

RELIGIOUS SIGNS

July, 1897

THE NEW GOSPEL

Among the "notable books of the month," The Review of Reviews gives a long notice of one entitled Social Meanings of Religious Experience, by Professor Herron of Grinnell University. We do not further advertise it, or place it among our "Reviews," but rather among our "Signs of the Times," because it preaches the new

"GOSPEL OF SOCIAL DUTY"

as the "True Religion": and the true Gospel: but it is "another Gospel"! It is the Gospel of Antichrist rather than of Christ. It deifies man, and it is intended to "glorify humanity." Indeed it boldly puts forth in so many words

"HUMANITY AS THE INCARNATION OF GOD."

"The universe is an eternal development of the life of God through sacrifice; it is the eternal becoming of God in obedience to the law of His being."

Again, he says in his work on The Duties of Man:

"God has placed beside you a Being whose life is continuous: whose faculties are the results and sum of all the individual faculties that have existed for perhaps four hundred ages; a Being who, in the midst of errors and crimes of

individuals, yet ever advances in wisdom and morality; a Being in whose development and progress God has inscribed, and from epoch to epoch does still inscribe, a line of his law. This Being is Humanity, and Humanity is the successive incarnation of God."

Professor Herron has of course got his own panacea for the effects of the curse. He has not much faith in the Churches (and we do not wonder at it). Indeed he looks upon the influence of the Churches with dread, so far as regards the hope of bringing in

"A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH."

"The new order of things will not be brought about by great men, it will be the political outgrowth of a religious evolution of the common life...

"They who prepare the way of the new social kingdom will be quickening spirits, rather than political and religious reformers; and through them the regeneration of society will proceed without observation, while the politically and religiously wise are mocking their impracticability."

This seems all very "good" to those who have not "heard the joyful sound of the Gospel of God." But this is the Gospel of man. It begins and ends with man. By this sign it may always be known, for God's Gospel is "concerning His Son Jesus Christ" (Rom 1:3,4).

While some are attempting in this way to

"GLORIFY HUMANITY,"

man is seen to be reverting to his original type—and that type is Fallen Man! He will soon see the Devil's Millennium, and have enough of man and all his works. No! there is no hope for man but in the Son of Man—the Second Man, the

Lord from Heaven, and He alone can make this earth the Paradise of God.

Others are adopting different methods. Those who expect the Millennium to come from "civilization" will do well to read some comments, not ours, but those of The Daily Mail of May 17th last:—

"Scratch the Russian and you will discover a Tartar," remarked Napoleon I. This expression slightly altered may apply to civilized man at the present day. Even the crust of civilization which has gathered on some families for many centuries is incapable at times of restraining the primal barbarism which is latent in most. Some of the fine flower of French nobility was gathered at the Bazar de la Charite in the Rue Jean-Goujon on the day of the terrible fire, and in the panic that ensued gave way to bestial passion. About 120 men, it is now said, were present, and they fought with the weak and helpless women for places of safety. With sticks and fists they struck out, not caring whom their blows reached in a shameful struggle for life. Alas! for poor humanity."

Scientists tell us that after all cultivation, whether of animals or plants, there is a law which causes them "to revert to the original type" as soon as artificial means are cut off. It is, and will be so with man, after all his civilisation and cultivation, when the Church has been gathered unto the Lord, and the salt has been removed.

EVEN THE WORLD IS ASTONISHED!

After describing the recent re-opening of the Restored Chapter House of Canterbury Cathedral, The Daily Telegraph records a service of a very different character which followed it a few hours after and says:—

"Instead of processions and prayers, hymns and blessings, gilt crosses, and white-robed choristers, courteous canons and scarlet-robed mayors and sheriffs in fur-robed gowns, white-

wigged recorders and stewards adorned with Royal purple badges, lovely children with still lovelier women beautifully dressed, 'men of Kent' side by side with 'Kentish men,' an Archbishop leaning on a pastoral cross, and a lily-adorned Dean, with the faint suggestion of a crimson cardinal on his robes, we shall see 'a well-graced actor' reciting a stage play for the first time in the world in the Chapter House of Canterbury. And why not, when a Dean is in the chair, when the Sermon House has been secularised, when the actor is Sir Henry Irving, and the stage play is the beautiful 'Becket' by Alfred Lord Tennyson? Canterbury will have done wonders in these two memorable days, when Royalty and ecclesiasticism, the Church and the Canon, the Chapter House and the Stage, the Dean and the Drama have clasped hands in friendship and goodfellowship. A memorable occasion and a record indeed. A stage play recited under the 'pictures in little' of a series of Archbishops ranging from St. Augustine to Edward Benson, and an actor's mission unknown in the days of Queen Bertha receiving ecclesiastical recognition in the glorious reign of Queen Victoria!"

Other newspapers describe the applause and the waving of handkerchiefs, and the several actors and actresses whose presence helped to complete the "Union of the Church and the Stage!"

And all this in the name of Christianity, and in part commemoration of its introduction into England!

ICHABOD!

The Romish conspiracy must be nearly complete when we have to call attention to a recent letter written conjointly by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to the ecclesiastical dignitaries of the Russian Church.

It commences thus:—

"London, Lambeth Palace; on the day (New Style) of the Annunciation of the most holy Mother of God and ever Virgin Mary, in the year of our Salvation, 1897." This is a title which has no warrant in the Word of God, or in the formularies of the Church of England.

The Globe very truly remarks that "The communication is dated in a style which will not commend it to those who have charged them with betraying English Protestants."

Not only will it "not commend itself," but it will be regarded as one of the most ominous of signs to those who "know the times," and observe the rapid strides which apostasy is making.

What are we to say when archbishops and bishops openly side with the "blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits," which they are solemnly pledged to "banish and drive away"; while they are at the greatest pains to devise means for crushing all true witnesses for Protestant and Reformation truth and practice?

ARMINIAN TRICKS AND SHIFTS.

When men cease to depend wholly upon the Spirit of God for Spiritual results there is no limit to the means which may be adopted. The cry is, "Get the people in," but the question is, what is done by those got in?

In order to "get them in" there is a growing catch-penny style of announcement either of the subject or of the character of the service.

The Christian Register recently called attention to a notice running thus:—

"A Bright, Brief, Breezy, Brilliant, Brotherly service is advertised." Whereupon The New York Observer comments: "That will do for the men. Next we should have Short, Sweet, Suggestive, Sunshiny, Sisterly services for the women, or as

Dr. Parker, of London, once suggested, something of a Meek, Mild, and Motherly order."

All this betrays a loss of faith in the Power of God's Word to accomplish God's purposes, and is the direct outcome of the loss of faith in its truth.