

**CHRISTIAN
THEOLOGY AND
MODERN SKEPTICISM**

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Christian Theology and Modern Skepticism by The Duke of Somerset

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THE DUKE OF SOMERSET

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THEOLOGY AND
MODERN SKEPTICISM**

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AND

MODERN SKEPTICISM.

BY

Edward Adolphus Leumour

THE DUKE OF SOMERSET, K. G.

"Recte enim veritas filia temporis dicitur non auctoritatis."

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P R E F A C E .

For many years past, religious questions have incessantly interfered with the social and educational improvement of the community. Instead of gradually diminishing in their effects, these causes of disturbances seem to be increasing.

A politician would gladly avoid touching these thorny subjects, but he observes that the religious teachers never cease from intermeddling with politics.

The Church of Rome, as in olden times, pours imprecations on our heads; and the Roman Catholic clergy, in the United Kingdom, administer the same balm in a more inconvenient form.

The Established Church distracts us with so many doctrinal disputes and perplexing

doubts, that we almost wish she would slumber again, as she did during the greater part of the last century.

The Non-conformists appear to be exasperated, and threaten to upset every thing, from the village-school to the cabinet, unless they are allowed to have their own way.

All these convulsive movements are symptoms of mental disquietude, which forebodes a religious change.

Meanwhile, every Protestant may exercise his private judgment; and, since inquiry cannot easily make matters worse, let us again examine into the fountain-head of all these differences, and see whether there is any possible solution at least of the Protestant difficulties.

We live in an age of free thinking and plain speaking, "*rara temporum felicitate, ubi sentire quæ velis, et, quæ sentias dicere, licet.*"

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INTRODUCTION.

It is humiliating to be obliged to confess that, after eighteen hundred years of Christian teaching, man has made no advance in certainty of religious knowledge.

So far from any approach to certainty, the opinions of educated society upon the most important questions which can occupy the human mind, appear at the present time to be more unsettled than at any previous period of European history.

In every other branch of knowledge assiduous study and persevering industry have been rewarded with at least partial success. Some progress has been made, and some results obtained, which, while they have con-