

PREFACE.

is a deplorable but notorious truth that almost all religious organisations, in proportion as they have become powerful and popular, have persecuted all those who have seceded from them. The Jews persecuted the Christians, and the Christians, when they became powerful, persecuted the Jews. The Catholics persecuted the Protestants, and the Protestants, when they obtained the power, persecuted not only the Catholics, but all Protestant dissenters. The Anglicans persecuted the Puritans, and the Puritans persecuted the Quakers and Baptists. It is shocking to contemplate the amount of misery and bloodshed that Christians have inflicted on each other. All orthodox Christians, so-called, persecute, to the extent of their power, Universalist Christians. But the introduction of liberal opinions has compelled them to modify the old methods of physical torture, such as burning, whipping, mutilating, etc., and the worst they can now do is, like Bunyan's old giants, to sit and grin, slander and misrepresent. But of these they are unsparing. For now over one hundred years no opportunity has been neglected to not only defame our persons, but to hold up our religious principles before the public for scorn and contempt, and ridicule to point their slow, unmoving fingers at; and bigotry and intolerance, the two greatest evils that ever afflicted our poor humanity, are still rampant.

But ridicule and slander will not now avail to convince and satisfy the intelligent seeker for truth. Someone has aptly remarked that he that would bring *ridicule* to bear against *truth*, takes in his hand a weapon without a hilt, and is more likely to cut himself than anyone else.

The author of the following pages is well aware that his work will not stand the test of literary criticism, and any of the Literati who may see fit to criticise his humble effort, will have ample opportunity to ridicule his grammar and composition, as he has never studied these branches one hour in his life. And he would beg merely to suggest, that should any of them consider the work of sufficient importance to claim their attention, that the cause of truth and justice would be best subserved by taking as little notice of the author, his grammar and composition, as possible; but extend to them all the charity they can, and give all their attention to the *arguments*, proving, if possible, that they are unfounded in the Scriptures. And further, should it be considered that anything in this Review would seem to savor of undue reflections on the author of the pastoral or his party, he would plead