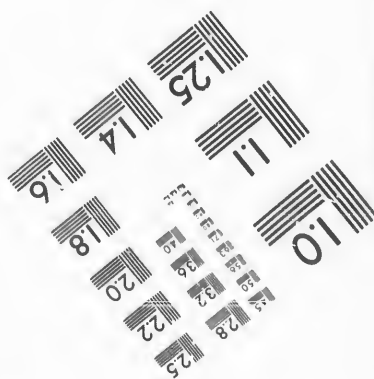
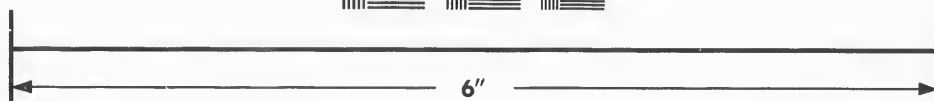
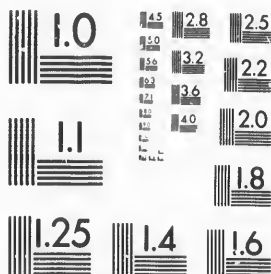


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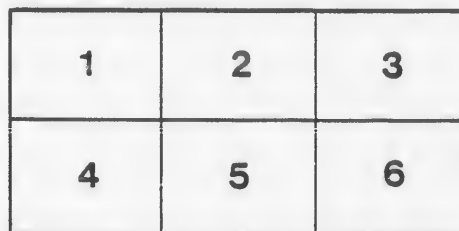
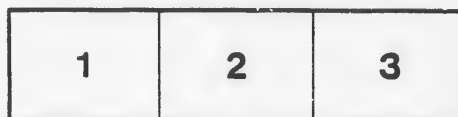
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9.

9

THE THEORY

OF THE

SECOND ADVENT IN 1843,

SCRIPTURALLY EXAMINED,

AND ITS

EVIL TENDENCY EXPOSED,

IN

A LECTURE,

BY R. H. THORNTON,
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, WHITBY.

Originally delivered, and now published by request.

TORONTO:

PRINTED BY J. CLELAND, 15, CITY BUILDINGS.

1843.

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P R E F A C E .

THE following Lecture is made public, with no small reluctance on the part of the Author, conscious as he is, that the acceptability with which it was received, by the numerous individuals from among all denominations, who requested its delivery, must have been owing, *much more* to the unprecedented excitement occasioned by the subject of which it treats, than to any intrinsic excellency. The call for its publication, however, was made in such a manner, and to such extent, it could not be withheld, lest it might have been supposed, *that* was delivered, which could not bear more minute investigation.

Should it find its way into the hands of any, beyond the sphere of that excitement which has given it importance, there is no doubt but the *truth* it contains, will command that respect which truth always receives from its friends; while its numerous imperfections will, it is hoped, be charitably attributed to their real cause—the getting up of it hastily and unexpectedly, amid engagements already great.

With the exception of a few notes, furnishing matter of explanation or interest, it is not, so far as he is conscious, materially either altered or enlarged since it was delivered. Wherever it may go, that it may have the blessing of Him, who says with regard to human instrumentality, “not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit,” is the earnest prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

WHITBY, 4th April, 1843.

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LECTURE.

Acts, i. 7.—“It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power.”

TIMES and seasons are terms which occur very often in Scripture, and stand for periods of *time* indefinitely. They are almost universally employed to denote those great eras in the dispensations of Divine Providence, connected with some peculiar change or revolution in the state of affairs in this lower world. The terms are employed in peculiar accordance with the way in which *He* thinks of *time*, with whom “one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” What “times and seasons” are alluded to in this passage, it is not difficult to ascertain. The words are an answer to a question put by the disciples to their risen Lord, in the preceding verses. “They asked him,” saying, “Lord, wilt thou at this time, restore again the kingdom to Israel?”

But, to ascertain more distinctly what is referred to, in both the question and answer, we must turn to Matt. xxiv. 3, where we are told, that when Jesus was with his disciples upon the Mount of Olives, and foretelling the destruction of the Temple, to the splendours of which they had directed his attention, they said, “Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy *coming*, and of the end of the world?” What ideas the disciples had of the “coming” here referred to, it is impossible for us to say; for, till a considerable time after his resurrection, their views regarding the nature and objects of his mission, were imperfect and confused. But when He speaks of the subject, it is uniformly in reference to some signal display of his glory—some remarkable exercise of his power—or some notable change or revolution in the state of affairs. His *coming*, therefore, sometimes means a spiritual manifestation of himself, by his Gospel, either to his disciples or to the world; it also denotes his invisible, but powerful agency as Judge, in bringing total destruction upon the impenitent nation of the Jews, by the instrumentality of the Roman armies; or, it is employed literally, in reference to his final, visible, and glorious Second Advent to judge the world. Now, of this final season, closing up all the events of *time*, He makes the prophecy throughout this chapter, a type, and a prophecy; hence the prophecy runs on in a twofold reference,

intermingling the descriptions of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the end of the world. "The *principle* on which this combined description of two events was spoken, appears to be, *that they could be described in the same words*, and therefore the accounts are intermingled." Similar language is frequently employed by Isaiah, where the description of the return from the Babylonish captivity suits also that accomplished by the Messiah. This will serve to explain what has seemed an inconsistency to many—that certain things which seem capable of being realized only at the last day, are yet connected with declarations which can have a reference only to the prior event. Thus, in the 34th verse it is said, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." The meaning of which is, *that generation* should not pass, till events took place that should be a complete fulfilment, if there were nothing farther intended. Yet the day of judgment was not thereby excluded; but only, that the destruction of Jerusalem would be such, as to make *appropriate* the words of the prediction, were there nothing beyond. In like manner, when *death* was threatened to Adam, the propriety of the threatening would have been seen, and its truth vindicated, had men been subjected only to *temporal death*; yet it had a *fulness of meaning*, extending also to spiritual and eternal death, or the "pains of hell." So the words of Christ had a fulness of import, which would meet also the events of the final judgment; and the meaning, therefore, would not be *filled up* till the end of time. Now, it is in reference to *these descriptions*, that the disciples put the question already noticed, exactly similar to that in Acts i, 6; and our Lord declares, verse 36, "that the precise time of their fulfilment is unknown to men, yea, even to the angels." The *general signs* betokening its approach, were distinctly given, just as the budding of the fig-tree, when the juices have returned from the roots to the branches, is a *certain* indication that summer is near; but the *precise time* is not indicated. To say, as some have done, that our Lord's statement "does not prevent the *year* being known," is too much of *quibble* to merit serious notice.

These remarks, although somewhat lengthened, are called for, in order to clear up the *fallacies* of Miller's views upon this chapter, as well as to illustrate the passage in the Acts. You will now perceive, that in the latter passage, the same truth is declared regarding man's ignorance of *that day*; and with this important addition, that the knowledge of it is not *becoming* or *proper* for man. "It is not *for* you to know the *times* and the *seasons* which the Father hath put in his own power." None need to be informed how much has been done in our neighbourhood, and elsewhere, to explain away these solemn declarations, nor how boldly "the same word of prophecy" has been pressed into the service, as having all along foretold the very thing which our Lord, as we have just seen, both before his death, and after his resurrection, emphatically declared was not to be communicated to man. The

consequence has been, that many, like the Thessalonians, are "shaken in mind, as though the day of Christ," the termination of the *times and seasons*, "were at hand."

To advert publicly to this *theory*, I for a considerable time felt reluctant, not only because of the difficulty of making any subject, so much connected as this is with the *reasonings of men*, as *useful* as I wish all my feeble efforts in the pulpit to be, but also, because I regarded it as one of those *visionary theories* which, when most unheeded, are most speedily numbered among the things of the past. Opposition in such cases, not only attracts a notice which is not merited, but is almost certain to give them life and form. But as not only an earnest request has been made over the Township to take it up, but as it has of late been promulgated with all the characteristics of insidious infidelity, I am ready—if there is the prospect of aiding *one mind* involved in perplexity, or of stopping the flood-gates of error—I am ready to "contend for the faith once delivered to the saints."

It has been the mode of some to dismiss the whole subject with affected ridicule; but while this may be, and I believe is very applicable to no small part of the reasonings by which it is supported, yet, as scripture is appealed to with such confidence, we must come to it after the manner of the Bereans, and *search* "whether these things are so." And instead, therefore, of dwelling much upon the *calculations* connected with it, which few in a mixed audience could follow, it will be more satisfactory I trust, and certainly more *useful*, to turn our attention chiefly to the yet unfulfilled *outline* in the *Prophetic Word*. This is what every one who "can read in his own tongue" may examine; and it is that of which the "faithful and true Witness" has affirmed, "*all shall be fulfilled.*" And when we "search the Scriptures," it must never be with a view to support any preconceived theory, but to make every theory bend, and every thought and affection submit, to the dictates of the unerring Spirit speaking in the Word.

