

**A LETTER TO A FRIEND ON
THE EVIDENCES AND
THEORY OF CHRISTIANITY**

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A Letter to a Friend on the Evidences and Theory of Christianity by Alexander William Lindsay

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ALEXANDER WILLIAM LINDSAY

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OF
CHRISTIANITY.

BY
LORD LINDSAY.



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PREFACE.

THE following letter is published at the request of the friend to whom it was addressed, and in the hope that its brevity may prove a recommendation to some who have neither time nor inclination for the study of works of greater length and higher pretensions. In admitting, however, this hope, the writer would earnestly refer to the "Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures," by the Rev. T. Hartwell Horne, as a library of information on all points connected with the evidences of the Christian religion, and the illustration of the Bible; and also to the works of the Rev.

Henry Blunt, as embodying and enforcing, in a popular form, in pure English, and with perfect freedom from sectarian prejudice, the theory and practice of that religion.

August 11, 1841.

A LETTER,

&c.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE conversation I had the pleasure of having with you last Saturday has been dwelling on my mind ever since, and now induces me to trouble you with a letter, which I apprehend may extend to rather an unwarrantable length. But as you evinced deep interest in its subject, and received with indulgence the few observations I then made, I take the liberty to write them out, and lay them before you at greater length, and more connectedly than I could then express them. You will forgive me, I am sure, for commencing, as I do, from the platform of natural

religion : I do so, to avail myself of the presumptive argument in favour of revelation,—to me a very striking one. And I have dwelt equally upon every link of the argument, from conviction that belief is much more readily conceded to many of the distinctive tenets of Christianity, after their reasonableness and necessity have been recognised in their connexion with, and dependency upon, the rest of the system. You will wonder perhaps at my not sending you a single work on the evidences and theory of Christianity. But no one work that I am acquainted with, of moderate compass, treats of the whole argument consecutively, and in the peculiar manner in which I wish to lay it before you. I will, therefore, now proceed, without further apology ; and pray forgive me if I appear, in the course of reasoning, at all dogmatical, which is very far from my intention.

That God is good, (which his very name implies in our old Teutonic tongue,)

is clearly deducible from the open page of creation in general, and from the physiology of the mind and body of man in particular, as well as from a thousand provisions of adaptation made for his existence and comfort in the world he lives in, evidently showing him to have been the object of care and providence before creation.⁽¹⁾ God has also implanted in the human breast an intimate assurance of continued personal existence after the death of the body; a belief by no means inefficient as a motive of action, common to every human tribe on the face of the earth, and found in no other order of the visible creation. Man, therefore, even had no special revelation ever been made to him, would, I conceive, in the first instance by the light of reason, in the second by intuition, come to the conclusion, that he is the creature of a God of beneficence, and that it is his destiny to survive the body, and the state of things in which he finds himself temporarily a sojourner. ⁽²⁾