

Popery,* were so near akin to lunacy, that a Babylonian and a Bedlamite were hastening fast to become synonymous terms. This system of trumpery was almost worn out, and it required the addition of new springs to set their cracked and decayed machinery again in motion. Suffice it to say, that several doctors of the Babylonish school, no less eminent in their day than Faber, Whitaker, Zouch, Valpy, Kett, King, and Hales, their successors in our time, from visionary interpreters, had become enthusiastic prophets. With unhalloved rashness they attempted to penetrate into the secrets of futurity; and with the degraded Bible in their hand, pretended to demonstrate the exact time of Antichrist's fall. The years 1620, 1650, 1690, were pointed out as the precise period. This was however putting the truth of their interpretations to the test. But, O most lame and impotent conclusion! each period successively arrived, and antichrist still kept his seat. Mede was more artful, at least, if not more inspired than these imprudent seers. He cunningly fixed upon the year 1716, near a century later than he could expect to live; unless, as he was fully authorized to

do, he had laid claim to the longevity of the patriarch, as well as the inspiration of the prophet.—Jurieu and Whiston were less prudent. Instead of shily shifting the period of the Papal downfall a century later, in which case the fall of Babylon and the destruction of the beast would have oddly synchronised with the restoration of the venerable Pius VII. to his throne and territories, they were silly enough to follow the delusive authority of their patriarch Mede. The former fixed upon the period between the years 1710 and 1715, and as he died in 1713, he just saved his prophetic credit. Whiston was less fortunate. With all the whimsical parade of mathematical demonstration, he ascertained that the year 1716 was the epoch of papal destruction, but he had the mortification to outlive that period above thirty years, an object of scorn or pity. He died in 1752, leaving the virtuous and learned Pope Benedict XIV. in firm possession of the Papal throne. These and similar hallucinations, not only of their obscure, but also most distinguished and able writers, in which the absurdity of their tenets was surpassed only by the credulity and confidence with which they were

espoused and maintained, blasted for a while the credit of Babylonish prophets; and if they did not wholly deter succeeding adventurers from the vain pursuit, they taught them at least a lesson of prudence and patience. Accordingly the catastrophe of Papal ruin has been subsequently assigned by Mosely, Woodhouse and Faber, to the year 1866; by Bishop Newton and others to the year 1987; and by Lowman, who allowing the greatest latitude, comes in our opinion nearest to the truth, to the distant year 2016. *Opinionum commenta delect dies.* Time, which has already refuted the prophetic fictions of Mede and Whiston, will not be more merciful to the jarring systems of their modern competitors; and will in due season class the prophetic romances of Whitaker and Faber with the obsolete fables of Mede and Whiston.

Of the two circumstances before indicated, which gave a short lived popularity to the whimsies of the sect, we shall first dismiss the more recent in point of time. As the pseudo prophets, whose inspiration was derived from the French revolution, form a distinct class, we shall make few observations on them at present. Our readers are aware that the tremendous volcano of the French revolution exploded in 1789. In 1796 the republican armies invaded Italy; Rome was unable to resist the torrent, and the venerable and good pontiff Pius VI. robbed and insulted, but not disgraced; was dragged into France by the victorious revolutionists, and there died in captivity. To the eye unblinded by prejudice, the conduct of His Holiness displayed, in his humiliation, all the bright and solid virtues that can adorn and sanctify suffering innocence; as his public and private virtues had, in prosperity, reflected honour on his exalted station, and rendered him a benefactor to his country and to the world. Mr. Pitt addressing the House of Commons on the subject, could not withhold the tribute of his pity and admiration, and that distinguished orator and statesman, in one of his best speeches, (Feb. 3, 1800) describes it in these beautiful terms, as "a transaction accompanied by outrages and insults towards the pious and venerable Pontiff (in spite of the sanctity of his age and the unsullied purity of his character,) which even to a protestant seemed hardly short of the guilt of sacrilege." But the deluded Babylonian, who could discover nothing in this holy Pope, this worthy Vicar of Jesus Christ, but marks of the Beast, and features of the Babylonian harlot and of Antichrist; and who devoutly expected, and as vainly wished, that every expiring Pope was to be the last, viewed these events in a different light.—With his bible in one hand, and the newspaper in the other, making the gazette his expositor of holy writ, he discovered in every battle, and in every succeeding event, especially in the spoliation of the temporalities of the Holy See, a fulfilment of prophecy; and a confirmation of his dreams.—Pius VI. is dead! The last of the Popes has perished! The Popedom is extinct! Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen: Babylon is swept with the besom of destruction, and shall be found no more at all! (*Signs of the Times, by Edward King, Esq. P. R. S. & A. S. 1798.*) Such was the antichristian rant and fanatical rancour which resounded from the pulpit of many churches and conventicles in this kingdom, on occasion of this virtuous Pontiff's death; and which forcibly reminded us of that spirit, which once cried out against his Divine Master: *Away with him, Crucify him.* Such moreover is the drift and substance of the moonshiny sermons and visitation charges on "the Fall of Ba-