In what remains, I shall endeavour to proceed in the following order:—

I. Shew that every attempt to interpret unfulfilled prophecy, should be characterised by great *modesty* and *caution*.

II. That in the interpretation of that *outline* prophecy has presented, and which the events of time fill up, Miller and his followers have greatly erred.

III. Advert to some of the fundamental errors of the system, exhibit a few of its numerous inconsistencies, and expose its dangerous tendency.

IV. Notice the end for which we should examine prophecy, in tracing the dispensations of Divine Providence.

First. I am to shew that our attempts to interpret unfulfilled prophecy, should be peculiarly cautious.

The *necessity* of this, many will doubtless consider so obvious, as to deem any confirmation of it unnecessary. Such, however, is the disposition in modern times, to speculate upon the unfulfilled part of the *train* of prophecy, and such the want of *modesty* and *caution* many have displayed, that we cannot have the truth of this proposition too strongly impressed upon our minds.

Within the last twenty-five years, numerous have been the attempts to establish systems of calculation, in reference to the obscure language of prediction, by which the most interesting events may, with accuracy, be determined; and the means which ingenuity and learning, consecrated by piety, have brought to our hands, are very great. But while we are encouraged by the numerous and triumphant vindications of Divine Providence, which writers upon the subject have furnished, we must ever bear in mind, that there is always an imminent danger of overstepping *that boundary* assigned by Him, to whom all time is but a point. To this boundary he has directed our particular attention, by saying to us, "things that are revealed belong to us and to our children; but secret things belong to the Lord our God."

This line, I hesitate not to say, has been over-stepped by those who presumptuously declare, that within the limits of the current year, the consummation of all things shall take place,—or from 11th to 14th April next, as they have at length more positively determined. The very *design* of prophecy, as interpreted and employed by them, has been, I conceive, entirely misunderstood. Its design was surely not to impart foreknowledge to man, but to demonstrate that God possesses it; and as *time* rolls on, along the prophetic outline, to present from age to age the most incontrovertible evidence that "Jehovah reigneth," and thus furnish the believing with so many pledges that *all shall be fulfilled*, "Time has ever been the great interpreter of prophecy;" and the Divine Wisdom has been displayed by that obscurity which rests upon prophecy, till *time* declare it. Things future are commonly announced in terms sufficiently obscure to check presumption in a pious mind, and yet sufficiently clear to afford satisfactory evidence, when once the events have taken place, that every circumstance was fore-ordained, foreseen, and foretold. But those who start ahead of *time*, the great revealer of secrets, must grope their way by a wisdom above what is written, and in a "perpetual mist, through which indeed a variety of objects are visible, but none of them distinctly seen."

Now, I apprehend, we need no better evidence that the *Theorists* already alluded to, have proceeded too quickly, than the almost distracting variety of hypothesis which have already been broached upon the subject of prophecy. When we have before us so many instances of wide disagreement, between those of equal industry and talent—of the oft-repeated failure of calculations, upon which the greatest stress has been laid—it is surely high time to beware, and "not lean to our own

understanding," by attempting to "give the stamp and currency of inspired truth" to those conjectures which *time* may ere long demonstrate to have sprung from our presumption, impatience, or ignorance.

Apart, therefore, from the solemnity of the case—apart from the deeply responsible attempt to decypher with accuracy the *sketchings out* of the Eternal Spirit, in his prospective outline of the world's history, surely the consideration, that we tread upon the ground where many of the *wise* and *mighty* have gone astray, should lead us to advance with that humility and caution, which accord with the entreaty—"lead me O God in thy truth, teach me." Were any *specific* illustration required, I might adduce the fact, which many here will recollect with me, that a little more than ten years ago the followers of Irving, in England, and of Campbell, of Row, in Scotland, for a time, expected from day to day, the Second Advent of the Messiah, as confidently as the followers of Miller do *this year* in America. And their expectation was founded upon a system of calculation, characterised by much greater plausibility, and in the support of which, the plain words of Scripture were not so unceremoniously wrested.

But the necessity of *caution* appears, not only from the nature of the investigation, but from our situation and character. Whatever expectations man may form, he never knows "what a day may bring forth." Accordingly, it has been well said, that it is neither by "a light issuing from the earth, nor by the meteor-gleam of high imaginations, that the page of history can be read, or the dark recesses of futurity disclosed."* The Ruler among the nations, whose omniscient eye penetrates alike through space and time, can alone shew "the things that are not, as though they were." He hath the "times and seasons in his own power," and the signs of them can be known only by his word. From ancient times he hath declared by his servants the prophecies, the things that are now passing, and that are yet to come. And if we would trace the final results, and ultimate consequences of existing events and movements which agitate the world, we must turn to the Word of God, with all submissiveness and child-like docility.

It may appear to some remarkable, that upon no part of unfulfilled prophecy perhaps, has there been such boldness of exposition, as upon that which respects the *Second Advent*. Although, from the obscurity which still enshrouds many statements regarding it, mistakes have been made since the days of Paul, by all who have tried to fix *times* and *seasons*, yet the confidence of the most recent theorists is not in the least checked. The cause of this boldness, however, is, in the present case at least, not difficult to account for. The system exhibits either no ordinary display of ignorance, or of wilful perversion; and ignorance has always been more assuming than knowledge. But audacity in such

* Keith.

theories is to be expected, from the very circumstance that they overstep the line stretched before us, by Him "who hath the times and seasons in his own power;" and we need not wonder, that those who have the hardihood to disregard it, should have boldness enough to assert anything to their fellow worms. That peculiar *confidence*, therefore, which has surprised many and staggered and perplexed others, is anything but a *favourable* feature in the supporters of the *Millerian* scheme.

Second. I have next to shew, that in the interpretation of that *outline* which prophecy has presented, and which the events of time are filling up, Miller and his followers have greatly erred.

Prophecy stretches over the whole period of the world's duration. It was first employed immediately after man had sinned, and it reaches on to "the consummation of all things." And in all the grand events it sketches out, and the *times and seasons* it passes through, there is one notable personage who is kept ever before us, and who, from the time he was first revealed as the "*Seed of the Woman*," down to the era of "the restitution of all things," is the uniform subject of prophetic testimony. Now, it is important to keep in view the fact, that all the great and leading events included in the prophetic *outline*, down to the *Second Advent*, have been *partially* fulfilled; and whatever prophecy is partially fulfilled, is just as capable of *demonstration* as any prophecy relating to things *wholly past*. In other words, the *begun accomplishment* of any prophecy, is the best of all evidence of its complete *filling up* in future.

With this principle in view then, let us select for examination, a few of the leading events foretold in the *outline* referred to, in order to discover how far the way is prepared for "the coming of the day of the Lord." And let us remember, that as with Him nothing can be retarded, so nothing is premature; and, therefore, however much *we* may suppose the way is prepared, "the Heavens will *retain* Him till the *times* of the restitution of all things."

1st. We learn from the prophetic outline, that the power and dominion of Antichrist shall cease previous to the Saviour's "visible and glorious appearing." Amid the various conjectures, who, or what is referred to, by this name of ominous import, the general definition given by John, 1st Epistle, ii 22, is explicit enough for any general purpose,—"He that denieth that Jesus is the Christ, he is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son." This general, yet forcible description, is applicable to every thing that is an *opponent* to the Gospel of Christ; and that the Apostle refers to various sects of apostates, and not to any individual teachers, seems incontrovertible. Each sect was an Antichrist, and there were, even in that age, "many Antichrists." And it is equally applicable still, to Papal, to Mahomedan, or Infidel *opponents* to Christ. But almost all nominal Christians restrict the name to the great Power which was, according to prophecy, to arise in the Christian

Church, after the death of the Apostles ; and which they solemnly charged the disciples to observe with all vigilance, and to resist with all fortitude, patience, and hope. This Power is evidently spoken of also, by the peculiar appellation, "*Man of Sin.*"

The *rise* of this Power, it is generally allowed, is matter of *history*, but its *downfall*, seems yet to be the subject of *prophecy*. Although the limits of its duration, seem to be distinctly assigned in the prophetic word, yet, all who have come to the examination of the subject, with becoming humility, have felt no small difficulty in calculating the date of its fall ; and, as might be expected, they have exhibited considerable diversity of opinion in their respective conclusions. This difficulty arises from the obscurity, which of necessity, attends prophecy, and from the fact that although the duration is spoken of, as being for 1260 days or years, no circumstance is specified to mark with certainty, the date from which the number of his days is to be computed. One thing, however, seems obvious, that the 1260 cannot begin at any period *prior* to the *full establishment* of the Papal Power ; for nothing less surely, can be implied by the expression in Daniel, vii. 25, "the saints of the Most High,——shall be *given into his hands*, until a time, and times, and the dividing of time." Without presuming to decide then, where wiser and abler men have been uncertain, I simply state as matter of history, that in A. D. 533, the spiritual power of the Pope was declared by the civil authority, viz: the emperor Justinian. From this date as shall afterwards appear, Miller and his followers, proceed to calculate the 1260 days of his existence. But it is equally a fact, which they have overlooked or disregarded, that Justinian's edict, did not then come into full operation.* For we find that after his death, when the Pope was still advancing in influence and authority, his supremacy was still disputed by the bishop of Constantinople ; and the case was not formally settled, till A. D. 606, when the emperor Phocas, a usurper and a tyrant, renewed and confirmed the edict referred to. As, therefore, an earlier period cannot with propriety be fixed upon, if we take 606, and add 1260, it will bring us down to the year 1866. The *correctness* of this, I do not assert ; it is opinion only.

