

PREFACE.

NOT only every closing year, but every moment demand from the elect family of heaven, a song of praise and thanksgiving.

WHAT rapturous affection is due from us to God the Father, for the love wherewith he has loved us, and for the gift of his dear Son. What triumphs of faith should ascend from our breasts to God the Son, for that precious blood, which cheers the heart of God and man. Our joys should no less abound to God the Holy Spirit, for his regenerating influences, the source of those refreshing streams, which follow us all through the wilderness, and will exhilarate us when heart and flesh begin to fail, nor leave us when we pass through the dark valley and shadow of death. To the Trinity in Unity, and the Unity in Trinity, be all glory, honour, and dominion, now and for ever.

WE turn to our Correspondents, several of whom are men of learning, of genius, and profound judgment, and thank them on behalf of the Public for their voluntary contributions, and indefatigable industry.—The encouragement this work has received with such talents, we trust it will not be deemed arrogance to say, is no more than it is justly entitled to. To hold up their distinguished characters by name would be unnecessary, our pages from year to year, bearing ample testimony.

RESPECTING ourselves we have stood on the walls of Zion for twenty-five years, continually on the watch, and when we have seen the enemy approaching, we have given an alarm from the ramparts. If insurmountable danger has appeared, from superior force, or any stratagem, we have fell back with our scouting party to head-quarters, and with our veterans in the front, have

come forward and frustrated the enemy's designs, and have at times had the honour of cutting part from the main body of our adversary. Our victories have always been decisive, and never chequered with defeat, though we have met with disappointments. At times we have thought of resigning our commission, but the warfare continuing unremitting, it would shew want of fealty to our king, to leave his service, when almost every description of characters, under the garb of friends, are sapping the citadel, more particularly, when some old veterans have left the ranks, and have joined the enemy's standard

LEAVING metaphor aside, we cannot congratulate our Christian friends with respect to the success of religious truths, though "we live in a land of Bibles," and in a nation of theological tracts, to which may be added, a spiritual guide at the elbow of almost every one, with millions of money spent yearly to make men Christians. The prospect before us is gloomy. Impiety of every description is walking abroad. Crimes are riding over the boundaries of law and social order. The laws of our forefathers are deemed no longer available to the immoral condition of society, insomuch, that new laws are promulgated. Infidelity as a tempest is raging around us, and to add to the dreary catalogue, we have professed Christians rooting out the foundation of our most holy faith, who deny the testimony of God, concerning the divinity and personality of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit; of some of these we may say, "O foolish men! who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you, and of whom ye have preached and written, but by a libertinism in the understanding, have plunged into those deep waters, which have neither bottom nor shores to reach.

INDEPENDENT of the Socinian and Sabellian heresies, we have preachers out of number, at the head of their thousands and tens of thousands, who are feeding their disciples with the corrupt leaven of unsound doctrines. While they profess themselves orthodox, and sound in the faith, they fritter and crumble away the component parts of the religion of our Lord and Saviour, and substitute a blind, unsystematic observation of every trifle, however minute, so as to prevent the believer from seeing the light of the glorious gospel.

UNDER an hypocritical guise, they descant on inherent holiness, and progressive sanctification, the meaning of which is, that the old man of sin and death is subdued, and that every hour he lives, he increases in holiness, and goes on to perfection. Those teachers discard the work of Christ and his righteousness, by glossing away the spirit of his mediatorial sacrifice, and character. To assert that Jesus Christ was really clothed with the sins of those that shall be saved, and that they became really his own, and that believers are by his Spirit clothed with his righteousness, which is made really theirs, so that upon account thereof, they are justified, accepted, sanctified and glorified of God. The acknowledgment of such precious truths, that those who belong to Christ, are sanctified, completed, and perfected for ever, before the throne of the uncreated Majesty, causes the enemies of free-grace to gnash with their teeth, and vilify the espousers of such principles with the most opprobrious names, even to the defaming of their moral characters.

THE same leaven is produced in all their public ministrations, when they speak of redemption, they maintain that it has taken off from all men the guilt and condemnation they stood in, owing to Adam's transgression, and that it is their own fault, if the death of Christ is not effectual to save their souls, seeing that God

intends, and desires the salvation of all men, without exception, having provided a sufficiency for them, which they offer to all that hear them.

THESE are the men who have been raising contributions all over the country for thirty years, in order to carry the Jews to Palestine, and to convert the Pagan and heathen world, though they have plenty of work to evangelize their own little island; nevertheless, they are for roving the habitable globe over, as harbingers to the Son of Man's appearance in the clouds of heaven. But without being prophetic, we hesitate not to say, that if our Lord's second advent, depends upon such means, and such instruments, he will never come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all those who believe in him.

