

Preface.

“ IN the former of these Tracts the argument is so short and clear, that the meanest capacity may understand it, and so forcible that no man has yet been found able to resist it. When it was first published, some attempts were made ; but they soon came to nothing. It is briefly this. The Christian Religion consists of facts and of doctrines, each depending on the other ; so that if the facts are true, the doctrines also must be true. Thus for example, the Resurrection of JESUS CHRIST is a fact ; our resurrection is a doctrine : admit the fact, and the doctrine cannot be denied. The ascension of Jesus Christ is another fact ; his return to judge the world is a doctrine : if the fact is true, the doctrine must be so likewise. For (argues an Apostle) if the doctrine is not true, the fact must be false : if the dead rise not, then is not CHRIST raised.

The truth of a matter of fact may be certainly known, if it be attended with certain Marks, such as no false fact can possibly have. These Marks are Four :

It is required,

(I.) That the fact be such, as men's outward senses can judge of ;

(II.) That it be performed publicly in the presence of witnesses ;

(III.) That there be public monuments and actions, kept up in memory of it ; and,

(IV.) That such monuments and actions be established and commence at the time of the fact.

And it is Mr. LESLIE's design to show, that all these Four Marks meet in the facts of Christianity.”

The above is an abridged extract from the Rev. Mr. JONES's Preface to a late edition of the first Tract ; and, if I do not proceed to insert what he calls its history (in which he relates, that it was composed at the request of “ the Duke of Leeds of that time,” who was converted by it) is because LESLIE himself, in the introduction to a short work which he published in its defence, has given us a different account. He there expressly states, that, “ it was written for the satisfaction of a gentlewoman (though it is addressed as to a man) who had been staggered with the ar-