* It is not from any private complimentary letter to the Pope, such as the edict properly was, but from the public law of the empire, that we can learn the true import of the titles which Justinian applied to the Pope. In the *Novellæ Constitutiones*, treating of ecclesiastical titles and privileges, Justinian declares, "that the most holy Pope of Rome shall be the first of all Priests, but that the most blessed Archbishop of Constantinople, shall be second, or next to him." If Justinian had meant him to have a dominion over the Bishop of Constantinople, there would have been no necessity for this special regulation, respecting the order to be observed by those dignitaries on public occasions.

But if, as many have supposed, his duration is to be computed from the full establishment of his power, as a temporal prince, when he was not only a *spiritual* despot, "opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God," but a haughty tyrant, holding crowns and empires at his disposal, then, a considerably later period still, must be that from which we must date his rise. In reference to this, the year 666, has by several been supposed to be the commencement of the 1260. This idea, however, seems to be derived, not so much from any historical evidence, regarding this date, as from the supposition that in Rev. xiii. 18, there is a key given in the statement that "the number of the beast is 666."* As I have already shewn, we should be extremely cautious not to speak too positively upon such subjects. I state it, however, as matter of *opinion merely*, that notwithstanding what has just been said respecting different views, that *civil* power is not *essential* to the Papal character, any more than it is essential to the character of a sovereign prince, that he be declared head, over all matters ecclesiastical as well as civil, within the limits of his dominions. There was an emperor of Rome when there was no Pope, and there may be a Pope without his being possessed of an inch of territory, which he can call his own. "It is the Antichristian or spurious *ecclesiastical* authority, and not the civil power of the Popes, which makes them both the head of the mystery of iniquity, and the curse and disgrace of human beings."

The *theory* we are considering, takes such grounds on this important subject, as has rendered it necessary to go at some length into these divers views. This diversity of opinion, let me caution you to observe, arises not from confusion in the prophetic *sketches*, nor from any inconsistency in the statements of the "holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." It arises as was already said, from the fact that it is *outline* only, and comes to be developed as time fills it up. Besides, the prophetic features of Antichrist, became *gradually* unfolded, till they blazed forth in characters of light, "seen and read of

* It may be interesting to observe, regarding 1260, that in Daniel. xii. we have two express additional numbers,—30 and 45,—relative to the close of the latter of which Daniel says, "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh;" meaning probably that this gives the rise of the Millenium. "To what purpose," it has been asked, "are these numbers given, unless a fourth be somewhere furnished to inform us of the commencement of the noted 1260 years? for men would never agree where they should commence. But if such a number be given, it may be expected to attend the description of the papal beast, whose rise commences the 1260. And here such a number is in fact found."—See Smith's Key to the Rev. Lect. xviii.

Take then on this supposition, A. D. 666 and add the numbers referred to,—666 + 1260 + 30 + 45 = 2001, or the close of 2000; this will give 2000 before Abraham, 2000 to Christ, and 2000 to the Millenium; so the *natural week*. Thus also it has been observed, is according to analogy in the natural week, viz. six days for labour, and the seventh for rest.

all men." And thus, from small beginnings in the time of Paul, do we behold him advancing, till, "sitting in the temple of God," he receives at his footstool the homage of vassal sovereigns, assuming to himself the prerogative of Him, "by whom kings reign." And while therefore, many circumstances of *strong probability*, might be adduced in support of the correctness of some of the dates referred to, as the period of his rise, yet, it may, *till the day declare it*, rest upon an *if*, which may stamp with arrogance and vanity, the most boldly promulgated theories. And those who may live, to be able to say in reference to the final overthrow, "what hath God wrought" will not be without evidences, that "it is the glory of God to conceal a thing." Hence the venerable Ireneus wisely said, "it is surer and safer, to wait for the accomplishment, than too much to conjecture, and divine about it. When the end shall come, then we shall know better whence to date the beginning." It has been amply shewn, I trust, that *uncertainly* yet rests upon the date of Antichrist's rise, and the conclusion is inevitable, that we are yet unprepared to assign *with certainty*, the period of its final overthrow.

But all difficulties and uncertainties vanish, before those far-sighted men, who confidently predict, that in a few days "there shall be time no longer." They have made the interesting discovery, that Antichrist, in reference to all his prophetic characteristics, is now no more. This event we are told, took place in 1793. And in proof thereof, we are further told, that "since Napoleon then dethroned the Pope, he has *ceased to persecute*." This idea rests upon the supposition, that *temporal* power, is an *essential* Antichristian feature; an idea which, as shall be shewn in the sequel is untenable, if 1793 be the time of his downfall. The assertion, however, that this power, hath either ceased to persecute since the time of Napoleon, or hath no more the genuine Antichristian features, is wholly *untrue*.

Indeed the error is too glaring to require a formal refutation. It may suffice to say, that, frequently since *that* time, has the Inquisition been in operation.* And to what influence, but the genuine Antichristian, are we to attribute the burning of the Bible of Protestants, in the most public manner, but a few months ago; and that too in the immediate vicinity of him who confidently declares Antichrist is fallen? It is readily granted, that it is no more what it once was. In many countries for example, where the pomp of ceremonies was once revered, it has lost now, its imposing charm. No king now stands, as Henry IV. did, bare-headed and bare-footed, at the gate of his Holiness; and none do

* The re-institution of the *Inquisition* of the Jesuits, and of monastic orders in the 19th century, is a retrograde step in the progress of society."—Rome in the 19th century, vol. iii. p. 174.

"By the re-institution of the *Inquisition*, the most diabolical engine of oppression and torture was brought into action again."—Keith's Signs of the Times.

penance as of old, at his mandate. But even yet, Antichristian features, as delineated by Paul and others, *distinctly appear*. Is not the name blasphemy yet written in his forehead? Does he not yet literally "sit in the temple of God"? At his election he is enthroned still, in the temple of St. Peter, and "*adoration* is not only the *act*, but still the word in use, when on that occasion, the *Cardinals* and *Princes* of the church, prostrate themselves before him." In short, he still "exalts himself above all that is called God, and worshiped." The consecrated wafer called the *host*, is not God, but it is *called God*: when laid on the altar in St. Peters, it is said to be "the very body of Christ," and when it is borne through the Streets, all true Catholics prostrate themselves in adoration of it, yet the altar, upon which the *host* is laid, is but the *footstool* of him, who is thus "exalted above all that is called God." Despite of all such evidence however, we are told that the number of his days is completed.

I have been thus particular, both because the subject is *new* to many, and without considerable illustration could not be comprehended, and also because 1260 being part of the 2300 which Miller says reaches to the end of all time, and terminates this year, it plainly follows, that so long as the smaller number is not completed, the *end* cannot come.*

But here it may be observed, that as in almost every main feature, the theory is inconsistent with itself. It is often maintained, for example, that the "time of the end" mentioned in Daniel, is the end of all things, when Christ shall appear; but in other cases, it is granted that it means the end of the Papal power, terminating 1798; nevertheless it is plainly said, this power shall prosper "till the indignation be accomplished."—Daniel, xi, 36. If, upon this principle, we admit that 2300 reaches to the end of all things, and that 1260 extends to the close of the

* There is a circumstance connected with the prophetic numbers regarding the beast, or Papal power, which has not only been generally overlooked, but inattention to which has doubtless been the cause of the great discrepancy which has marked the various treatises upon the subject. The circumstance is this, that the 1260 days are almost universally spoken of, as if they took their beginning from the *rise* of the tyranny so often described. Yet the words of Daniel, vii. 24, 25, plainly relate *not* to his rise, but to the time, when, having made war with the saints, they *were given into his hand*. Accordingly, one learned author remarks that John expressly says, that "The time not of the witnesses prophesying, (for in part of that time they had power) but of their prophesying in sackcloth, should be twelve hundred and sixty days."—Rev. xi. 3. "And the persecuted woman after her flight, was to be actually in the wilderness," the same time, chap. xii. 6. Wherefore also the 42 months, (the very same period), during which power was given to the beast, Rev. xiii. 5, evidently ought not to be reckoned from his rise, or when the ten horns received power with him, chap. xvii. 12; but from the time of his *having overcome* the saints, and of his being worshipped by all that dwell upon the earth, ch. xiii. 7, 3. —Clarke's Evid. of Nat. and Rev. Religion.

larger number, then, if the Papal years terminated 1798, so did the present state of things. When this inconsistency is pressed, it is *allowed* that Antichrist is not *quite* destroyed; for he is to "be destroyed" says Miller, "by the brightness of the Saviour's coming"—but he has lost his *distinctive characters, having no civil power*. This explanation only involves the scheme more inextricably still; for not only is it opposed to oft-repeated assertions, regarding his fall in 1798, but it rests upon the *supposition*, that his *essential* characteristic always has been the possession of *that* power. We shall grant it, and what is the result? Why, that we must come down at least to a date *far beyond that* which was fixed on to make his days terminate in 1798.

