

PREFACE.

THE following pages were, for the most part, originally written in the form of Lectures; and partly used in that form. In preparing them, however, for the Press, it has appeared to me more advisable to change the original plan, and to arrange the whole subject under different chapters, with appropriate titles. With this view I have recast that portion of the Work that had been written in the Lecture form, and made such an adaptation of the whole subject as to produce an even and uniform construction of the material which I desired to employ. The convenience of this arrangement will be manifest from the facility of reference which will be thus afforded, as well as from the superior advantage which the statement and discussion of separate topics under their distinct and limited headings are calculated to produce.

My main object in the preparation of this Work was to facilitate the reading of the Holy Scriptures. Many persons who open the Old or the New Testament find great difficulty in comprehending all the passages that present themselves to their notice:—I do not now speak of mere ordinary readers; but of persons of cultivated intellect and refined education.

I can speak for myself, and freely declare that I have never opened a page of the Bible in which I have not been confronted with passages which I did not feel satisfied that I fully and correctly understood. This, I take it, arises in great part from a want of proper acquaintance with the manners and customs, and laws and ceremonies of the Hebrew people in the times spoken of and referred to by