

**OBSERVATIONS ON
THE BIBLE: FOR THE USE
OF YOUNG PERSONS**

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Observations on the Bible: for the use of young persons by S. A. Eliot

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S. A. ELIOT

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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

BIBLE,

FOR THE USE OF

YOUNG PERSONS.

A glory gilds the sacred page,
Majestic like the sun !
It gives a light to every age ;
It gives, but borrows none.

BOSTON:

1842.

JOHN H. EASTBURN.

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1842

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS little tract was written for my children ; that when they begin to perceive the difficulties which occur in reading the Bible, they may be put in the way of discovering the explanation of them ; and that they may be, in some degree, prepared to meet and answer the cavils of the infidel, and the pretensions of those who claim an exclusive right to the name of Christian.

A species of error, or what seems to me error, has lately sprung up anew in the world, after having been, again and again, banished from all rational society, viz : mysticism, confounding the impression made upon us by the vague and the vast with profoundness of thought ; confusing the operations of the understanding by suffering the feelings, the wishes, what are called the aspirations of the soul, to interfere with the intellect ;

and transforming dreamy, shadowy phantoms of ideas into proofs of the greatness of the dreamer's immortal spirit, or proofs of its divinity, or proofs of religious character, or into proofs of any thing. Against this I wished to guard my children, and in conveying to them my own idea of what constitutes religion, to show them that no substitute for it can be found in obedience to earthly superiors, in the adoption of a particular creed, in adherence to certain forms, or in the abandonment of all forms.

I desired, also, to show, as distinctly as I could, what were the peculiar merits of the books which contain the record of the lives and thoughts of men eminent in the religious history of the world, and the characteristic excellences of those men themselves; that my household, at least, should regard them neither with indifference, nor contempt, nor with a blind, superstitious reverence; but that, holding them in deserved respect, they might know the reasons on which that respect should be founded.

In doing this, I have combined the results of former studies, with those of recent reflection, without attempting to distinguish between ideas derived from others, and those which are my own. I have merely given expression to what I found in my own mind, however it might have got there.

The design of the work explains the familiar tone prevailing through it. I will only add, that my experience has been altogether in the active business of life, and that I do not belong to the clerical profession.

March, 1842.

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