



REV. WILLIAM WARD.

*late of Serampore,*

Died March 7. 1823. Aged 53.

*W.W.*

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REFLECTIONS  
ON THE  
WORD OF GOD,  
FOR  
EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR.

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By WILLIAM WARD,  
OF SERAMPORE.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Work is reprinted, (with some corrections,) in the confidence that while it will amply sustain the estimation which its late judicious and excellent Author enjoyed when living, it will acquire no mean rank among productions of a similar kind now that he is numbered with the dead.

That there exists a great and increasing demand for such productions, is a circumstance most creditable to the taste of the religious public, and most auspicious to the cause of christian piety. They have the peculiar recommendation of at once drawing attention to the paramount authority and value of the Bible, and enabling the devout reader to consult its pages with additional pleasure and advantage.

JUST PUBLISHED.

Memoirs of the REV. W. WARD, late of Serampore, India, with some of his Poems, and a MONODY to his Memory, by SAMUEL STENNETT. Second Edition, price 5s. boards.

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P R E F A C E.

THE "Bible" being not only a Divine communication, but the express revelation of the will of the Creator to man, it might be expected that it would be read with such reverence, deliberation, and anxious desire to comprehend its whole import, that helps for its perusal would be scarcely necessary.

Yet it is a painful fact, that we are in greater danger of paying a merely superficial attention to the contents of this Blessed Volume, however vast the interest we have in it, than to the matter contained in works written for our amusement:—

1. It is possible to read the Bible as an act of simple allegiance or homage to the Divine Being, or merely as a religious duty, without recognising the idea that our most vital interests are connected with the sentiments which it contains.

2. Our indisposedness to subjects of a spiritual

nature may also contribute to produce a less marked attention while the Holy Scriptures are read, than when the reading refers to subjects which immediately engage our senses and our passions. We take up the Bible without expecting a mental feast, and we perhaps possess too little spirituality of mind to seek for a moral one.

3. The subjects contained in the Holy Scriptures are of a serious and weighty nature, and as such have little attraction for minds naturally averse to deep research: hence some assistance in reading the Bible appears to be desirable.

4. In the Scriptures there are difficulties peculiar to them as a Divine communication: they would not be obscure to angels, nor are they very much so to Christians of the highest order in spiritual attainments: the apostle fully explains our meaning, when he says,—“The natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God: they are spiritually discerned.” To the study of the sciences a person brings a scientific mind; nor should it be matter of objection to Christianity, that to the study of the Christian system a religious mind is requisite.

5. In addition to the fact, that the truths of the Divine word are serious, weighty, and spiritual in their nature, it must be added, that many of them belong to lofty, to heavenly themes; so that not only

is a religious frame of mind necessary to their profitable perusal, but an elevated train of sacred feelings, capacitating the individual to “delight in the law of the Lord,” and leading him to “meditate therein day and night.”

6. The very phraseology of the Scriptures partakes of the difficulties belonging to them as religious and divine communications; and this also renders it desirable that we should have some one to guide us, as well as some familiar acquaintance with them, before these phrases can be well understood.

7. The doctrines of this Divine book unquestionably form a complete system of sacred truth, a system of which every part is necessary to the unity and perfection of the whole. Yet this union does not lie on the surface; nor will it be perceptible, without assistance, to common readers, though clear and distinct to him who obeys the Divine injunction,—“*Search the Scriptures.*”

8. Many parts of this sacred book are connected with human agents and events, and receive a most lucid interpretation from a knowledge of the historical facts, and persons, and collateral circumstances, connected with their promulgation.

9. The Bible, as one book given for the whole world, is a summary rather than a full exposition of sacred

truth; and, that the human mind might contain it as a revelation of the will of God, this truth, which receives a full exposition in the heavenly state, has here in this volume a vast concentration; and this necessary brevity involves some parts in a degree of obscurity; an obscurity, however, which gives way before the labours of him who digs in these mines as for hid treasure.

10. Finally, as a summary of Divine Truth, suited to our present momentary being, and yet attended with these and other unavoidable difficulties, the Bible may properly become the subject of comment, explanation, and reflection, when offered with modesty and humility; and though a commentary is not absolutely necessary to the comprehension of its essential truths, yet meditations or reflections may open to us some of the riches contained in this Divine treasury.

To assist the sincere Christian, therefore, in his endeavours to derive from the Holy Scriptures the instruction, and comfort, and support, and capacity of blessing others, which his circumstances require, and which the stores of the Bible are so well suited to impart, these Reflections have been committed to the press; and it is hoped that to families they may supply the place in some degree of more cumbersome volumes, and to private individuals become not an unwelcome companion in the closet.

The former part contains a view of the Christian system as developed in the Jewish economy and the discourses of our Lord, and of its progress as described in the Acts of the Apostles. The latter part contains comments on the doctrines and duties of the Christian Religion, as drawn from passages in almost every part of the Divine word, but especially in the Epistles.

The chapter connected with each comment is pointed out at the head of each Reflection, as the Scripture selected for the day. The reader needs not, however, confine himself to the portion thus directed to be read, but may read a whole chapter at once, though the author is of opinion, that the Holy Scriptures are far more likely to be profitable (the Historical Books excepted) if only small portions be read at once. The Psalms and Epistles especially should be read either in small selections, or "pondered in the heart," sentence by sentence, if we would either see their beauties, or have "the word of God dwell in us richly, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."

This Work, it is true, only supplies Reflections for one part of each day, that is, for morning worship, or for the morning exercise in the closet; and the author would rejoice to supply another volume, could he depend on the patronage of the public; for certainly family worship is as necessary in

the evening as in the morning of each day. This, however, must depend on the continuance of life, and on the reception given to this volume. Should it be accepted with candour by his fellow-Christians in India, and endear to him, or any of them, that word of life and salvation upon which all our hopes are built, the author will rejoice that he employed his leisure, in his voyage to England in the year 1819, in composing these Reflections.

*Serampore, 1822.*

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