

Lastly. This theory has been often defended upon this principle, that as should the end not now happen, the excitement is doing good.—It is not a new idea to do evil that good may come; but let the nature of the evil, as already pointed out, be considered, and then enquire, can we, with the light we have, be guiltless, if we should promote it, even with good in view? The means of grace which God has engaged to bless, are pointed out, and it is at our peril if we substitute others; but it is a daring I cannot characterise, to adopt that which does violence to that “Word by which we shall be justified, or by which we shall be condemned.” But I deny its good results. It is in the great majority of instances merely the alarm of a guilty conscience, scared at the prospect of speedy ruin. Let the “exciting cause be removed, and the danger is great indeed, that many will speedily become tenfold more the children of the devil than before.” Nothing is done to impart light; to the most grossly ignorant the reception of this one sentiment furnishes the passport to the realms of bliss.

4th. I was to notice the ends for which we should keep our eye upon prophecy; in tracing the dispensations of Divine Providence.

Prophecy, and time as it rolls on, should be carefully compared, not to discover what is concealed, but what is gradually unfolding. And in this view, the “Signs of the Times” become every day more interesting and momentous. Antichrist is gradually expiring under repeated assaults—the disease is mortal. Yet it is a question there is ground for proposing, may we not anticipate a partial recovery—a last deadly struggle—before we sink to rise no more?

The seat of the Turkish Prophet is also shaken; and that empire which has so long cherished this dreadful enemy to truth, may well tremble. The doom of the empire is certain; when, or by what means it shall be inflicted, it belongs to God in his own time to shew. Infidelity, in all its withering forms, must also perish, destroyed by the Spirit of the Lord, “and then cometh the end:” but as “yet we see not all things put under him,” and our posture should be that of resignation, and teachable expectation. While the “vision” is yet for an appointed time, we ought ever to recollect that it is “at the end it shall speak and not lie;” and though it may tarry, according to our mistaken calculations, yet we are to wait for it, because it surely will come and not tarry.—Hab. ii. 3.

Thus I have endeavoured, as proposed, to illustrate and prove, the different parts of the subject. If some parts exhibit a want of that arrangement and method, so essential to clearness, let it be considered as unavoidable in sketching and exposing a few features of a theory which is *complicated* and inconsistent in the extreme. For the different positions I have taken I have, I trust, adduced *evidence* from the *holy oracles*. I now beseech you therefore, to examine *that evidence*, and “hold fast that which is good.” And now, allow me in justice to myself, and that truth I have endeavoured to exhibit, to say, that it is neither my *wish*,