

MILLERISM.

We notice in the papers frequent accounts of insanity, and even of suicide, caused by the consideration of those alarming scenes, which are to take place when the world will be destroyed. An individual of no great learning, and hitherto obscure, has been able, by persevering zeal, to agitate our country from one extremity to the other, making the stout to tremble, and driving the weak & nerveless into hopeless insanity. The chance coincidence of some natural phenomena, such as have at different times before been witnessed, has the effect to give credibility to his visionary theories, and to prepare the minds of thousands to receive as gospel truths, the ominous predictions of this self-constituted oracle.

At the time of the end, there are to be disastrous earthquakes, and we have had several of late, which have subverted cities, and buried thousands beneath their ruins. At the time of the end, we are to have signs in the heavens, and of late the sun showed himself at noon-day with four reflections of his disk in the clouds, or, in common parlance, with four *dog-suns*; and we have also the comet, a visitor unlooked for by astronomers, which now stretches his lengthened train along our western skies. Some, too, aver, that at early dawn, as they issue forth to commence the duties of the day, they are startled to behold the sun, in his first rising, amusing himself with turning some sets in the eastern sky, before he gives the rein to his fiery coursers, and speeds upon his journey. These wonders, with the array of figures presented by Miller's calculations, must be enough to carry alarm into the breasts of thousands, and if they are sufficiently fortunate to escape absolute madness, they must live in hourly expectation and fear. The children need not be schooled; the artisan may desist from his labors, and take up his abode in the big tent of Miller; the merchant may open his shop, and distribute his stock *gratis* to all who think his goods worth acceptance; the farmer may let the soil lie fallow; the student close his books, and repose from his midnight vigils; in short, it is unwise for men to do any thing, except to hear Miller or his disciples discourse about the end, and sing and pray upon the wide plain, with nothing between their heads and heaven, but the canvass of the latter-day temple.

It has been the custom of mankind to characterize different epochs by some term which expressed the dominant spirit of the time; thus we have had the iron age, and the golden age; the dark ages and the ages of light; with numberless other ages. If the present period were justly designated, we fear it might be termed the *age of fanaticism*; for, certainly, when we consider the wild theories and insane systems which of late have been originated and encouraged, we must acknowledge an extraordinary tendency in the age to unqualified fanaticism. We have had Fourierism, St. Simonism, Socialism in France; Irvingism, with its strange god of tongues, in England and Scotland; Mormonism in the United States and in England; the false-prophecy of Mathew in New-York; the horrible *brood-axe* system recently begun in Pen-

sylvania, with its most shameless and criminal profligacy; and Millerism, all through the country, sweeping on with giant strides, and leaving in its wake, alarm, dread, folly, madness, suicide, and other deplorable consequences.

There is no doubt exhibited, in the present age, considerable concern for the affairs of religion; but it is equally certain, that this zeal is often unenlightened in principle, and deleterious in its results. And hence it happens that among us, every system finds its advocates, and every imposition its dupes. The most absurd and palpable delusions meet with hundreds to favour, encourage and uphold them. The people have the bible, printed in veritable English, and placed gratis upon their tables by the kind agents of the bible-society; they are taught how to read it, and are encouraged from their religious "opinions" by the light which would thence shine upon their minds. They are instructed to abhor the Pope and the Catholic Church, which of course is represented to their minds, not as the most ancient society of Christians, but as "the Antichrist of the Revelation," and a quite modern human despotism. They find themselves in the midst of numerous sects, calling themselves Christians all, yet always denouncing each other, abusing each other, ever in perpetual dispute, and never able to present a semblance of union, except for the purpose of opposing the Catholic Church. Hence, their minds are left forever *unsettled*, as to the positive doctrines of revelation; they are unable to fix upon any creed with unwavering faith; if they unite themselves to a particular church, they soon again, from a chance sermon heard from a preacher of a different creed, or the perusal of a work advocating other doctrines, or a casual conversation with a person of a superior mind or information, induced to doubt, hesitate, and finally, withdraw. Numbers never have attached themselves professedly to any church; numbers are in churches without knowing how or wherefore; numbers have never examined any other system of religious doctrines; and all these form a large multitude; they constitute an extended theatre of operation, where the visionary, enthusiast or impostor may go, to hunt his hearers, and, if by nature gifted with any special talent for moving men, where, also, he may find numbers ready to enlist under his banner, and follow his guidance as obsequiously and trustingly as the deluded followers of Mahomet did that arch impostor.