* The Reverend George Stanly Faber not only shows the sagacity of his discernment, the soundness of his judgment, and the delicacy of his taste, but gives a fair specimen of the conclusiveness of his logic, and elegant language which are current in the Babylonish school, in the following extracts from his Dissertation on the Prophecies: "There is a most curious treatise by Mr. Potter on the number 666, in which he goes on the principle of extracting the square root, and of applying it when so extracted to a wonderful variety of matters connected with popery. I can promise the reader entertainment of a singular sort from this work. It is one of the most ingenious productions I ever met with, but too elaborate and far-fetched." (Vol. II. p. 310.) "Latinus, and nothing but Latinus, is the name of the Beast." (p. 316.) "With regard to the mark of the Beast, I think with Sir Isaac Newton, that it is the Cross. Protestants are the spiritually wise children of the symbolical woman, who profess the same principles as those who perished at the era of the reformation, in trying, in purging, and making white their apostate brethren." (p. 463) "I freely allow, that the papists are members of the Catholic Beast; but I cannot bring myself to style them Catholics, as if they were the only members of the true Church." (Vol. II. p. 261.) "The spiritual kingdom of the Pope sprung up after the empire had become Christian, or during the period of what St. John styles its non-existence as a beast. In the course of the latter part of this intermediate period, the ancient pagan beast, that had been wounded to death by the preaching of the Gospel, was gradually come to life again by the apostasy of numerous individuals. But when he perfectly revived, resumed all his bestial functions, and set up an idolatrous spiritual tyrant in the Church, by constituting Boniface the third Universal Bishop, then were the saints delivered into the hands of the little horn; then did the little horn begin to have a look more stout than his fellows; then did the universal spiritual empire of the Pope commence. This happened in the year 606—consequently I esteem this year the most probable date of the 1260 days." (Vol. I. p. 60.) "The campaign of 1805 has made Bonaparte the undoubted representative of Charlemagne, and consequently the head of the beast." (Vol. II. p. 372.) Mr. Faber then pursues the head of the beast and the little horn of the beast, till he sees Bonaparte and the Pope perfectly secured, by both being cast alive into a certain "lake of fire burning with brimstone." (Vol. II. p. 411.) Little did this "spiritually wise child of the symbolical woman" dream, that in less than eight years after he had told their fortunes and settled their fate, the head of the beast would be shipped to St. Helena, and that the little horn would again have a look more stout than his fellows, in the Vatican. But whether our modern seers attempt to prophecy from scanning the future or considering the past, they appear destined to be unsuccessful, and are eventually proved to be no wiser than their uninspired neighbours. The following is a curious specimen of his ex-post-facto-propheying. "Mr. F. lays it down as an axiom, that Rev. xi. 13, and at the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men even thousand, denotes the French Revolution. In the Greek and Latin Vulgate, though not in his own Bible, the expression is seven thousand names of men. He then gives this interpretation: "In the year 1789 the earthquake commenced, and in it fell a tenth part of the great Roman

city; that is to say, the French monarchy, the only one of the ten original regal horns then in existence. This circumstance, added to the chronological era to which the earthquake is assigned, namely, the close of the second vroe, or a period subsequent to the permitted season of Ottoman conquest, might itself be sufficient to teach us that the French revolution can be alone intended in this prediction. But the prophet adds even a yet more decisive mark: in the earthquake, says he, were slain 7000 names of men. The expression is remarkable and full of meaning. In common earthquakes, or political revolutions, men alone are ordinarily slain; but in the present earthquake their very names are to be slain; and the number of the names is said to be 7000, or 7 multiplied by 1000, the usual apocalyptic method of describing a great multitude. The number of names or titles is seven, and this number is multiplied by a thousand to describe how great a multitude the ancient French nobility were. Now it is a remarkable circumstance that not merely names or titles of nobility should be slain or abolished, by the earthquake of the French revolution, but that precisely seven such names or titles should be abolished. 1. Princes. 2. Duke. 3. Marquis. 4. Count. 5. Viscount. 6. Bishop. 7. Baron." (If Mr. F. had needed two or three more titles to make out his number, he might have found kings, archbishops, cardinals and chevaliers.) "All these names were slain in the course of the earthquake, which overthrew the only remaining tenth part of the Roman city, or the monarchy of France. For the first shock of the earthquake took place in the year 1789, and the last on the memorable eve of August 1792. Thus are we alike directed by chronological and circumstantial evidence to apply this prediction to the French revolution. It was to be fulfilled after the Ottoman empire had ceased to be victorious. It was to be fulfilled in one of the ten original horns of the beast. It was to be fulfilled in the downfall of the monarchy symbolized by that tenth horn: and in the abolition of precisely seven names or titles of nobility. No event except the French revolution answers to all these particulars; and it does exactly answer to them ALL. Consequently we have as much certainty as can be attained in these matters that the French revolution is here foretold by St. John. I have explained this prophecy much better in the present edition (1807) than I did in the first (1805)." (Vol. II. p. 95.)

Aut insant aut versus facit. What can our disciple of Mr. Moore the almanac-maker say now, when he has lived to see "Fallen Rome" again risen; to see most of the ten original regal horns of the Romish beast, Austria, France, Spain, Naples, &c. again lift up the terrors of their Popish altars; again to see his precisely seven slain titles of French nobility come to life again? Qui Bavian non odit amet tua carmina Mævi Among the numerous conceits of this author, in Revel. xiv. the first angel is the chaste Luther, the second the meek Calvin, the third the unpersecuting "insular Church of England." The fourth angel, who says, put in thy sickle and reap he might not, greater propriety have stationed in tythed and exhausted Ireland. The battle of Dresden created excessive demands on the credit of Messrs. Faber's & Co's. prophetic bank; the battle of Waterloo has shut up their warehouse of mongrel prophecy, if it has not yet gazetted the firm among bankrupt prophets.—What solemn trifling!