

P R E F A C E .

OF the pieces in this volume which the Author, more from conventional usage than from any sense of special fitness, has ventured to call "Poems," he has little to say. As the composition of them has profitably filled up some hours of leisure or forced idleness, he trusts that the reading of them may not be altogether without pleasure or profit. But the special object of the publication is to obtain the opinion of Christian people in regard to the few Hymns which the volume contains. The Author came to the conclusion, a good many years ago, that his was not the poet's vocation, and that even as a secondary pursuit he could not expect to accomplish much good by the study. For some time, however, the conviction has been growing in his mind, that although in the general field of poetry there is no place which he could expect usefully and honorably to occupy, yet in the kindred and in his estimation, more important field of hymnology, his labors might not be altogether in vain. But so many and so important are the other objects which can be pursued consistently with our special calling, that the Author feels reluctant, without a strong conviction of his fitness for such a work, to devote his spare time to the writing