

secutors ;—of which the instances are numerous, and the places in which they occurred various,—works published at the time, and on the very spot,—works not in favour of a ruling system, but directed against every other religious establishment under heaven ; and, for giving their testimony to which, the original witnesses had reason to expect, and did in most instances, incur reproach, stripes, imprisonment, and death.

Y.* This is very convincing as to miracles ; but as to the *prophecies* of Scripture, I have heard them compared to the heathen *oracles*, which pretended to foretell future things, and whose predictions are in some instances said to have been remarkably accomplished.

T. No contrast can be greater.

The first great distinction lies in this, that none of the predictions ever uttered by the Delphic or other oracles, went deep into futurity. They relate to events on the eve of taking place, and whose *preparatory circumstances* were known. The oracles did not even pretend to foresee things at the distance of a few years ; though even a hundred years had been a very limited period in comparison of the range of the prescience of inspired Prophets, who looked through the course of succeeding ages, to the end of time.

A second contrast lies in the ambiguity of the oracular responses. The prophecies of Scripture are sometimes obscure, though this does not apply to the most eminent of those which have been most signally fulfilled, as we have already seen ; but they never *equivocate*. For this the Pythian oracle was notorious. Historians relate that CRÆSUS, who had expended large sums upon the agents of this delusion, was backed by an equivocation, through which, interpreting the response most favourably for himself, he was induced to make an unsuccessful war on Cyrus. In