



PUBLISHED BY THOMAS SCOTT,  
 11 THE TERRACE, FARQUHAR ROAD, UPPER NORWOOD,  
 LONDON, S.E.

1875.

*Price Threepence.*

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

NOVEMBER, 1875.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury deserves precedence of all meaner folk, both by right of his primacy in the Church, and by right of having talked more than any of his brother Bishops during the past month. He has been delivering his soul upon the intricate subject of "Christian unity," and, as a proof of the unity, we suppose, upon "Church and Dissent," also on Foreign Missions. The readers of this series will fully understand the deep reverence with which should be received all the utterances of England's primate, and they will not share in the evil sentiments of the *Stockwhip*, an Australian Free Thought paper, which profanely says that the Archbishop's logic is not

always faultless, and that some of his arguments are sophisms, while others are fallacies. So, with child-like faith, let us incline our hearts to listen to his Grace. On the subject of Christian unity the Archbishop was extremely facetious; he made jokes about his own enormous correspondence, and caused "renewed laughter" by speaking of a Bishop who lived "in a place where it was dark a great portion of the year, and as a man cannot sleep during the whole of that long night, he naturally writes letters." What a useful Bishop! not being able to be always asleep, he fills up the intervals of slumber with letter-writing! But also, what an injurious Bishop, for these same letters take up so much of the English Archbishop's time, that he finds it difficult to visit his diocese as much as he should do. Might not the letter-writing and somnolent Bishop leave his See, and take ship to some other diocese? However, it seems that the letter-writing of this Father-in-God, together with the like—but less voluminous—writing from many other Bishops, is a proof of Christian unity, and of the desire of all Churches to enter into—or bind closer already existing—bonds with Canterbury. Then, not only is our Primate overwhelmed with the number of letters, but he is also very busy in managing a number of thoughts. "Every man has an opinion of his own nowadays, and I am not sorry that he should have. I think it is a wholesome sign that men think for themselves. But then it does not make the management of their various thoughts at all more easy." But, in the name of common sense, who asks the Archbishop of Canterbury to manage his, or her, thoughts? And how does he do it, and why? This is as superfluous as the Bishop of the dark region, and is, in very truth, a work of supererogation. It would be deeply interesting to see the Archbishop at work, managing people's thoughts: does he do it by "good words?"

It is pleasant, at least, to be assured that the Archbishop is "not sorry" that people should have opinions of their own, but does he really mean that Free Thought "is a wholesome sign?" However, as "every man, and I must almost say, every woman" has an opinion, "it becomes more difficult than ever to keep them altogether. That is my special mission—to try and keep people on good terms with one another." Is the Archbishop making fun of us again? there is no "renewed laughter" in the report, and yet it is impossible to forget that the speaker is the Archbishop of a Church which 'has just had passed a Public Worship Bill, and whose officers are already appealing to the secular Law-Courts to crush out one division of the very united Christian body. Neither is it easy to avoid the reflection: "If this be the special mission of the Archbishop, what a terrible failure his Grace makes of it;" for the various opinions which it is his duty to manage are clashing together with such vigour and such fierceness, that the Church is rent in all directions, and is bleeding to death from the wounds inflicted by her own children. The Primate winds up by saying that he is continually being warned about "detestable heresies," and that "if I were a nervous person, which, thank God, I am not, I should be frightened out of my wits." The Church of England is to be congratulated on having so cool and careless a hand upon her helm, to guide her through the waves which rise higher day by day, and past the rocks which threaten her on every side. The day following the discourse of Christian unity, found our Archbishop discussing Christian divisions. Now, our Primate is not jocund; he is belligerent; he is self-asserting; it is "the Primate of all England" who speaks, and none must dare gainsay, "We are in very difficult times—very difficult times indeed. (Our Archbishop is not a Demosthenes.) We have

