridge Cyprian Leycester

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COMMON OBJECTIONS TO CHRISTIANITY

C. L. DRAWBRIDGE, M.A.
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Many points of doctrine have been passing afresh through the crucible; "re-statement" is a popular cry and, in some directions, a real requirement of the age; the additions to our actual materials, both as regards ancient manuscripts and archaeological discoveries, have never before been so great as in recent years; linguistic knowledge has advanced with the fuller possibilities provided by the constant addition of more data for comparative study; cuneiform inscriptions have been deciphered, and forgotten peoples, records, and even tongues, revealed anew as the outcome of diligent, skilful and devoted study.

Scholars have specialized to so great an extent that many conclusions are less speculative than they were, while many more aids are thus available for arriving at a general judgment; and, in some directions at least, the time for drawing such general conclusions, and so making practical use of such specialized research, seems to have come, or to be close at hand.

Many people, therefore, including the large mass of the parochial clergy and students, desire to have in an accessible form a review of the results of this flood of new light on many topics that are of living and vital interest to the Faith; and, at the same time, "practical" questions—by which is really denoted merely the application of faith to life and to the needs of the day—have certainly lost none of their interest, but rather loom larger than ever if the Church is adequately to fulfil her Mission.

It thus seems an appropriate time for the issue of a new series of theological works, which shall aim at presenting a general survey of the present position of thought and knowledge in various branches of the wide field which is included in the study of divinity.
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Shades of opinion and differences of judgment must exist, if thought is not to be at a standstill—petrified into an unproductive fossil; but while neither the Editor nor all their readers can be expected to agree with every point of view in the details of the discussions in all these volumes, he is convinced that the great principles which lie behind every volume are such as must conduce to the strengthening of the Faith and to the glory of God.

That this may be so is the one desire of Editor and contributors alike.

W. C. P.

LONDON.
PREFACE

THIS book is concerned with the most common objections to Christianity raised by the ordinary sceptic, rather than with the more academic objections which are put forward by sceptics in the world of high culture. Much has been and still is being written upon the latter subject: very little has been and is being published upon the former. But we ought to be more concerned with the great bulk of the people, than with the comparatively few who are real scholars and thinkers.

The ground to be covered in this book is too large to be dealt with adequately in the limited space at my disposal. I mention this fact at the outset, in order to account for the many and obvious omissions in the following pages which will be noticed by the reader. I have been compelled to leave out a great deal of what would naturally have been included, if it had been possible to make the book larger. Further, I have not forgotten that this volume is but one of a series of books, some of which will deal with problems touched upon in the following pages.

I presume that the reason that I have been asked by the publishers to write upon the subject of Common Objections to Christianity is that I have spent hours every week, for eight years, dealing with atheist lecturers and answering the never-ceasing stream of awkward questions put to me in the parks by sceptics of all schools of thought. Also, as Honorary Organizing Secretary of the Christian Evidence Society, I have had many and excellent opportunities of learning a great deal about popular scepticism. Therefore,
PREFACE

if I do not know the subject upon which I have been asked to write, it certainly is not for want of opportunities to acquire information with regard to it.

Most of the topics dealt with in the following pages are divided up into two sections. I deal first with the point of view of our opponents, and I then give, in rough outline, a criticism of their objections. It will be found that I do not attempt to refute everything that our opponents urge. There are three reasons for these omissions. One reason is that some of the criticisms of Christian theism are so absurd that it would be waste of time to meet them with serious attention; they are mentioned because they are so frequently urged, not because they deserve attention for any other reason. Other objections which I name I do not proceed to attack because they are objections that are often raised by Christian theists themselves, who gladly admit their cogency. Many other objections are not dealt with in the succeeding pages because much had to be cut out in order to keep the size of the book within the prescribed limit.

I have taken quite as much pains to state the anti-theistic position in each case, as well as I was able to do so, as I have taken to present the Christian reply to it. The former is of much greater importance to Christians than the latter. It is the former about which Christians know least, and it is the former about which I know most.

C. L. DRAWBRIDGE.
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