PROTESTANTISM IN PARIS: A SERIES OF DISCOURSES TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

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Protestantism in Paris: A Series of Discourses Translated from the French by A. Coquerel

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A. COQUEREL

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A. COQUEREL.

BOSTON: CROSBY, NICHOLS, AND COMPANY, 111 WASHINGTON STREET. 1854.

PREFACE.

ATHANASE COQUEREL, the author of the following discourses, may well be selected as the exponent of Protestantism in Paris, occupying as he does so prominent a position in the Reformed Church of France.

M. Coquerel is a preacher, whose great eloquence has earned for him, in the course of his more than thirty years' ministry, a corresponding reputation and influence: as a writer, he is perhaps still more widely known, being the author of a book called Experimental Christianity, a discussion of the fundamental doctrines of our religion, based upon a critical examination of the original texts; of A Reply to "The Life of Jesus" by Strauss; of two letters on the Hieroglyphic System of Champollion, considered in its relation to the Sacred Writings; and of a variety of other works: finally, he has been before the public, as a member of the last Assembly of France, previous to the coup d'état of December 2d.

He is, therefore, a man whose opinions, both for themselves and for the extent of their influence over the minds of others, are entitled to consideration; and it is in this view that the translator, adhering as closely as possible to the style and language of the author, has desired to present some of his ideas to those who may not have access to them in the original.

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THE SECOND DEATH.

"Let him that hath ears hearken to what the Spirit with to the churches: He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."—APQUALTER II. 11.

My Brethren, -

MEN have asked themselves, in the vague studies in which Mysticism delights, and in the cold discussions of Rationalism, which is no better, and throws piety into an extreme equally false; men have asked themselves if the intention of Creation, if the object of Life was goodness or happiness, virtue or enjoyment, good living or well-being, the true good, to practise or to enjoy. The question interests Christianity so nearly, that one may easily put it in Christian terms, and bring it into the do-

main of faith, in seeking if the result of the Redemption, that Jesus Christ had above all in view, is the progress, the moral perfection, the immortal sanctification of his disciples; or the pardon, the salvation, peace of soul in this world, and a celestial felicity in the other.

The partisans of the two systems have lost their cause by exaggeration. would, say they on one side, be virtuous only from interest, sell to God your obedience, make of faith a bargain and a calculation of integrity, and, so to say, discount your virtues one by one with your Creator! You would serve him under condition, and know beforehand what your service will bring you! Instead of practising good for the love of good, of professing the truth from an admiration for it, and of loving God because he is supremely lovable, you dare to raise for a moment the eternal balances, in order to assure yourself that the future recompense will equal your merit, and speculate thus for eternity on your