

THE CANADIAN UNITED PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.

VOL. III.

TORONTO, JUNE 1, 1856.

No. 6.

Miscellaneous Articles.

THE RISE AND FALL OF ANTI-CHRIST.

Concluded from p. 132.

Is it asked, When will the Millennial era of the Church's glory begin to dawn?—How long will she have to wait ere her sufferings and persecutions from the power of Antichrist terminate, and she enter upon her Sabbatical millenary of rest? On such a question it does not become us to dogmatize, as some have dogmatized. The enquiry has hitherto baffled the skill of the most eminent critics and commentators, and set all their prognostications at defiance. And it is well that it should be so. It is not for us to know "the times and seasons." These God has reserved in His own hand. All that mortal man can say with regard to the future is merely to offer conjectures or probabilities. And our conjecture is, that the expected era of the Church's millennial glory will not commence until about the year 2,000 after Christ. This conjecture, we are aware, is at variance with that of those who hope to live to see the dawn of that glorious era, and who are ever and anon inventing schemes of interpretation that coincide with their Utopian notions about Christ's personal reign upon the earth. But we cannot help it. It seems to us that there are some good grounds on which to rest the opinion thus expressed. And what are these grounds? it will be asked. They are the following: The angel tells us by John, in the 17th chapter of the Revelation, that the wild Beast that was to arise from the abyss, was to be the *eighth head of the Roman Empire*. On this statement we rest the opinion, that the Pope of Rome could not be the Antichrist of Scripture fully developed, until he obtained a kingdom, and thus became head of the empire in a secular as well as in an ecclesiastical sense. When he received the title of Universal Bishop by the decree of Phocas, and came to be known in the world by that proud title, he might indeed be called Antichrist in a limited sense, as he was then made head of the Church of the Empire; but until he received dominion and power over the State, he could not properly be said to be, in the full sense and meaning of the term, the "eighth head" of the Empire;—and it is to be observed, that, until Head of the Empire, in a secular as well as in an ecclesiastical sense, he could not be said to have power to persecute "the witnesses" unto death, to pursue "the woman" into the wilderness, or "to kill men" with the sword—official acts that are attributed to him in prophecy. We therefore look to the time when the Pope of Rome acquired sovereignty, and became a civil as well as an ecclesiastical ruler, as the time when he rose to the summit of his power as the great Antichrist of Scripture. Now this did not take place