The foundation of the civil power of the Popes, was doubtless laid in the revolution, in the year 728, yet, till that rule was acknowledged by some foreign power, they could only be regarded as usurpers, whom, the first who had the means, might dethrone at pleasure. At what period then did this recognition take place? It was not till 740,* when, in the treaty between Gregory III. and Charles Martel, plenipotentiary of the King of France, the evil power of the Pope was plainly recognized. This then is doubtless the era of the *secular* throne, and thus the date assigned by Miller, is untenable upon *his* principle of civil power being *essential*. As it has been already shewn, however, that the possession of it is *not essential* to the Papal character, then observe, though *it* should be wrested *before* the spiritual dominion expire, or the 1260 years of the apostacy run out, the predictions of John would not on that account be affected; because, he describes the duration of the *spiritual* or *ecclesiastical*, and not the *secular* power of the Pope.

2nd. I proceed to notice another important part of the prophetic outline to be filled up by events yet future. I allude to the Turkish power, which is identified with the religion of Mahomet. The character and downfall of this dreadful enemy are also repeatedly and distinctly given, both in Daniel and the Revelation. It is also to "perish without hand," before *the mystery of God be finished*. This power, though but the shadow of what it once was, has not yet ceased to be under the influence of the "king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences." More requires therefore to be done here, according to the prophetic word, before "he that shall come will come." Here again, however, we are told, all we are to expect in reference to this, has been

* Most writers have adopted a later date, viz: A. D. 755, when the Pope absolutely shook off the authority of the Emperor; and Pepin of France sent the keys of Ravenna and Penientapolis to the Pope. But the civil power was as plainly recognized in 740, as by any subsequent transaction.

accomplished. The Turkish power, like the Antichristian, is numbered, according to Miller, among the things that *were*.*

The gradual wasting of the Turkish power is strikingly foretold, under the emblem of *drying up the Euphrates*,—Rev. xvi. 12. Now, though few will believe with Miller the full accomplishment of this prophecy, every discernor of the *times* will acknowledge it to be in a course of obvious fulfilment. The kings, however, have not yet passed its channel. Who "the Kings of the East" are, I shall not at present attempt to shew, because it is unimportant in our present inquiry. I believe them, however, to be different characters from what they are taken to be by Miller; who supposes them to be *all the infidel powers*† gathering together, to decide the final conflict with the subjects of the Messiah. Waiving this, however, and supposing with him the sixth vial poured out, and the river dried up, what are the kings doing? Where is the field of muster? and what indications are there that in a *few days* the conflict shall be terminated? If the theory is correct, the battle commenced three or four years ago. Speaking of the sixth vial, and quoting the above passage, he says, "This preparation is for the last great battle which will take place at the pouring out of the seventh vial, in the year 1839 or 40. At the pouring out of the seventh vial, a voice from the throne will pronounce the word, *it is done*. The kingdoms of the earth, and the governments of the world, will be carried away, and their places not found,—Lect. xviii. Again, alluding to the same events, he states the case more fully; quoting Rev. xvi. 16, he makes the strange assertion, that this gathering is the same spoken of in Matt. xxiv. 32, "And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate," &c. It is unnecessary surely, to point out to any one, with the Bible in his hand, this reckless confounding of things so obviously distinct. The gathering in Matt. is *that subsequent* to the resurrection,—it is the appearing of "all before the judgment-seat of Christ;" whereas, the other, according to Miller himself, *precedes* the "time of the end." This, however, is aside from our main argument. In the context immediately following that just alluded to, he says "the seventh and last vial of God's wrath will be poured into the air, about the year 1840, if my former calculations are correct, when this judgment will have a quick and rapid circulation over the globe. Like the air, it will pervade every kingdom, circulate into every nation. sow the seeds of anarchy in

* It is remarkable that Mahomet began his imposture in the very year that the Emperor constituted the Pope universal Bishop. This was 606, when Mahomet retired to his cave to forge his impostures.

† This idea of the Kings of the East is inconsistent with verse 14, where there are kings of a different character introduced, and are placed in contrast with Kings of the East. Those in verse 14, being termed *Kings of the earth*, appear much more likely what he supposes, especially as they were to be mustered by the *unclean spirits*

every society, and disorganize every bond of union among men."—Lect. xv. p. 321. Whether all these things have taken place, every one can judge. Observe, however, they were predicted, according to that system of calculation, which exhibits all things as accomplished in 43. If, therefore, these conjectures have turned out to be incorrect, then out of his own mouth is his theory refuted. And since the events he so confidently expected, have not happened in 40, 41, nor even in 42, then, apart from all other reasons, it is difficult to conceive how, with this failure in view, the consummation of all things can be looked for in 1843. Before leaving this, I shall allow the author to adduce another confirmation of what has just been advanced. Speaking of the "time of trouble" noticed in Daniel, xii. 1, he remarks, "Mankind will, for a short season, give loose to all the corrupt passions of the human heart. No laws, human or divine, will be regarded; all authority will be trampled under foot; anarchy will be the order of governments, and confusion fill the world with horror and despair. Murder, treason, and crime, will be common law, and division and disunion the only bond of fellowship. Christians will be persecuted unto death, and dens and caves of the earth will be their retreat. All things which are not eternal will be shaken to pieces, that that which cannot be shaken may remain. And this, if I am right in my calculations, will begin on or before A. D. 1839. And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."—Lect. vii. How obviously does the theory furnish the means of its own refutation!*

3rd. Another great event which, according to the outline of prophecy, is to *precede* the Second Advent, is *the extension of the kingdom of Christ in the world.*" This is a topic, respecting which, it is unnecessary much to enlarge; because the promises upon the subject are so numerous, and the indications of their rapid accomplishment, are becoming every day more abundant; so much so, indeed, that many who fully believe the Bible, may regard it as needless to adduce *any proof*. But strange as it may seem to such, we are told, that here also all is now done that can be expected. All the "great and precious promises" of the knowledge of the Lord covering the earth, are set aside by the *assertion*, that the gospel *has* been preached to all the world. And this, we are further told, is all that is implied, previous to "*the end coming.*"—

* It cannot be deemed unfair to adduce these Lectures as authority, rather than more recent publications, because they are the *Text-book* still, notwithstanding all their inconsistencies. None of his followers found their conclusions on any other ground than his "*Chronology*" and scheme of computing the 2300. Indeed the *Lectures* furnish the whole *material* of the Lectures of others, as I have had ample proof, by reading the Lecture as it was *re-delivering*. As might be expected, his authority goes with many beyond the Bible.

It would be endless to attempt to adduce *half* the amazing variety of passages, which relate to the growing empire, of the Redeemer on earth, its universal extent and miraculous effects. It is, however, very difficult, from so splendid and harmonious a list, to make a selection. To render this more easy, as well as present the evidence in a more distinct shape, I shall arrange my quotations under different heads; and before proceeding, let me urge the consideration, that what is to be adduced, is not the opinion of man, but the "true word of God." I solicit attention, then,

1st. To the promises of the *enlargement* of the Church, and the spreading of the gospel *throughout the world*. But here, I may first observe, that the proof adduced, in reference to the end of time by the spread of the gospel, is simply the *assertion*, that to *some* of *all* nations, the gospel has been preached; and besides, that it has been translated into *all* the various languages of the world, with the exception of *one* or *two*. Hear now the testimony of Scripture—"Ask of me, and I will give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession."—Paul, ii. 3. "All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee."—Psalms, xxii. 27. "All nations whom thou hast made, shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name."—lxxxvi. 9. Mark this language—they shall not only *all* *hear*—God's "way" shall not only be *known* among all nations—but they shall *all* *remember*, *all* *turn*, and *all* *worship* before him. Nay, as if on purpose, to build up his people's faith, in reference to those "glorious things spoken of in Zion," and preclude all possibility of mistake, by any *general* accomplishment merely of the "things spoken," God even *specifies by name* some of those places, otherwise the most *unlikely*, ever to be *blessed by the joyful sound*. "The Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and shall perform it, &c. Again, in that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance." Isaiah, xix. 21—25. Again, we are told, that the kingdom of the Messiah should reach "from sea to sea," from the Mediterranean that is, to the Indian Ocean, "and from the river (Euphrates) to the ends of the earth," or to China and the isles of Japan, known of old as the "ends of the earth."

