

A DECLARATION
OF THE
FAITH, CHURCH ORDER AND DISCIPLINE
OF THE
CONGREGATIONAL OR INDEPENDENT CHURCHES.

ADVERTISEMENT.

As there was reason to believe that the opinions of the Congregational Dissenters had been greatly misunderstood and even misrepresented, and that a large body of their countrymen supposed them to be either *Unitarians* or *Methodists*, the attention of the brethren assembled at the general meeting of the CONGREGATIONAL UNION, held in London, May 11, 1832, was invited to the subject, and they were requested to deliberate on the best methods of disabusing the public mind. A DECLARATION of Faith and Church Order was suggested, and the draught of such a document was submitted for their consideration. On a business of such moment, it was determined, however, first to consult the Ministers and Churches of the respective County and District Associations, whether, in accordance with the example of their Nonconformist ancestors, it were desirable to publish a Declaration of the leading articles of their faith and practice; and whether, if deemed advisable, that Declaration should be made by such a statement as that which had been presented to them.

The proposed Declaration was accordingly appended to the printed Report of the Meeting, and in that form submitted for the consideration of the County and District Associations, and was by them generally approved.

On Friday, May 10th, 1833, the Declaration, as revised by the Committee appointed for that purpose, was presented to the Annual Assembly, and by that meeting was unanimously adopted "as the Declaration of the Congregational Body, with the distinct understanding, that it was not intended as a Test or Creed for Subscription," but simply as a summary of "what is commonly believed" by the Congregational Churches.

GEORGE SMITH, }
ROBERT ASHTON, } *Secretaries.*

CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARY,
Blomfield Street, London, August, 1852.

DECLARATION.

THE CONGREGATIONAL Churches in England and Wales, frequently called INDEPENDENT, hold the following Doctrines, as of Divine authority, and as the foundation of Christian faith and practice.

They are also formed and governed according to the principles hereinafter stated.

PRELIMINARY NOTES.

1. It is not designed, in the following summary, to do more than to state the leading doctrines of faith and order maintained by Congregational Churches in general.

2. It is not proposed to offer any *proofs, reasons, or arguments*, in support of the doctrines herein stated, but simply to *declare* what the denomination believes to be taught by the pen of inspiration.

3. It is not intended to present a *scholastic or critical* confession of faith, but