

were excited, and he was always listened to, even in that age of eminent speakers, with marked attention and respect. The elegance of his language, the melody of his voice, the suavity of his manner, the beauty of his imagery, the force of his reasoning, the loftiness of his sentiments, and the weight of his character, combined to produce a strong impression in his favour, which was generally attested by the marked attention yielded to him by the House of Commons, notwithstanding the aversion of some of the members to what they esteemed the peculiarities of his Christian character.

It is to these peculiarities that we must now turn, as the ground-work of all his excellencies, the inspiring principle of all his philanthropic labours, which entitle him to the affectionate regard of true Christians of every name, which matured and sanctified the naturally amiable qualities of his heart, and which prompted and sustained him in all his movements and trials. Having embraced the TRUTH "as it is in Jesus"—not as it is perverted by the Pharisee, the legalist, and the neologian, but as it is revealed in the Scriptures in all its majesty and simplicity—he shrank not from an open avowal of it, but boldly (yet meekly) maintained it through evil report and good report, as the ground of his hope towards God, and the source of his charity to men. Living habitually under the sentiments he had imbibed, and feeling their constraining power, it soon became his "earnest wish to address his countrymen on the important subject of religion." From "the abundance of his heart," and the copious stores of his intellect, he was enabled to gratify his wish in an effectual manner, and in the year 1797, he came before the world in his Christian character, as the author of *A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christ-*

*ians, in the higher and middle Classes in this Country, contrasted with Real Christianity.* Among other reasons which he assigns as inducing him thus to act, "He might also allege, as a full justification, not only that religion is the business of every one, but that its advancement or decline in any country is so ultimately connected with the temporal interests of society, as to render it the peculiar concern of a political man; and that what he may presume to offer, on the subject of religion, may perhaps be perused with less jealousy and more candour, from the very circumstance of its having been written by a layman." This now celebrated work is so well known, and so highly estimated, that it is unnecessary to occupy room in describing its valuable contents. Its publication, at a time when it was peculiarly needed by the indifference and ignorance which prevailed in the church of England generally, and among the higher classes in particular, created a wonderful sensation. Never, perhaps, did any volume produce a deeper or more sudden effect. It came upon the whole world of statesmen, and literati, and divines, quite by surprise. It was a thing quite unprecedented, for a leading parliamentary speaker, to publish any considerable work—much less, a work on religion. Every one talked of it; every one was attracted by its eloquence; every one admitted the benevolence, and talent, and sincerity of the writer. It was acknowledged such an important work had not appeared for a century. Opposition, indeed, arose against it, as the first admiration subsided—but this only increased its interest, and ultimately its utility. It has been translated into most of the European languages, and unnumbered editions of it have been printed, both in England and America. Dr. Wilson, the present Bishop of Calcutta, says of it, when referring to the causes of the wider