

P R E F A C E.

IN submitting the following pages to the candid and serious attention of the religious Public, it may not be improper to state, that, although the last fifteen years of my life have been principally devoted to Biblical and Theological research, and to the ministration of the Gospel of the blessed God, yet I have never read a Treatise nor preached a Sermon expressly on the subject of the Baptismal ceremony.—Nor could any consideration have impelled me on the eve of my departure from the Province, when multiplied engagements furnished sufficient occupation for every hour of my time, to have engaged in this controversy but a sense of imperious duty. Perceiving the sectarian spirit and tendency of Mr. Crawley's recently-published 'Treatise on Baptism'—and fully persuaded in my own mind that the arguments by which he has endeavoured to support his exclusive views, are just about as solid as the element employed in the administration of the ordinance in question, I strongly felt that I owed it alike to the cause of Christian *liberality*, and of Christian *truth*,—promptly to stand forth in defence of both.

I entertained a hope of being able to complete the work which I have been thus induced to undertake, before my departure: but my time is so extremely limited that I find this to be impracticable. I have therefore thought it preferable to issue it in two Parts: the present discusses the *mode* of Baptism; and the other, which will appear as soon as circumstances in the order of Providence may permit, will exhibit the Scriptural grounds of Pedobaptist sentiments as to the *subjects* of the rite.

As the Part now before the reader is the production of little more than a fortnight,—I may not unreasonably claim his indulgence towards any inaccuracies he may discover in the composition: in relation to the reasonings and philological investigations by which I have endeavoured to show the fallacy of Mr. Crawley's positions, I desire nothing but rigid impartiality.

Above all, may it ever be remembered, both by the writer and the reader, that "in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature,"—and that, "GOD IS A SPIRIT", and they that worship him, must worship him *in spirit and in truth*."