

literary, moral, and religious tendency; but chiefly those which have for their professed object—To investigate and to incite to the knowledge and practice of primitive Christianity—the religion of the Bible;—To establish the authority and all-sufficiency of the Scriptures of truth, for the faith and practice of Christians;—To disentangle them from the perplexities and metaphysical subtleties of system makers of theology;—To destroy sectarianism, and in its stead to promote Christian union upon the only foundation upon which it can exist or be preserved—by exhibiting the truth itself of the New Testament, its simple facts and plain statements as the only scriptural and true bond of peace and unity among believers—not men, nor their jarring creeds or speculations respecting these truths—and by proving that the errors and contentions among Christians arise in no respect from any necessary obscurity in the Divine revelation; but chiefly from erring mortals, contrary to its spirit and express teaching, trusting to their own understandings, as if infallible, and teaching for doctrines, their own opinions, and the commandments of men, thus imposing on themselves and on others. The sincere enquirer after divine truth is soon discouraged and bewildered, rather than instructed with the endless variety and contradictory nature of the speculations and comments of men, perhaps well intentioned and ingenious, which he meets with, on the subject; each claiming from him peculiar regard for its own system, and each opposing the other. Occasionally however in his researches, he finds some plain and intelligent guide, whose instructious carry conviction to his understanding, and like a beacon amid surrounding obscurity and danger, enlightens him on his way, pointing him to the true haven of knowledge, and exposing to him the error and the danger of those who deviate from it; these, though possessing much intrinsic interest and merit—though perhaps the result of rigorous and candid investigation—having borne perhaps the strictest scrutiny of friend and foe, without the detection of error,

“Like many a gem of purest ray serene
Which dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear”—

lie hid from others alike pursuing the same object, who, if duly apprised of their existence and real import might appreciate their worth and profit from their instruction—different and opposite reasons tending often to render them thus inaccessible to numbers—sometimes from being found only in works of a larger and more expensive kind—sometimes from their circulation being limited to publications of a local, ephemeral or party nature, with which they are identified; and often are they prejudged to neglect, unread, through the misrepresentation, prejudice, or blind partiality of sectarian zeal, whose errors perhaps they profess to expose. To collect some of these into a volume, and thus far contribute to their impartial examination, and to the promotion of their professed design, is the chief office of *The GLEANER*. Its conductors having no personal end