

THE  
COTTAGER'S FRIEND,  
AND  
GUIDE OF THE YOUNG.

---

---

VOL. I.]

FEBRUARY, 1854.

[No. 1.

---

---

L I F E O F W I C L I F .

John Wiclif, (or John De Wycliffe,) who lived in the fourteenth century, (having been born about 1324, and died about 1384.) is one of those personages whose history is that of the times in which they lived. The biography of Wiclif connects itself continually with the public events of the day, nor can the events of the day be narrated without the introduction of one who so greatly influenced them. Some reference, therefore, to the state of things in the former half of the fourteenth century, is indispensable for a clear view of the history of Wiclif, and a correct understanding of his character.

We must ascend, however, to the very beginning, and see in what the corruptions of Christianity consisted, and what the appearances were which they presented.

There are two fundamental maxims of original Christianity:—one relates to the spiritual character of religion. “God,” said our Lord, “is a Spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.” Hence, therefore, when disputes arose in the early church, respecting meats, as clean or unclean, and days, as sacred or common, the Apostle was led by the Spirit solemnly to declare, “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

The other fundamental maxim relates to Christianity as a remedial system; and describes the source whence human salvation proceeds, and the means by which it is to be obtained: it is this,—“By grace are ye saved through faith.” From the mercy of God comes the salvation of man; and by faith in Christ, is the sinner, conscious of his personal guilt and corruption, to receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified.

Here, then, we see original Christianity. These truths were clearly and earnestly preached; and this was the main feature of pure doc-