got a number of people who are very anxious to pull down the good works which we have undertaken." This is true Christian humility; *we* desire to do good, but these Gentiles, these outer-court dogs, they are trying to hinder us, and to mar our work. There are the philosophers, the sceptics; but "those who entertain these opinions are in a very small minority." True, O Archbishop! the thinkers are always in a small minority, *but the thinkers rule nevertheless*, and this small minority moulds the majority, and when they say "go," the world goes, and when they say "come," the world comes. Luther was in a minority, but Luther conquered Rome; all Reformations begin in the labours of the minority, because all Reformers are a few steps in advance of the crowd, and from their vantage-ground on the mountain top, they proclaim the coming of the rising sun, whose first rays have not yet reached the dwellers in the valleys below. *But the sun rises, and the minority becomes the majority.* The Archbishop cares little for the thinkers; he dismisses, in a curt sentence, "modern philosophy, and modern theorists as to the regeneration of society;" but to an Archbishop, with several palaces, society needs no regeneration; the sorrows, the agonies, of humanity touch him not; the archiepiscopal throne remains unmoved. But now Dr. Tait attacks the Dissenters: "Christian unity" is forgotten: it was spoken of yesterday, and yesterday is numbered with the past. Dissenters object to Archbishops: do they? they had better put up with Archbishop Tait, for there is Archbishop Manning looming behind him, that "I defy all the Dissenters in Europe to get rid of." If "I were to depart to-morrow" he would be left, with "a very old and powerful historical system" behind him. This is very much like a plea *ad misericordiam*; it sounds like: "I may be bad, but he is worse, so you had better put up with me." The Dissenters are prayed

to hold their hands, lest "a worse thing happen unto" them. The Primate then declares: "the seat I occupy is a sort of rallying point for all the civilisation and the reasonable religion of the world." Alas, for the world, with nought to rally round save the throne of Canterbury filled by a Dr. Tait! Then the lover of unity generously says that the Dissenters "keep up a sort of running fire against the Church of England," but they only do it because "it is part of their business." (How this will increase Christian unity!) True, "the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and all sorts of commissioners, have been cutting and paring away at our revenues." Poor Archbishop, passing poor, on £15,000 a year; from our heart's depths we sympathise with him. Yet is there balm in Gilead; Lord Hampton has moved for a return of "how much has been spent in the extension of the Church of England during the last forty years?" The Primate thinks that about thirty millions "have been added to the aggregate property of the Church of England in the matter of repairing of churches." Thirty millions spent to make houses for the God, who, according to the Bible, "dwelleth not in temples made with hands;" and, meanwhile, man pines and agonises in filthy dens and hovels, and "no man careth" for him. When the return is made to Lord Hampton's motion, perhaps the Archbishop of Canterbury will deign to move for "a return of how much has been spent in the education of the people, and the improving of labourers' dwellings, during the last forty years." In his speech at Maidstone, on Foreign Missions, the Archbishop clearly shows that if God does care for mission work, he, just at present, if we may judge from what is going on in Africa, approves more of Mahomedanism than of Christianity.

But the Archbishop of Canterbury must not make us forget the Bishop of Lincoln. Dr. Wordsworth

takes up the cudgels on behalf of the licensed victuallers, and declares that the temperance pledge is unscriptural, that it undermines belief in the deity of Christ, that it is therefore heretical, and that it is "a deadly sin for Christians to sign it." Hereupon, all those whose interest lies in drinking rejoice mightily; the *Licensed Victuallers' Guardian* reprints extracts from the Bishop's sermon, and this is, in turn, reprinted at the end of a wine-merchant's list. Imagine the Bishop of Lincoln quoted to gain customers for wine, "gin, whiskey, and rum." Dr. Wordsworth is certainly marvellously unfortunate; he always appears to be doing the wrong thing. It is curious to note that some very prominent Christians must have committed deadly sin; there is the Rev. Basil Wilberforce, for instance, the son of the late Bishop, who raves against wine as an invention of the devil, and who urges all Christians to sign the pledge as a matter of duty to God. Whom is a poor, puzzled, anxious believer to follow? One light of the Church urges him to do the very thing which another light of the Church declares to be a deadly sin. If only these good people would settle among themselves *what* to say!

