

THE

WITNESS OF TRUTH.

Vol. IV. OSHAWA, JANUARY, 1849.

No. 1.

PREFACE.

EIGHTEEN hundred and forty nine has come. It brings to us new duties and calls for new energies. Our opportunities regulate our duties, and these again make a corresponding draft upon our energies. Hence great opportunities open the way for great duties, and great duties call for a vigorous class of energies. Eyes to see, hearts to feel, and hands to execute, are, then, among the indispensable requisites; and, therefore, laying ourselves out for the exigencies and openings of the times, we shall not, we trust, be paralyzed by a spirit of "drowsy indolence yawning over great interests."

A wide field is open, and a still wider field is opening, for all the activities of religious benevolence and religious enterprize. Society is breaking its former bounds and throwing itself into other moulds. Old customs, like old almanacs, are being replaced by new. Long standing corruptions, secreted by darkness and artifice, and held sacred by popular superstitions, are receiving a double death-thrust from their own suicidal nature, and the all-revealing light that brightens and widens the moral horizon. The social, civil, and ecclesiastical elements are moved to their centre; and while these elements are either in the transition state, or re-uniting and re-organizing upon new principles, and after superior models, there is a crisis for action—an opening for Christian philanthropy to exert itself successfully.

The past year has been eventful in the first degree. All Europe has been convulsed, and the new pulsations have throbed throughout the civilized world. Laws, nationalities, and alliances, long binding and long honored, have been broken, trampled, and annihilated. Trembling has seized the mighty, and liberty struggles and triumphs. It is not simply the liberty of civil government, or of national privilege: it is liberty of conscience, liberty of moral action, liberty of religious right, liberty for the whole man in view of all his obligations