

PREFACE

TO THE READER.

DEAR READER :—The celebrated Principal Chalmers of St. Andrews, in speaking of the Newtonian Philosophy, says, that its author, Sir Isaac Newton, took nothing for granted, but rested his systems of *philosophy and theology upon proof*. All I wish from my readers in perusing the following pages, is to adopt the same maxim.

I have addressed myself to those who profess to receive the bible as the only revelation from heaven respecting religious subjects. Let them make it the standard, and I shall rejoice in the consequences—but I wish them to let the bible explain itself. Let every religious system taught by men, be laid aside, and let the language of the bible be understood upon the same principles as other writings, and then *truth will shine*.

When men examine the word of God as lawyers sometimes examine the Statutes, not in order to learn the law from them, but in order to make the Statutes speak in favour of their client; then they are sure to err—but when they adopt the principles of Cornelius and friends of wishing to hear what God speaks to their souls, the blessing and benefit must follow.

Neither the love of gain nor the desire of applause has induced me to write the following sheets. I do not expect such sale as to bring gain, and I know my subjects to be so unpopular that enmity and evil speaking will be my earthly reward. My wish is to lead you to consider the scriptures for yourselves, to lead you to believe that gospel which saves the soul; and to obey its author. In handling all the subjects I have studied brevity and clearness, having no wish to please the learned by a high style, or a flow of imagery—my aim is to make the poor understand me, (not doubting but the rich may guess at my meaning) and to lead them to understand and obey the truth in all its parts.

I make no apology for publishing, as I consider it my duty to use every means in my power to propogate the gospel of Christ—to point out the nature of his kingdom—and the ordinances he has set on foot in that kingdom.

If any one be disposed to criticise my style or arrangement &c. they may