In like manner, when we turn to the New Testament, we are told, that Christ endured the cross, and despised its shame, animated by the joyful prospect of "bringing many sons to glory."—Heb. ii. 10. This joy was prominently *set before him*, in the ancient promise of "a people willing in the day of his power," resembling in *number*, as well as in

glory and beauty, "the dew-drops from the womb of the morning."^{*} Psalms, cx. 3. Accordingly, he himself said, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to me." And to sum up this part of the evidence, we are told, that just before the final appearing of the Messiah, in the clouds of Heaven, the Seventh Angel sounded, "and there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ."—Rev. xi. 15. Have these promises been yet fulfilled? Shall we believe the *assertion of man*, or the testimony of God? Judge ye.

I pass over those promises which relate to the *glory* of the church, because, they occupy what may be called *disputed ground*. Millenarians, as well as Millerites, may insist upon their application, to the period, when *they* expect Christ to reign *personally* upon the earth.

2d. Turn next then, to the promises of light, and knowledge, and means of grace. And the time shall yet come we learn, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, *as the waters cover the earth*" Hab. ii. 14. And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people, (or, as in the original *peoples*)† a feast of fat things—full of marrow and of wines on the lees well refined. And he will *destroy* in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all *peoples*, and the veil that is spread over all nations."—Isa. xxv. 6, 7. As no terms could more appropriately point out the darkening effects upon the mind of ignorance, delusion and idolatry, than *veil* or *covering*, so nothing could more unequivocally point out their ultimate and entire removal than the term *destroy*, and as applied to *all* nations and people. In addition to this may be noticed the declaration in Daniel, xii. 4, that "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased;" and in the present accomplishment of which, by the many active labours of faithful ministers and missionaries, and the numerous Societies for the advancement of all useful, as well as *saving* knowledge, we have a present pledge of the filling up of all the rest.

Now glance briefly at the *Effects* of all this, as indicated in the Word of Promise. They shall be most beneficial, extensive, and glorious. The distressed conscience shall be comforted, the barren heart made fruitful, and the beauties of holiness communicated, where formerly vice and deformity, alone were visible.—Psalms, xxii. 2, 3, 7. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them," &c. &c.—Isa. xi. 6, 9. The advocates of the *Second Advent* in 43, hesitate not to ridicule the expectation of Christians, in reference to such promises, and they have shamelessly asserted, that we expect a *literal* accomplishment of all this. Nothing can be more contrary to truth: any person of ordinary understanding

^{*} Lowth's Trans.

† Plainly pointing out Gentiles as well as Jews.

may see, that from the nature of the case, such a passage must be *figurative*. All the animals alluded to, are wisely adapted in every respect, for their several modes of life ; and the instincts with which they are severally endowed, direct them to act in accordance with their organization. Hence any change in their physical construction, is not for a moment supposed : " Every creature on earth, man alone excepted, continues to the last, of that disposition, and retains unchanged, those propensities which belong to its nature." But this beautiful imagery is nevertheless, happily fitted to express the renovation of human passions and the completeness of moral transformation. They beautifully illustrate the reign of peace on earth, when men shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks,—when they shall

" Hang the trumpet in the hall,
And study war no more."—Isa. ii. 4. Hos. ii. 18.

Such are the general outlines of a great variety of most interesting prophecies, partly accomplished, partly fulfilling, but which *remain to be completed* ; nor can we doubt that every part of this sublime outline the hand of *time* will fill up ; for thus saith the *true Witness*, " my word shall not pass till *all* shall be fulfilled." The *certainty* is founded upon the *clearness* of the prediction, and the *absoluteness* of the promise. It is not a subject of mere *opinion*, nor is it beset with obscurity and *supposition*, like the theory I oppose, but is exhibited in terms as simple as the events predicted are desirable and glorious.

But suppose for a moment, that none of these promises exist, still, the publication of the Gospel, which they affirm with such confidence has been made to all the world, cannot be proven. I trust none here are so ignorant of the world's history, and of missionary enterprise, as to deny that the Gospel has been published in all the great divisions of the world. But this is far from enough, to meet the terms of the promise ; for the Gospel is not merely to run through a country, or a continent, and then disappear—leaving no better effects from its presence, than what is seen in the empty channel of a *deceitful brook*—it is to become water " to swim in, a river that cannot be passed over." Or, to change the emblem, the *stone cut out of the mountain is to fill the whole earth*. So the knowledge of the Lord is to *cover the earth*, we have seen, as completely, as the channels of the sea.* But besides the want of con-

* Some faint idea of the state of the world, in this respect, may be obtained by a single instance. The Island of Bombay, near the west coast of Hindoostan, has a population, according to a late census, of 161,550 ; besides 4,300 British, who may be called Christian, there are 11,500 Portuguese, Catholics and Armenians ; still leaving 145,750 in heathen darkness. Yet, owing to its situation in reference to the trading world, its state cannot be *so dark* as inland places. The knowledge of the Lord has not yet *half* covered the earth.

cord with the terms of the promises, the assertion cannot be made good. When, and by what instrumentalities was the Gospel proclaimed to the many darkened tribes of the North American Indians? or to the equally benighted tribes of Central and Southern America? to the great mass of the New Zealanders? or to the inhabitants of Central Africa? When did Ethiopia, in the fulness of the promise, "stretch out *her* hands to God?" When did the millions in Independent Tartary, China, and Japan, "remember and turn to the Lord?" When did the numerous *isles* of the Pacific and Southern Oceans wait for Messiah's law? or when did the various *castes* and *kindreds* of the Hindoos and the Affghans *worship before him*? The only reply they can return must be unfounded *assertion* still. Certainly, those who can believe what is so destitute of *all evidence* must have a credulity nearly as hurtful as infidelity itself; for in this case it is belief in that which is not only unsupported by *fact*, but which gives the *lie* to the promises of God. Similar remarks might be made regarding the publication of the Scriptures into the various languages of the nations. What a pity it is that the British and Foreign and American Bible Societies, throughout all their numerous *branches*, should not have been made aware of the fact, that they might be prevented from wasting their gigantic efforts and misapply their means, in attempting to accomplish *that* regarding which the notable words are employed, "*It is done!*"

4th. I proceed now to the last event in the prophetic outline which I can notice at present; and it is one presenting a field of vast and impressive dispensations of Providence in the world, before the "second and glorious appearing of our Lord." I refer to the outcast house of Israel. Although Scripture were silent respecting the future history of this singular people, a mind accustomed to reflect upon the Divine dispensations, would almost naturally, I think, infer that something very remarkable remains to be developed respecting them. For who can behold them scattered, according to prophecy, among all, yet remaining *separated from all*, and not see a constant miracle in operation? And when we turn to the Gospel, and find it written that "all Israel shall be saved," we have, in their present condition, a sure pledge of its accomplishment. We are told, however, the conversion of the Jews is never to be expected;" that there is *not* in the Bible a promise regarding them as a people;" that all the prophetic intimations respecting them, refer to *spiritual* Israel only—the seed of Abraham by faith. Of the agreement of such assertions with the Word of God, I shall produce such evidence as may enable every one to judge. And observe, that here again, the case is to be met by documentary evidence, and not by *my opinion*, which is worth nothing, except in so far as it is borne out by the *Law* and the *Testimony*: if I speak *not according* to them, it is because there is no truth in me. It should also be observed, that all that ought to be expected is but a meagre *selection* from the many references to this interesting subject with which the Word of God abounds.

Before adducing any evidence, it is requisite to lay down a simple principle for an impartial interpretation of such prophecies; a principle so obvious and reasonable as to commend itself to every intelligent mind, and which has accordingly been, I believe, universally admitted by those who seek to understand "what the will of the Lord is" upon such points.

The principle is this—that those portions of prophecy which have already been fulfilled in the history of the Jewish people, are to be taken as the surest guide for ascertaining the meaning of those portions which yet remain to be accomplished; so that if in the one part the fulfilment be literal, we must look for a literal fulfilment in the other also. To suppose that one part of a prediction is to be taken *literally* and the other part of it converted into an *allegory*, would be to make the Bible the most inexplicable of all writings, and indeed would confound all language. Upon the same principle, the different parts of a *figure* must have a uniformity of interpretation instead of referring the first part to one subject, and the rest of it to another.

Now, then, in reading prophecy, we find it predicted in most express terms, that the Jews were to be cast off from being God's peculiar people, torn from their beloved land, scattered among all nations, yet separated from all, treated with scorn, and loaded with reproach;—and if, on opening the page of history, we find the whole verified with surprising minuteness, can we hesitate to believe, that what remains of their prophetic history shall be accomplished as fully? Yet, in following the outline of their history, as sketched by the seers of old, we find it declared in the same explicit manner, that they shall be reinstated in the Church of God, and invested with an honour and a glory which had no parallel even in *their* days of bygone magnificence. "When we see," says a late writer, "that God has magnified his faithfulness in giving the *dark side* of their prospective history so complete a verification, shall we think so harshly of his character, or so meanly of the prophetic word, as to suppose that he will not verify to the letter the other also?"

