

PREFACE.

A FEW years since, the Editor of the following pages published a volume of "Religious Creeds and Statistics;" and, as the work, although quite limited, met with general approbation, he has been induced to publish another of the same nature, but on a much larger plan, trusting that it will prove more useful, and more worthy of public favor.

His design has been, to exhibit to his readers, with the utmost impartiality and perspicuity, and as briefly as their nature will permit, the views, creeds, sentiments, or opinions, of all the religious sects or denominations in the world, so far as utility seemed to require such an exhibition; but more especially to give the rise, progress, and peculiarities, of all the principal schemes or systems of religion which exist in the United States at the present day.

The work is intended to serve as a manual for those who are desirous of acquiring, with as little trouble as possible, a correct knowledge of the tenets or systems of religious faith, presented for the consideration of mankind;—to enable them, almost at a glance, to compare one creed or system with another, and each with the holy Scriptures;—to settle the minds of those who have formed no definite opinions on religious subjects;—and to lead us all, by contrasting the sacred truths and sublime beauties of Christianity with the absurd notions of pagan idolaters, of skeptics, and of infidels, to set a just value on the doctrines of HIM WHO SPAKE AS NEVER MAN SPAKE.

To accomplish this design, the Editor has obtained, from the most intelligent and candid among the living defenders of each denomination, full and explicit statements of their religious sentiments—such as they believe and teach. He is indebted to the friends of some new sects or parties in philosophy and religion, for an account of their respective views and opinions. With regard to