Among some of the denominations, various practices and modes of causing people "to get religion," are resorted to, which the more intelligent and rational Protestants denounce as absurd and reprehensible. These practices, ostensibly the produce of religion, have a remarkable tendency to degrade, in the minds of the people, the religious sentiment, and give a notion that religion actually consists of those things which it even reprobates. Vociferous exhortations, in which, amid multiplied words, we find nothing but stringed nonsense; a promiscuous intermingling of preachers, brethren and sisters, with restless movements,

shaking of hands, and clapping of hands, and hymns, now shouted, now sung, in which discords harsh and grating, predominate over melody; with frequent vigorous ejaculations of "amen" and "glory!" Then a call for mourners, and an approach, with tottering steps and agitated frame, of some slender girl, whose nervous system, like an instrument obeying the musician's hand, has through every fibre felt, the mesmeric influence of the exciting scene; she, poor child! has "got religion" at last; and behold the visible proofs thereof, in her present tears, her head thrown back, her drooping form upheld by the stout arm of some pillar of the church, and above all, her wild hysteric laugh, which falls upon the mere observer's ear, with that peculiar melancholy which an unnatural laugh always produces.

Sometimes such a scene is greatly heightened, not only by the numbers affected thus violently by religion, but by the various extravagances to which they are impelled in order to manifest all they feel under their delusions. It is almost incredible that they should actually throw themselves upon the floor, forgetful of all propriety, and roll about like persons possessed by any spirit except that of religion.

If such modes of awakening an interest for the Lord, can be resorted to by some of the whites, it may be expected that the African brethren will improve upon the example given them, and exhibit the process in its utmost degree of absurdity and extravagance. They certainly vociferate more loudly in preaching, praying, and singing; and present at their meetings a scene, which however ridiculous, must fill the intelligent beholder with the deepest sentiments of pity and commiseration. They too, of course, are looking for the end; religion and the destruction of the world occupy all their thoughts. In the meantime we learn that some have gone "stark mad." Two were last week confined in the work-house, a woman and a man. The first maintained that she was "the mother of the Redeemer;" the last, that he "was himself Christ, the son of God." Where will all this terminate? We are unable to divine. But it requires no acuteness to discover in it, the perverting heaven of fanaticism; no foresight to predict scenes still more ludicrous, absurd, and melancholy, than any yet witnessed. Amid such conflicting opinions and theories about all the truths of religion and morality, the minds of many are bewildered, their notions of practical principles confused, their judgment is bound captive to imagination, and soon, with some wild vision, some absurd dream as the star of their hopes, they are filled with but one thought, which, like *Mokana* in the poem, has its deformity concealed with a silver veil, and promising joys and pleasures, leads them on to "a banquet in mockery spread," where at last the veil is removed, and the victims too late recoil from the horrible face of the phantom they had so confidently pursued.

What is now thought of, or talked of, but Miller and his predictions? "Mr. B." said a Protestant lady to a Catholic gentleman a few days since, "What do you think of the doctrines of Mr. Miller?"

"Why, madam!" answered the gentleman, "we Catholics give ourselves but little concern about novelties in religion. We should keep always ready and prepared, for if the end do not come soon upon all the world, it may come at any moment upon any one of us, and that should be enough to make us hold ourselves in readiness."

Let Christians hold themselves ready for the hour of death, and leave the time of the end to God, who has not chosen to manifest to men either the day or the hour. Let Miller repress that ambition to be distinguished, which has sent him forth from his farm and business, to disturb the quiet of some, and sink others into incurable madness. Let him remember how many before him have dreamed and prophesied, and talked vain things, who are now pitied as enthusiasts, or condemned as impostors. If men keep themselves ready to account with God for their deeds and lives, they will have no reason to dread the terrors and calamities of the end.—*Catholic Advocate*.

THE CHURCH;

THE KINGDOM OF JESUS CHRIST.

The Prophets foretold that the Messiah would be King, that his dominion should extend over the entire universe, and that his reign would be eternal. It is evident that this kingdom is no other than the Church which he has established, which is far different from the other kingdoms of the earth. It esteems as nothing everything which raises these in the estimation of men, and causes them to be looked on as flourishing. Gold and silver it reckons as dross, and to the glory of arms it is a stranger; without worldly pomp; without soldiers; without any exterior apparel; it has no other riches than that of grace, no other force than that of virtue. It is an empire altogether spiritual. It is the reign of truth and of justice, whose only object is to enlighten and sanctify mankind. Jesus Christ reigns in the souls of his subjects by faith, and in their hearts by charity. The only enemies of this kingdom are error and vice, whom the church is continually occupied in combating, but to vanquish them she employs no other weapons than instruction and patience; with these army she is assured of victory. The Christian church extends herself over the people of every country and clime. Whatever may be the form of their government, she enters—she unites them in the bonds of fraternal charity, without changing anything in the political order, which she finds there established—she communicates to them new force—she consecrates their laws and institutions, and gives them new strength and vigour—she cement the people together, and thus becomes the strongest rampart of the empire. The church is to last till time shall be no more, her fate does not depend on the stability of the States wherein she is admitted. The different revolutions which have taken place during eighteen centuries clearly prove her stability; she still survives their destruction and their ruin.—She has seen the Roman Empire crumble to nothing beneath the iron grasp of a