Guided by this principle then, I assert, and now proceed to prove, that the Jews *as a people*, shall become the people of God—in one vast body members of the Christian Church. Till the pretended discoveries bearing upon '43, few, if any believers in Scripture ever doubted this.—Whether they shall be restored to their ancient heritage or not, has occasioned, and may yet cause diversity of opinion; but as to their ultimate conversion, there has been no difference of sentiment, nor would there now I believe, had not their prophetic history stood in the way of a *fond theory*. It is declared then, that the Jewish people as such, shall "no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall their land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married," &c.—Isa. lxii. 4, 5. That the Jews are the subject of the prophecy is plain to every one who will observe the distinction between them and

the Gentiles, in the second verse. Turn back to chapter xi. of the same book, and the same truth is declared in language not exhibiting the least semblance of poetical structure or of figurative embellishment, but in all the distinctness of historical narrative; verse 11, "It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea; and he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah, from the *four corners* of the earth." This cannot even be twisted to apply to their deliverance from the Babylonish captivity, or to any event in their *past* history. The return from Babylon was confined, with a few exceptions, to the house of Judah; and even in reference to them, it was so far from extending to those lands here specified, that it scarcely reached beyond Assyria.—Nothing then can be more certain, than this glorious restoration to the Church of God, in their yet undeveloped history. Even that ancient promise, that in them "all nations shall be blessed," has never yet been fully verified. The Gentile world has indeed by their means had many benefits imparted to them, but they are but a partial fulfilment of the promise, compared with that "unrivalled glory which is yet to be concentrated in them, and to emanate from them." In proof of which, turn to Hos. ii. 10, 11, "Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea which cannot be measured or numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, 'Ye are not my people,' there it shall be said unto them, 'Ye are the sons of the living God,'" &c. Who are the subjects of this prophecy no unbiased enquirer can doubt; for they are spoken of under the names of Judah, and Israel, the two distinctive branches of the Jewish nation, including the whole *natural* seed of Israel. Of them it is plainly testified that *they* shall become "the sons of the living God." But surely it is unnecessary to multiply evidence in a case so plain. Turn then for a little, to the testimony of the Spirit upon the subject, in the New Testament, and an instance or two here may suffice. Paul addressing the Corinthians, 2d epistle, iii. 16, and speaking directly of the Jews, plainly affirms, that the *veil* of spiritual blindness which for ages has covered their hearts, *shall be taken away, when they shall turn to the Lord*. And that they *shall* turn, he distinctly shews, Rom. xi. 26, 27. For not only is it there affirmed that *all Israel shall be saved*, but that an important stipulation in God's ancient covenant with them was, to *turn away ungodliness from Jacob*.*

* The Apostle, in alluding to Isaiah lix. 20, 21, abridges, or gives the *general sense* of the original.

The case then is so plain, that we cannot wonder it should have been hitherto universally admitted. The only question which may naturally arise regarding the things promised, is—When? By what specific *means*, or at what particular *time*, the “Deliverer shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob,” we are not informed; but we can ascertain that it will be attended with most glorious results unto the Gentiles: which shews that it will be previous to the universal diffusion of the Gospel among the latter. For, says the Apostle, in the preceding context, v. 13, “if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?” How the return of the Jews will thus conduce to the conversion of the remaining heathen, we cannot yet fully understand; but this we learn, that they shall be a blessing in no ordinary way, to those ignorant of God. “The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord.”—Mich. v. 7. One respect in which they shall have this influence is obvious, from the circumstance that, in the character of *missionaries*, they will be the honoured instruments of converting many to God. In past times, none were so efficient in this work, as appears from the little progress made in evangelizing the world since the christianized Jews went forth and testified that *Jesus was Christ*. “I will send those that escape of them into the nations, to Tarshish, Pul and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, that have not seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.”—Isa. lxvi. 19.* This illustrious event then—“the gathering” of outcast Israel, is what may be expected with the utmost confidence: and the *time* determined in the Divine counsels, the “signs of the times” seem to say is not far distant. In the meantime, it becomes us to wait in silent awe, but with assured expectation, for the determinations of infinite wisdom. Thus far then, I trust, it has been proved, that in the interpretation of the prophetic outline, those who entertain the expectation of the Second Advent at present, do greatly err.

We come then to the Third Department, viz:—To advert to some of the fundamental *errors* of the system, exhibit a few of its numerous inconsistencies, and expose its dangerous tendency.

Were it not that the theory of Miller has been so extensively embraced, and its different points so tenaciously adhered to, this division of the subject might be dispensed with, at least in so far as it is designed to point out the *errors* of the system. For surely whatever is so opposed to the most express declaration of the Word of God, must be *untrue*.—

* The converts to Christianity in the latter days will be proud to acknowledge their relation to the Jews, as their fathers and mothers in Christ. The following texts merit particular attention: Isaiah xlix. 18, 22; liv. 1, 3; lv. 5; almost all xv.; and Zech. viii. 23.

Lest, however, it may be supposed that the *basis* of the scheme is *correct* if we leave it unassailed, we shall refer at once to those passages in Daniel out of which the whole theory seems to be drawn. Turning then to vii. 25, 26, we find an account of the extent and duration of the anti-christian power; and the latter is said to be "a time, and times, and the dividing of time." A year is universally the measure of time; and, according to the usual scriptural computation, there are 12 months in a year and 30 days in a month. The period spoken of therefore, as Miller has correctly enough shown, in common with all writers upon the subject, is three and a half prophetic years. Thus *time*—360 days, i. e. years, times just the double or 720 years, and half a *time* or half a prophetic year—180, and their sum of course 1260. We have thus the number which occurs so often both in Daniel and Revelations, as we have formerly seen. And it is to be observed that it is applied alike to the Anti-christian and Mahometan powers.

Three years after this vision, another was revealed to Daniel, viii. ch., where, under different emblems, the same powers noticed in the vii. are represented as rising and falling in succession; till we come to v. 9, which introduces another power not noticed before, and which I shall in a little very briefly explain. In the mean time, we are entering upon the consideration of Miller's scheme of computing the *numbers* which are given in v. 14, as marking the term during which the power alluded to was to trample under foot "the sanctuary and host." Of this large number, 2300, the 1260 are, I believe, universally allowed to constitute a part; and most likely they terminate at the same time. Now, to prove that this large number terminates in 1843, we must proceed with the author of the theory to the next ch. v. 24; and as this constitutes properly the *first* step, or starting point, of the whole, it merits very particular examination. The 70 weeks here noticed are equal to 490 years, and are affirmed by Miller to be the *first* part of the 2300; and since the commencement of the former is given, by the reference to the "*decree*," there can be no difficulty in ascertaining when the latter will terminate. Now, mark the process by which we are to come to the conviction of the *truth* of this theory. 1st. We are required to believe, *upon the author's assurance*, that the reference is to the former vision. 2nd. That the 70 weeks, or 490 years, are to be subtracted from 2300. By doing so, the result will be 1810; and as the 490 reach from the decree to the death of Christ, add 33 years for his life, and of course the result will be 1843. All the theory wants, then, is a *foundation*, which, however is a very important thing. Observe then 1st. That there is *no ground* for the idea that the two numbers alluded to have any connection. The things connected with the large number were revealed to Daniel no less than *fifteen years before* those connected with the seventy weeks, which makes the supposition at least *very improbable*. But to make the case look more plausible, we must bear in mind that Miller has also

discovered that Daniel was meditating upon the *former vision* and had fallen into a mistake upon the subject, and that Gabriel was sent for the express purpose of putting him right. And we are further told, that if he did not give Daniel the starting point of the 2300, then he did not do what he was sent to do. This might all seem satisfactory enough if we had *any* evidence of its *truth*, which we have not. It happened to be the prophecy of Jeremiah, and not the *previous* vision at all, that Daniel was meditating upon, ix. 2. In the face of this, however, Miller intimates it was no such thing; and if he has better means of judging, respecting the pious exercises of the "man greatly beloved," then you will agree with me in concluding, he is "*wiser than Daniel*." Great stress is also laid upon the definite expression, *the vision*, which the angel wished him to *consider*. But if this indicates a reference to any *preceding* vision, then the probability is far greater that it was a *still prior* vision, as Daniel remarks that it was the same angel he had seen in "*the vision at the beginning*," which was the one in which the "time, times, and dividing of time" occurs, and not 2300.

Again, as to the authority for subtracting the 490 years, it rests upon a stray criticism of a Hebrew word which Miller and his followers have got hold of (for they cannot examine for themselves *generally*). The term rendered "*determined*" it is said means *cut off*, and hence the thought struck them to *cut it off* from 2300; for, says Miller, "I cannot see any thing else to cut it off from." The fact then that he *cannot see* any thing else suitable, is a *second argument*. Now although it is, I think, a forced rendering of the term, I have no objection to admit it; and what then? Why only look to the words of the angel, and *you* can see, I trust, what Miller could not, viz. that it is *cut off* "*upon Daniel's people, and the holy city*." That is, plainly, *set off* or *appointed for them*, as the period *in which* certain things specified would take place.* The term evidently implies *appointing* or *making out*, the limits of a thing. And this is at once consistent with the terms employed, and with the acceptance of it where it any where else occurs, and also with the corresponding Greek term employed in translating it.†

* There are six distinct events, for the accomplishing of which the 70 weeks are said to be *determined*. 1st. To finish transgression; probably meaning the filling up, on the part of the Jews, of the cup of their iniquity. 2nd. To make an end of sin, or *sin offering*. 3rd. To make expiation or reconciliation for iniquity. 4th. To bring in everlasting righteousness. 5th. To seal up or fulfil the vision and prophecy (orig. prophet), by the accomplishment of all in himself. 6th. To anoint the most holy. (See Prideaux Connex. P. I. B. V.)

