

TO THE PATRONS OF THE ALMANACK.

"Wisdom and Knowledge Shall be the Stability of thy Times."

The ordinary period for issuing the Annuals for 1844 having arrived, I have prepared with more than usual care my small publication for the Year, and cheerfully commend it to the support of the friends of truth and liberty, believing that every sentiment which it contains will bear the scrutiny of every honest mind. It is important always to realize that, amidst the revolutions of time and the vicissitudes of life, **TRUTH** undergoes no change; but, like the Sun in the firmament, is always adapted to enlighten, to comfort, and to cheer the mind that truly submits to its benign influence. With this conviction, and believing in the strange and melancholy fact, that in nothing is man more ready to be deceived than as to religious things, I have now, as on former occasions, endeavoured to expose some of the *abominable delusions which PRIESTCRAFT has palmed upon the world* as the verities of heaven, and by which millions of the human race are kept in bondage and exposed to ruin. If my feeble attempt at usefulness shall have liberated *one* soul from the thralldom of Priestly errors and conducted it to the only unerring guide to truth, to liberty and to heaven, **THE BIBLE**—I shall be more than amply rewarded for my labour.

Amidst the conflict of parties and the strife of Priests that Sacred Volume, like a Light House on a dark and dangerous coast, stands prepared to direct the weary and distracted spirit to the haven of security and peace. Yet it is a melancholy truth that it is comparatively but little valued; and, instead of being the daily Companion and Counsellor of professing christians, it forms very generally only **A TEXT-BOOK FOR PREACHERS**, whose opinions upon its truths, are implicitly received, as if they were the truths themselves, without either examination or conviction! Were it an unquestionable truth, that religious teachers shall bear the final and eternal results of all the spiritual ignorance and error created or upheld through their instrumentality, while the ignorant and deceived shall escape,—then might it be rational to submit implicitly to their guidance. But if, on the contrary, "*Every man must give account of himself to God*" [see Rom. XIV. 12.] and that, at **THE LAST DAY** we shall all be judged, not by the opinions of men, but by **THE WORD OF CHRIST**, [see John XII. 48.] how unspeakably important is it that *every one should make that word the alone rule of his faith and practice*. But men are taught that it is "a sealed book" and cannot be understood or believed without priestly instruction or a direct gift from heaven! notwithstanding that it is *itself* the Gift of Divine wisdom and benevolence,—wondrously adapted to the nature, character, and circumstances of man, and declared to be "*able to make [him] wise unto salvation.*"—[2 Tim. III 15. 1st John V. 9, 10. Luke XVI, 31.] Its design simply is, to convey "*good tidings of great joy to all people,*" [Luke II, 10.] in the language of sincerity and truth, and the practical knowledge and belief of that message is eternal life. (John III, 36, and XVII, 3.)

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