IN the midst of this boasted light, we must adopt the poetic description of the prophet, and say this is a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains; the sun and the moon are darkened by them, and the stars withdraw their shining.

NEVERTHELESS, the believer born of the Holy Spirit, discovers a gleam of hope darting from the throne to cheer this dreary state. He beholds the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus, and in his light he sees light. He rejoices in Christ, having no confidence in the flesh. He has an eternal discharge from all sin in his conscience, and from death the wages thereof, written in his heart fair and legible, as it were with the finger of God in the divine characters of Emmanuel's blood.

THUS mercy shall be built up for ever, thy faithfulness O God shalt thou establish in the very heavens, therefore we will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever, with our mouths will we make known thy faithfulness to all generations.

*Chobham, Surrey,
Christmas Eve, 1820.*

THE EDITORS.

AN ODE ON THE NEW YEAR.

SWIFT is the flight of time, another year
 Has in succession passed, and left one less
 For mortals to enjoy, or to abuse.
 Alas! that time, so sparingly dealt out,
 That men can scarcely call one moment theirs,
 Should be abused, but thus it is;
 Not only by the thoughtless multitude,
 But e'en by those who claim to know its worth.
 Philosophers, grave moralists, divines
 In holy orders, as they say, intent
 On fitting mortals for eternity.
 A sweeping charge, say some, but where's the proof?
 'Tis near at hand. See vain Philosophy
 Consuming midnight oil, in search profound
 Of qualities occult, eager to know
 All nature's deep arcana, yet too proud
 To learn from the pure stream of truth divine,
 Which teaches what he most has need to learn.
 He treats with scorn the sacred rules that say,
 "Whoso lacks wisdom, let him ask of God!"
 "Who would be wise, let him become a fool,"
 And stumb'ling at the threshold turns aside,
 Conceals his ignorance beneath big words,
 That mean he knows not what, nor does he care
 Provided his disciples think him wise.

SEE next Morality, of look demure,
 Toiling to graft on nature's barren stock,
 A living tree, to blossom and bear fruit
 Among the plants of grace in Paradise.
 But this can never be. Nature and grace
 Are opposite, and never can unite.
 The plants of grace are ever raised from seed,
 Which incorruptible, for ever lives.
 Nature corrupt, can never rise to this.
 Thus morals overpriz'd, is time abus'd,
 And fatally. For morals cannot save.

DIVINITY likewise, as taught in schools
 Where heads of houses oft have need to learn,
 Is but a ruinous abuse of time.
 For while Philosophy with dictum, proud,
 Exalts frail reason above reason's God,
 And moralizer's hope to merit heaven,
 Divinity debases its high name,
 And merges into mere Morality.
 Instead of pointing sinners to the cross.

THESE are all time-killers, and who can tell
 How soon time may retaliate?
 How many saw the last, expiring year,
 Who will not see another year expire.
 How many quit this sublunary scene,
 To sink in endless night, who never saw
 The sun of righteousness arise and shine,
 Their understandings dark, and dark their doom.

O'YE, who call'd from darkness into light,
 By that great voice, that in creation's morn
 Call'd light from chaos, and behold it came!
 What bondless, ceaseless gratitude ye owe,
 While on the rock of ages standing firm,
 Ye see the years roll on, nor wish their stay,
 Knowing ye have beyond this changing sphere
 Enduring riches never to take wing,
 A portion settled for eternity—
 A mansion lasting as the throne of God.
 Ye can enjoy the swiftest flight of time,
 Who on his friendly pinions safe are borne
 From earthly toil, to endless, heavenly rest.

HAIL! fellow-pilgrims to a world unseen,
 Another year of gloom now left behind,
 Has brought us nearer to the land of light;
 The year now entered on may be our last,
 And finish all our sorrows, sins, and fears.
 At least, we know, that whether soon or late,
 Our Father calls us home, still Death is ours,
 Our friend, to introduce us to His arms.

BLEST be the grace that makes a foe a friend,
 And turns a ruthless executioner
 Into a messenger of joy and love.

O, MAY our future days, or few, or more,
 Speak out the praises of the King of Grace.
 As we the Lord of glory have receiv'd,
 So may we walk in him by precious faith,
 Built up and rooted in him, as we're taught,
 And 'stablish'd in the faith abound therein,
 With thanksgiving, as meet, till we are call'd
 To walk with him in white. To whom be praise,
 While time shall last, and endless ages roll.

SAGITTARIUS.