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Perry, Ben Edwin, The Ancient Romances (Univ. of Calif. Press) 1967
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when he states in 11 Peter 1:21, Fror the prophery came not p. 97 For Rohde, influenced by the prevailing conceptions of his day, placed in old time by the will of man: but boly men of God stake as Iamblichus, Heliodorus, and the other "sophistic" romances at the base of his they were moved by the Holy chost." He then roce on to talk system, assuming that they were typical of the romance in its pristine character, of the false prophets then among the Jews, thus equating the and that the distinctive features of Chariton's work were merely so many aberrations times with his own, and testifying that his attitude toward from an originally sophistic norm, due mainly to decadence. On this assumption the Old Testement is under attack even as the Java' attitude we were told, for instance, that the simplicity of Chariton's plot was a deficiency was in the days of its composition. but that the fact of its due to want of imagination or ingenuity in the invention and multiplication of inspiration cannot be obscured. episodes, that he imitated the substance of all the other romancers, and that In I John 1 the apostle speaks of "that which was from the historical background of his narrative, instead of being due to an early the beginning, which we have beard ... . "-thus continuing his literary convention, was only a bit of arbitrary decoration or flavoring, as earlier statement of the authority of the Old Testament. Amain a recent writer calls it in effect - superimposed on a story that was pure invention here, in the epistles, the references which could be alluded from the bottom up. In Rohde's theory of development the romance passes from to are many, yet the core of what is to be found in these Antonius Diogenes at one pole to Chariton at the opposite, from the complex, unwritings is expressed, I believe, in the verses and passages real, sophistic, and externalized at the beginning of its career to the simple, which a have chosen. naively sentimental, and quasi-historical at the end. This theory does not need Although the attitudes of the common neorle of New Testato be refuted today, since no one accepts it in principle; but its baleful inment times toward the Old Testament are not strictly included fluence still lives, particularly in the tendency to regard ancient romance as within the definition of the New Pestament attitude toward the a by-product of professional rhetoric, and in certain other misconceptions which Old Testament, they are of some importance: bence. I shall have not yet disappeared from what is casually or perfunctorialy written about the briefly treat just a few such people and their attitudes. for Greekromances. they reflect in some measure, the attitude of the New Testament What was the rational basis, in the nineteenth century, for this completely in reneral on the question. erroneous dating of Chariton? Was it inferred from any internal evidence of a word and internal account to maid a common and a common a positive nature, or from any external testimony? The answer is no. It was only Jesus and his prophecy concerning Him, and also Anna's adoraa hazy guess, fostered by historical accidents in the textual transmission of tion of the holy child. These two had searche the scriptures the several romances, and by the vogue which the sophistic romancers, Heliodorus, diligently, seeking out those things by which they might identify Longus, and Achilles Tatius, had enjoyed among the precieux of the sixteenth and the Messiah. It is a tacit admission of the verscity of the seventeenth centuries, and, before that, among the Byzantines. Hebrew Rible that on the authority of its prophecies concerning