† *Michaelis*, whose authority in such a case every scholar will admit to be great, says the term means *what is decided upon* (Supplem. p. 484); and the Targum on Esth. iv. 5. says Esther called Daniel *Hatach* (i. e. *determined*), because according to the word of his mouth *were determined* the affairs of the Kingdom.

It has thus been shown that the *first*, and of necessity the *most important*, position in the scheme is *assumed*, and that in carrying it out violence is done to the plain words of Scripture.

I proceed next to notice briefly that power already alluded to, respecting which these numbers are given; and I allude to it, not so much because of any peculiar bearing it has in this case, as on account of the obvious misapplication of it, which has been made in Miller's scheme. The power is described, ch. viii. 9, 14, and 23, 25. This power, or little horn, was for long pretty generally understood of Antiochus Epiphanes, in whose career, though brief, it was thought there were so many remarkable coincidences that he must have been intended. This application of it is now, as the case has been more examined, about as universally discarded. Indeed the objections to it seem insuperable, and too numerous to be noticed here. It may be observed, however, that a *horn* is never taken for a single person; it always signifies a *new* kingdom; that of Antiochus was an *old* one. He reigned over one of the *four* horns, whereas the little horn was a *fifth*. Again, this *horn* cast the sanctuary to the ground; Antiochus left it standing. Besides, when he *stood up*, the Jewish transgressors had not come to the full. Miller, following some others, applies it to the *Papal power*. Now, it is remarkable that the locality in which the horn rose did not prevent this misapplication. It arose within the boundaries of the former empire of Alexander; whereas the Papal power, it is well known, arose in the *west*. Faber, in his learned dissertations, has adduced the most abundant evidence of the application to the *Mahometan power*. One of the Second Advent writers seems to have observed the inconsistency regarding locality, and he gets quit of it by the *assertion* that Alexander's dominion did not include the region where the false Prophet began. To this it is enough to oppose the high authority of Gibbon, that "when Mahomet reared his holy standard, *Yemen* was a Province of the Persian empire." And, accordingly, ever since that time, Mahometanism has been the *exceeding great, prospering and prevailing power*, over the countries that formed the various kingdoms that succeeded to the Grecian empire of Alexander, the conqueror of Persia. Were it necessary, the application of the various characteristics might be pointed out at length, but to all acquainted with his history they will be quickly obvious.

Another very conspicuous error, and of great moment in the system of Miller, is the mistaking or substituting of the *Pagan* for the *Jewish* sacrifice. This error is so obvious, from a comparison of the different texts, that every one must see it at a glance. All the notices in Daniel, as well as those in Revelation that are parallel, show that 1260 is the term of the *church's desolation*. If the *Pagan sacrifice* is intended, the *Pagan sanctuary* must also be meant. The application of our Lord of the prophecy to the *holy place at Jerusalem*, is more to the purpose

than any refutation however lengthened. And I have noticed the case, as an illustration of the manner by which the theory is built up by a series of *suppositions* and *assertions*, opposed by the *letter* as well as the *terror* of the word of God.

Once more here, it is very generally known that great stress is laid upon the words *time of the end*, already mentioned. Let ch. xii, 6, be examined, and it will at once be seen that it is not *the end* of a period, but of *the wonders*, which is the object of inquiry. It is not the *end* of the *time*, but the *time* of the *end*. And accordingly the *duration* is specified, evidently indicating the *duration* from the rise to the extinction of the power spoken of.* Hence it cannot with any propriety be applied to the *end of all things*.

I have now to observe that there is another period of 1335, reaching on other 45 years, and with regard to this period, when spoken of at the close of Daniel's prophecy, it is very remarkable, and as if to quash all premature and presumptuous speculation, it is only said in general terms, "blessed is he that waiteth and cometh;" whereas in reference to the preceding numbers, there is uniformly some event of importance connected with them. But as it approaches the closing up of the vision, it becomes more and more indistinct—the Father keeping the "times and seasons" still more completely "in his own hand."

Till this period, or the final developement of the whole scheme of prophecy, the *seasons* may not be perfectly seen in all their due relations and proportions. But this we ought to be certain of, that God "will do his work, his strange work;" and after the instances which have been adduced of mis-statement and mis-application, this part of the subject cannot be better concluded than in the words of Keith, in his *Signs of the Times*, where, alluding to Daniel's position after being partially strengthened by the angel, he says, "The sight (set upon his knees and the palms of his hands) may well shew us how human imaginations have here to be prostrated; how the idle strife of words befits not such a subject, and that it becomes not any man to vaunt of any interpretation of any word of his. And whoever may here receive strength to stand, may well remember that Daniel stood trembling, and sympathise with his emotion. It is not at least for the pen of man to *alter or misplace* that which was spoken by the tongue of an angel at the command of Christ."

From the numerous *inconsistencies* with which the theory abounds I shall select one other feature here.

* And that Miller himself understands it in *no other* light, except when to serve a purpose, appears from his statement that it is the term the Pope had "to tread upon the Church by his civil authority" (Lect. vi. p. 95); but this *time of the end* he has made 1798!!!

It is a prominent part of the theory, that when the Saviour comes the righteous dead will be raised and the righteous living changed, the wicked destroyed, and all the *raised* and *changed* shall live and reign with Christ 1000 years. To this I shall attend as briefly as possible.

The point long in dispute, whether Christ shall reign personally, is not of much moment here. The passage upon which the idea just alluded to rests, is Rev. xx. 4, 5. The passage is highly figurative, and too obscure to be made the foundation of a positive opinion. "No wise man would oppose a vision in which the description is professedly figurative to the plain declaration of Scripture, that the resurrection will take place at the *second coming* of Christ." But supposing Miller's view correct respecting the *first* resurrection, unfortunately for the theory, it is a resurrection of *souls*, not of bodies. The term *first* is probably used here, as it often is, for the *best*, or that which is excellent; "bring forth the best (literally the first) robe, Luke xv. 22. The *literal* resurrection is of *bodies*, this of *spirits*. If a "living dog" be more excellent than a "dead lion," because it is animated, how great is that excellency which is communicated to the soul when it is made spiritually alive, and has the divine image impressed upon it. What can it then mean but a figurative or spiritual resurrection? A resurrection of the "cause" for which the martyrs died, and included with them of course are all the righteous dead. They shall live in their successors, as Elijah did in John; which is quite a common figure in the Bible. Now, Miller and his followers just flatly deny that there is any such thing as a "figurative resurrection" in Scripture. Does not Paul, as we have already seen, describe the restoration of his kinsmen to the Church, by this figure? Isaiah makes use of the same figure, ch. xxvi. 19; and Ezekiel describes in the same way the remarkable reviving which was to take place in the Church upon her return from Babylon, ch. xxxix. 11, 12. And as to these "souls" reigning with Christ, it is supposed that he is to dwell "bodily" with them during 1000 years. Did not Enoch walk "with" God? But who ever supposed that Enoch was either then in heaven, or God "with him" on earth, otherwise than by his gracious presence? But the idea is groundless: 1st. Because there are only *two* appearances of Christ on earth mentioned, and they are always spoken of so as to exclude a *third*. The second is always connected with the final judgment. 2nd. Such a reign is incompatible with the glory into which he has now entered. The personal reign is also supposed; however, from ch. xxi. 8, "the tabernacle of God is with men." Yet the words seem employed as if on purpose to remind us of an ancient promise thus fulfilled, Ez. ch xxxvii. 27, "My tabernacle also shall be with them." And it has been the privilege of genuine believers, in all ages, to have Him, "who dwells in the high and holy place," with them. The saints then, in the times spoken of, shall reign "with Christ," in their government of themselves by his spirit and laws, and shall have

fellowship "with him" in his spiritual and invisible government of the world. As might be expected after what has been said, the texts adduced, as "direct" proof of Christ's personal reign with his people, seem to me at least to say nothing to the purpose. But you can judge. They are such as, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself," &c. And did he not intimate the "locality" of this abode, "with him," when he went to his Father's house "to prepare mansions?" And when he comes again, it is not to dwell "with them" here, but in the very terms of the texts adduced by Miller and others, "to receive them to himself." And as to the "second" resurrection, implied by the first alluded to, it is supposed to be that of the wicked dead to be raised after 1000 years, when Satan shall be loosed. It seems equally plain, however, that it is a resurrection of the "spirits" of the wicked; they in their turn shall live in their successors. Like Satan himself, they were put under restraint for a season; but by his influence, when let loose, the enemies of the Church will again speedily appear. And they, doubtless, "will constitute the spawn or germ from which the mighty army of Gog will be raised. During the 1000 years they shall be like serpents stiffened with the cold, and incapable of harm; but at the end of that period they will revive." But, supposing we admit the theory, I ask—

