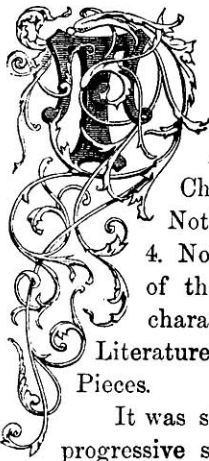




PREFACE



THE BOOK OF DAYS was designed to consist of—1. Matters connected with the Church Kalendar, including the Popular Festivals, Saints' Days, and other Holidays, with illustrations of Christian Antiquities in general; 2. Phænomena connected with the Seasonal Changes; 3. Folk-Lore of the United Kingdom—namely, Popular Notions and Observances connected with Times and Seasons; 4. Notable Events, Biographies, and Anecdotes connected with the Days of the Year; 5. Articles of Popular Archæology, of an entertaining character, tending to illustrate the progress of Civilisation, Manners, Literature, and Ideas in these kingdoms; 6. Curious, Fugitive, and Inedited Pieces.

It was stated to be the desire of the Editor—while not discouraging the progressive spirit of the age, to temper it with affectionate feelings towards what is poetical and elevated, honest and of good report, in the old national life; while in no way discountenancing great material interests, to evoke an equal activity in those feelings beyond self, on which depend remoter but infinitely greater interests; to kindle and sustain a spirit of patriotism, tending to unity, peace, and prosperity in our own state, while not exclusive of feelings of benevolence, as well as justice, towards others. It was desired that these volumes should be a repertory of old fireside ideas in general, as well as a means of improving the fireside wisdom of the present day.

The day of profession has now merged into the day of performance, the half of the work being completed. It is given to few to feel assured that every particular of a favourite object has been duly accomplished; and the individual who has superintended the birth of these pages is certainly not of that happy minority. He would say, nevertheless, that he has done his best, with the means and opportunities at his disposal, to produce a work answering to his plan, and calculated to improve, while it entertains, and mingling the agreeable with the instructive. It will also be his hope to produce a second volume, if possible to him, excelling the first; and in this he meanwhile rests, THE GENTLE READER'S HUMBLE SERVANT.

