

PREFACE.

IN studying the rise of this curious sect I have discovered that certain misconceptions concerning it are deeply rooted in the minds of many of the more earnest of the well-wishers to society. Some otherwise well-informed people hold Mormonism to be synonymous with polygamy, believe that Brigham Young was its chief prophet, and are convinced that the miseries of oppressed women and tyrannies exercised over helpless subjects of both sexes are the only themes that the religion of more than two hundred thousand people can afford. When I have ventured in conversation to deny these somewhat fabulous notions, it has been earnestly suggested to me that to write on so false a religion in other than a polemic spirit would tend to the undermining of civilised life.

In spite of these warnings, and although I know it to be a most dangerous commod-