

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

The work which is now introduced to the English reader has been for fifteen years in high esteem among the divines of Germany, as well as of several other countries. The respect which occasional extracts have received, and the ample references to it among recent expositors, warrant the expectation that it will be no less cordially welcomed among the British churches.

No one will read it, as such a book should be read, without feeling that he is under the guidance of one who is profoundly imbued with the mind of Christ. **The author's aim is the loftiest which mortal man can set before himself—to unfold the meaning and harmony of all the recorded words which fell from the lips of the Word made flesh.** That the Lord's own sanction is manifestly given to the attempt, is the highest tribute we can pay to it.

The *form* of the work may possibly be in some respects **repulsive** to the reader unaccustomed to German theology. **The minute subtilty of its analysis, its keen inquisition into the secret thread of every discourse,** with some occasional novelties of theory or exposition, will not disparage it to the student who **keeps the original text always before his eye,** and understands the rare value of **criticism which combines deep thought with deeper devotion.** The very frequent vindication of the true meaning **against fanciful or infidel interpretations** sometimes interrupts the current of the exposition; but it must be remembered that the work is **throughout an unwearied protest against Rationalist opinions.** These bring its own distinguishing excellencies into relief; and every work of **orthodox** German Theology has, as such, a strong preliminary claim to our favour.

Finally, as the Translator is not necessarily responsible for all the opinions of the original; so neither ought the original to be absolutely judged of by the translation, which but faintly reproduces its peculiar qualities of style.

LONDON, April 1855.