1st. What is Satan to work upon, when let loose? The whole population is then to be not only *holy*, but *immortal*, and of course glorious. This Miller expressly says, and quotes as evidence the promise that "when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." If this is to be their condition, how can Satan deceive them? We are gravely told, he "will only *try*, and would deceive *if possible* the very elect, but it is not possible." Yet words cannot be more plain than those which declare he *shall succeed*,—and Gog and Magog are mentioned as those he shall beguile, and with them compass the camp of the saints of the Most High.*

2d. It is at variance with many intimations regarding the resurrection and judgment scenes. "Man lieth down and riseth not again, till the Heavens be no more."—Job, xiv. 12; but according to the theory, the *righteous* at least are to be raised *before* this event. We read only of *one* summons, and "the hour cometh when *all* that are in their

* To suppose, as the Millerites do, that Gog and Magog are the wicked, long dead and "gone to their own place," whom Satan is to deceive as he was wont to do on earth, conveys ideas regarding the Divine being and the state of mind of those who had gone to eternal death, too shocking and unscriptural to be adequately characterised. Long before this period will the multitudes of the lost have learned, by awful experience, the *woes* which rest on those who "strive with their Maker." Besides, Satan's end in their deception shall have by that time been completely served.

graves shall hear, and come forth—some to the resurrection of life, and others to damnation ;” evidence enough, that at *that hour* there shall still be *two classes* of bodies to raise. I am aware that the *words* of Scripture are adduced to the contrary : and if *words* only, without connection is to be regarded, it can be proved. The passage adduced, however, is nothing to the purpose. 1st Thess. iv. 16, 17. There are just two things spoken of here, viz : the *rising* of the *righteous dead*, and the changing of the *righteous* living ; the Apostle says, the latter shall not *anticipate* the former ; “ the dead in Christ shall *rise* first ;” and “ then” after *that*, but how long he does not say, “ we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds.” Whether the wicked shall be raised with, or ages after the righteous, this passage *gives no information*—that must be drawn from other sources.—Such, however, is the reckless manner in which Scripture is made to teach the doctrine of men.*

It now only remains for me, under this division, to allude to the *evils* of this system ; and after what has been exhibited of its departure from scripture testimony, what requires to be said ? Yet hundreds are still receiving it, despite of all the disregard manifested to the Word.—Had not the lamentable fact been so obvious, one might have supposed it must have condemned itself wherever the light of the Bible shone upon it. 1st. We have seen it is maintained by a series of assertions without evidence, and with manifest *wresting* of the Scripture ; and what must be the result ? In every age there have been some, alas ! who have daringly called in question the truth of the Bible, and from time to time, with scorn, have demanded “ where is the promise of His coming ?” and when the *day* shall declare the error of this scheme, as speedily it will do, these scoffers shall be furnished with *another weapon* against the truth, which they may employ with peculiar force. It has been maintained, with a boldness seldom, if ever displayed before, not only that the theory is supported by the Bible, but that “ *it is Bible*.”—And as infidelity will not have the candour to examine the sacred book, nor discriminate between the *real* messenger of God and those who run unsent, it will boldly conclude that all are alike false,—that since this has failed, the Bible is “ a cunningly devised fable.”

* Another notable instance of this kind, is the attempt to get aside the reference of some terms in Matt. xxiv. to the destruction of Jerusalem. For instance, “ this generation” is not, we are told, the generation then living ; but Christ’s disciples, the generation of the faithful to the end of time. Suppose they were, why exhort such to flee to the mountains at his coming, since their redemption would then be nigh. Or if it was the wicked who were told to *flee*, reconcile that with Christ’s assurance that “ hills and mountains” would be a vain resort in that day. But applied to the destruction of Jerusalem, all is consistent and harmonious ; and accordingly the event *did happen* about 40 years after, when John at least had not *tasted death*. And opportunity was also given to *flee*, when Cestius Gallus besieged the city.

2d. But infidelity is stamped upon the system itself, and the whole mode of carrying it out in public. This is a serious charge, but I adduce the proof. Can reverence for the Word of God be found where its plainest language is thus set aside, or made to bend to every crook in this devious scheme? But besides this, it is well known that its supporters have often, and publicly declared, that if it is not this year verified, they will no longer believe the Bible! nay, that it may then be burnt!! Here is infidelity, if ever that monster reared its impious head on earth. And has it come to this, that after the blessed book has comforted the distressed, bound up the broken-hearted, dispelled with its gleams of heavenly light the shadows which rest upon the valley of Death, and upheld, yea, caused a triumph, by its "exceeding great and precious promises," the tormented martyr, through all the ages that are past, is it now, in the nineteenth century, to stand or fall, to be prized or destroyed by its coincidence or otherwise with the presumptuous speculations of men, displaying either a wilful perversity, or the grossest ignorance of some of the "first principles of the oracles of God?" The more this feature of it is considered, the more serious must it appear to every pious mind, and have a tendency to rouse the dark suspicion, that some hidden plot of infidelity must be at the basis of the whole. At all events, as much is *seen* of its *spirit* and tendency as ought to be sufficient to lead every one to act upon the warning of our Lord, in reference to similar sentiments of old, "Take heed that no man deceive you."*

3rd. The mode in which it is held forth to public attention, is subversive of the Gospel scheme of salvation. It is not only exhibited as a point of immense importance to be believed, but as *absolutely essential* to salvation; so much so, that the doom of all who do not receive it has been announced repeatedly, in terms which I cannot in this place repeat. We learn, my hearers, that "one thing is needful;" and that doubtless Paul had in view when he counted "all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge that is in Christ Jesus," and "his blood cleanseth from all sin." But here we have something in addition, exhibited as the only means of mercy to perishing sinners. And what can come more plainly under the designation of "another gospel?" which, if even an Angel from Heaven should publish, the Apostle says he shall "be accursed when the Lord shall come." We should therefore dread having any fellowship with it.

* That what is advanced is no breach of the "charity which thinking no evil," will appear to any one who can judge of impiety, when it is stated and can be *proved* by many witnesses that a *preacher, so called*, publicly took the name of God in vain. If this is to be done in such circumstances and by those who call themselves "*Messengers of God*," then why, not only in the bar-room or any other "*high place*" of wickedness, but any where, may not the swearer raise his shameless front and blaspheme his Maker? And what awful evidence is it of blind infatration, that an ear should be given to individuals of such a stamp!

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*,

nor the tendency of any thing I have from Scripture, opposed to the theory so often noticed, to lead to security and unconcern about your eternal interests. This remark is *necessary*, because, in all that is written and proclaimed on the other side, we are stigmatized as *false prophets* and *agents of the devil*. If we utter a word in opposition, it is for the purpose of saying *peace, peace!*

So far from this, I seek to impress every one before me, with the *truth* of that Holy Book, which proclaims a *woe to the wicked for it shall be ill with him*; and which presses upon all, the absolute necessity of *instant attention* to the things that belong to their peace. "Peace! no indeed, "there is no peace saith my God to the wicked;" and I would earnestly embrace this opportunity, the like of which I may never again enjoy, to urge you every one to *give all diligence*, to be found in Christ. We have all the motives to activity and watchfulness presented, which can be supposed to influence intelligent beings. What security would any one have were we informed now by Divine Authority, that this world should *last for ever*? would it change for one moment, the solemn truth, that life is but a *vapour* which continueth but "for a little season and then vanisheth away?" No, for "no man knoweth what a day may bring forth;" and whenever we may be called on, to give in the account of our stewardship, then with regard to us "there shall be time no longer," and in whatever state we leave this world, that shall eternity stamp upon us for ever. "He that is filthy, shall then be filthy still, and he that is holy shall be holy still." Oh! while it is called to-day" then, let every one hear the voice of mercy, and "seek the Lord while he may be found," for this night your soul may be required of you.

You have asked my opinion; it has been given freely; it may not I trust be thought out of place if I now offer an advice: Retire to "search the Scriptures, which contain the things of eternal life;" examine them, to learn, therefrom "what is good, and acceptable in the sight of God." Examine them, to understand how thoroughly every thought and affection should be subjected to Christ. And if you have only the word of God dwelling in you richly, you will not be exposed to the pernicious influence of "every wind of doctrine," but "established, strengthened and settled," you will be enabled, not only to look for, with holy hope, but also with patience to wait for the coming of the Lord. Then too would you learn, that since he first "ascended far above all Heavens," leaving the promise to come again, never has there been reason to say, he "delayeth his coming." Let every one then who has not already settled in inquiry, settle it immediately—"where shall you stand when he ap-
peareth?"

