

A BOOK FOR THE TIMES.

PURE
EVANGELICAL RELIGION

RESTORED;

OR,

CHARITY, FAITH, AND GOOD WORKS
RE-UNITED,

AND TRIUMPHING OVER ALL THE

SELFISHNESS, WORLDLY-MINDEDNESS, INFIDELITY, BIGOTRY,
SUPERSTITION, FANATICISM,

AND OVER EVERY OTHER CORRUPTION OF HUMAN NATURE,

BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE

HEAVENLY KINGDOM OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
IN THE HUMAN BOSOM.

A TRUE HISTORY.

BY

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Third Edition.

LONDON:

HODSON AND SON, PORTUGAL STREET, LINCOLN'S INN.

MANCHESTER:

BOTTOMLEY, SON, AND TOLLEY, 10, MARKET STREET.

1861.

MANCHESTER: CAVE AND SEVER, PRINTERS BY STEAM POWER,
PALATINE BUILDINGS, HUNT'S BANK.

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THE following little work was written many years ago by the late Rev. JOHN CLOWES, Rector of St. John's, Manchester. It has been reprinted from the edition of 1811. In Chapter VII. is a record of the Author's appearance before Dr. PORTEOUS, the Bishop of Chester; before whom he was cited to give an account of various charges alleged against him by certain persons in Manchester, on the ground of his theological sentiments. This interview with the Bishop is supposed to have taken place about the year 1792. The Sage, so often alluded to in the work, was SWEDENBORG.

As this little Book appears to be especially adapted to the present times, when the Theological world is so much agitated with conflicting opinions, it has been thought by the Editors to be especially suited to the present period, and, therefore, they have called it A BOOK FOR THE TIMES.

P R E F A C E .

HISTORY, it is well known, is in many cases little else than a record of the operation of the bad passions of mankind, seeking their gratification in the overthrow and destruction of all that order, harmony, and peace, which a merciful God is ever desirous to establish amongst His creatures here on earth.

The following history is an exception to the above rule, being intended to develop and describe the operation of those higher principles of the human mind, which descending from the Most High, by the revelation of His eternal Truth, have a tendency to elevate man to his Maker, to dignify his otherwise degraded nature, to give him power over his corruptions, to renew in him the Divine image and likeness, and finally to qualify him for admission into the kingdom of beatified spirits, there to live for ever in the enjoyment of a bliss, as pure as it is permanent, as transcendent as it is inconceivable.

Let the reader, however, be upon his guard as to the spirit and temper of mind, in which he peruses the pages of this singular volume, lest by perverting its meaning, he should make it an instrument of mischief to himself. Let him remember, therefore, that

what is herein written is not intended either to amuse the frivolous with its gaieties, or to fill the cups of the voluptuous with its enchantments, or to gratify the pride of learning with its deep and critical researches, or to advocate the cause of modern theology, by supporting its opinions, its commentaries, and its creeds.

Should any ask, what then is the object and design of the following pages? It is answered, to establish the true Christian in the purity and simplicity of Evangelical Faith and Life; to detect some of the leading errors, which tend at this day to divide and desolate the Christian church; to point out the only effectual security against those errors in the bright and genuine Light of revealed Truth; and lastly, to encourage all to walk in that light by a consolatory prospect of that glorious and renewed state of the earth, predicted in the Word of ancient prophecy, when "the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, their God." (Rev. xxi. 3.)

Let then the careless and inconsiderate, who are not disposed to discover their duty, and the impenitent and profligate, who may have discovered, but are not willing to practise it; let the learned, who mistake science for wisdom, and the theologians, who measure piety by assent to articles of faith; be alike cautioned against the perusal of a book, which will but add to their condemnation, so long as they are determined to continue in their respective states of carelessness and impenitence, of useless erudition and mere creed-worship. But let