

**THOUGHTS ON THE
ATHANASIAN
CREED, ETC.**

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Thoughts on the Athanasian creed, etc. by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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OF THE
ATHANASIAN CREED,

ETC.

BY A LAYMAN.

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PREFACE.

A VERY kind friend having expressed anxiety respecting the soundness of my religious opinions, and the consequent health of my soul, I was induced to give the subject further consideration; determining to "search the scriptures" without note or comment, and without reference to any treatises one way or the other; so as to try whether I, as a person to whom the Bible and Prayer Book only were presented, would naturally, or could reasonably, come to the belief that the doctrines contained in the latter, could be "proved by most certain warranty" from the former, as stated in the third of the XXXIX Articles; with due regard to the rule laid down in Article XX, namely that one portion of scripture must not be expounded so as to be repugnant to another.

The result of that examination and consideration has been the conclusions contained in the following pages.

There is nothing new under the sun; and it is very probable that all that I have thought and written has been already expressed in better language by others, whose whole lives have been devoted to the task. Yet, as an old picture may discover fresh merits by being accidentally placed in a particular light, so it is possible that my thoughts as hereafter expressed, may suggest some ideas or arguments that may not have been previously entertained or urged. At all events I trust that my views are so compressed as to prevent their being found tedious in the private circulation for which, alone, they are intended by

THE AUTHOR.

Christmas, 1865.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE greatest mistakes that are made respecting the nature and attributes of the Deity, and man's relation to him, seem to arise from a partial continuance of, and inconsiderate acquiescence in, the errors, which until lately prevailed respecting the natural formation, position, and motion of the earth, and the literal and incontrovertible truth of the facts stated in the beginning of Genesis, all which are now blown to the winds.

When it was believed that this earth was the centre of the universe, and that the sun, moon, and stars, were made for the sole purpose of

giving it light and heat, being, in fact, nothing but larger, lesser, and very small lights set in the firmament for the sole use and benefit of this earth "and all the inhabitants thereof," it is not surprising that men should have thought themselves the only beings, (not only on this earth, but in the entire universe,) who were worthy of, or received, the care and regard of the Creator. And this feeling was strengthened and supported, by the account of the creation, as given by or attributed to Moses,—the belief in its literal truth as held by the Jews, and (until very recently) by all Christians, and the practical assertion of that belief by setting apart one day in seven as a sabbath of rest.

But now that it is known to a certainty, that this earth is only a very small one of the several worlds that revolve round the sun; and that that sun is only one of innumerable suns, each of which is itself the centre of a separate system of worlds; and that there is no reason against, but are very cogent reasons in favour of, the supposition, that most if not all of those worlds are inhabited by beings of equal if not greater intelligence than man; and when it is proved that, so far from the acts of creation as stated in the 1st chapter of Genesis having been the work of six *days*, according to the