

**OUR PRESENT POSITION
ON THE CHART OF
TIME, AS REVEALED
IN THE WORD OF GOD**

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Our present position on the chart of time, as revealed in the Word of God by J. Brodie

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J. BRODIE

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BY

THE REV. J. BRODIE, A.M.,

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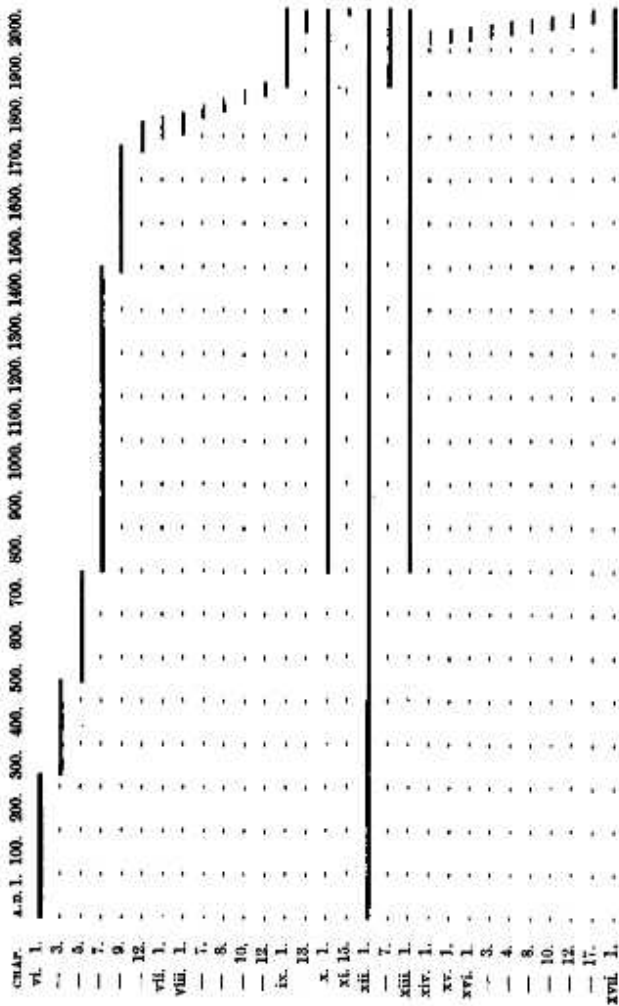
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THE CHART OF TIME.—From "Inquiry into the Apocalypse."



OUR PRESENT POSITION
ON THE
CHART OF TIME.*

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN the mariner is tossed by the tempest, when he sees the clouds thickening around him, and dangers multiplying on every side, it is no doubt his first desire to be assured that the vessel in which he sails is fitted for braving the billow and the blast. He does not, however, rest contented when he has ascertained the strength and trim of the ship that bears him, but proceeds to determine, in as far as lies in his power, his exact position on the chart of the deep. In like manner, when the Christian is surrounded by spiritual dangers, he seeks, in the first place, to establish his confidence in the ultimate success of his Master's cause, by recalling to mind the wisdom and power of Him who has appointed a Church upon earth to be the ark of His covenanted people, and who has promised to sit Himself at the helm, and guide it in safety to

* As originally published in 1844.

the haven of heavenly rest. But he does not rest satisfied with this; he endeavours, in the next place, to ascertain the position he holds in the chart of time, that he may the better prepare for the trials and temptations that are coming upon him. In such seasons it is at once his duty and his privilege to turn to Prophecy for guidance; and though the fanciful interpretations of some commentators have led the unthinking to regard the study as unprofitable and vain, a moment's reflection will suffice to show that no part of revelation can be undeserving of a careful perusal, and that it never would have been said of the most mysterious portion of unfulfilled truth, "Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of this book," if that book had not been intended for our comfort and guidance. The acknowledged difficulty of the task of interpretation, and the diversity of meanings given, only show the necessity that exists for a more careful investigation of symbols, a more attentive collation of passages, and a more earnest seeking for instruction from above. It cannot excuse our neglect of that which God hath seen meet to reveal.

In accordance with these views, it is our purpose to examine some of those portions of Scripture which appear to have a more immediate reference to the present time, in the hope of meeting with some information that may be fitted for arousing our desires after an abiding inheritance, and for putting us on our guard against impending temptations.

Three different series of inquiries have suggested

themselves to our minds, as so many methods by which we may discern the signs of the times, and form some general idea of the events that are before us. The *first*, which is the simplest of all, is the examination of those passages, in which the varied changes that take place in the civil and ecclesiastical condition of the world are represented by corresponding alterations in the emblems by which they are typified in the visions seen by the prophets. The *second*, which is more difficult to pursue, but exceedingly interesting in its results, is the calculation of the periods given in what may be called the historical prophecies of Daniel and John. The *third*, and most difficult method of any, is the interpretation of the emblems by which the varied events that are to befall the world are represented in the Bible. The first two of these methods, to which, at present, our inquiry will be confined, may be considered as introductory to the third. They form, as it were, the thread by which the promises of God to His people are connected together, like precious pearls on a silken cord. None can deny their great importance; but, until we have followed out all the three methods of inquiry, a large portion of heavenly truth must remain unimproved and unproductive.

EMBLEMATICAL PROPHECIES.

EMBLEMS REFERRING TO THE CIVIL CONDITION
OF THE WORLD.

IMAGE OF GOLD, SILVER, BRASS, IRON, AND CLAY.—DAN. II.

THE first passage to which we shall refer is the second chapter of Daniel, from the thirty-first verse to the end of the forty-fifth, in which we are told that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his vision an image having the head of gold, the breast of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, and the feet of iron mingled with clay. This image, the Prophet told him, denoted four kingdoms, the first of which was his own, represented by the head of gold; and the other three were the monarchies that were to succeed it, typified by the silver, the brass, and the iron. Other portions of Divine writ, when compared with the history of the world, have led commentators universally to regard the silver, the brass, and the iron, as intended to denote the Persian, Grecian, and Roman Empires. The last, and most formidable of these powers, after it had subdued all the others, and established, to a great extent, a community of interest and