A very sad event has taken place. The Rev. R. S. Hawker, vicar of Morwenstow, Cornwall, was received into the Roman Catholic Church on his deathbed, and was duly buried in the Roman Catholic cemetery at Plymouth, by a Roman Catholic priest. This is terrible for all believers in a One Holy Catholic Church. The *Rock* takes it seriously to heart, and spends nearly two columns in lamentations: besides, who can tell how long Mr. Hawker may have been a Roman Catholic at heart, and how many such may there not be in our Church of England? Is not Bishop Cloughton craftily encouraging such, by proclaiming that the Public Worship Act is but empty thundering, and that no Ritualists will be interfered

with? But why should Bishop Claughton bring "balm and comfort and hope to the trembling bosom of the foe?" The *Rock* is sad at heart, and forebodes disaster, unless all good men and true come "to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." Poor Almighty Lord! but the editor of the *Rock* will stand by him.

No words of ours could add solemnity to the following notice:—The *Church Herald* announced, at the end of September, that "after our next issue we shall cease to appear." In times past the readers of *Signs of the Times* have gained much amusement from the pages of the deceased paper, and, recording its death, we drop a farewell tear upon its tomb.

What the *Rock* is to the Low Churchman, and what the *Church Herald* was to the High Churchman, that is the *Christian* to the "believer." Many gems might be drawn from this delightful paper. In a review of past and present the *Herald* says: "The nations of Christendom have almost without exception left Christianity behind," and not only Christianity, startling as the assertion may be, nations as nations have nothing to do with God. It is the *impelling power* of the great *Liberal movement* of these latter days that secular governments as such have nothing to do with God. This is from the *Herald's* point of view, whose ideal of Christendom is that "*Christ* is the head of nations in temporal as in spiritual affairs, and delegated his offices to others to rule for him till he should return to occupy his own again." *That* reign of superstition is, thanks to liberal education, nearly over; the Church which is considered in the light of Christ's *delegate* has ruled the world for pretty nigh two thousand years, and in parts of it, autocratically and absolutely, and what has come of it? "That the fool says in his heart there is no God." By confession of its staunchest friends and adherents "the Church is torn

by *internal* strife, and is all powerless to meet the dangers to overcome *which* is her special mission; indeed it is a sad truth that to a great extent *she* has been the cause of them,—where should be the unity of heaven, is the discord of hell.” From it we also learn that a new danger is added to railway traveling; a plan is started for placing large texts along the tops of houses, so that railway travellers may see them as they whiz past. A lad, “passing in a train for a ‘change of air,’ was seriously impressed by one of these ghastly signs: it is depressing to be told, immediately afterwards, that he died, trusting in Jesus.” These suddenly converted people always *do* die, by some strange fatality. The “Rev. F. Baldey, of Southsea, has over his door: ‘When I see the blood I will pass over you!’” Why it should do any one the smallest good to see offensive texts of this kind, it is hard to say. Placarding texts has become quite a fashion in London just now, especially at the East end. It is really hard to believe that any earnest Christian can like to see, “Prepare to meet thy God,” flanked on either side by Newsome’s circus, and the latest comic singer.

It is somewhat trying to hear that the irrepressible Moody and Sankey have started again in America, and are going “to revive” the United States. In England their whilom friends are complaining that they have done more harm than good, because they have only reached the church and chapel-goers, and they have made these discontented with less exciting ministrations. If they will kindly persevere, and visit each country in turn, we may then look for a serious decrease in church-goers.

Abroad, there are signs of much disturbance. We are pretty well accustomed to “Burial Scandals” at home, but one has taken place at Montreal, Canada, which throws all ours into the shade. “A literary society, known as the ‘Canadian Institute,’ has in



its library a number of books that several years ago came under the ban of the Roman Catholic Church." The Bishop objected to the books, and, as the Society did not discard them, he promptly excommunicated the Society. A member of the Institute, one Joseph Guibord, died, and before his death was refused the Sacrament, he being one of the banned Society. His widow claimed that he should be buried in a grave in the Catholic cemetery, owned by the heirs of the deceased. This was refused. The widow died, and left the Institute legatee; the Institute carried on the lawsuit begun by the widow, and at last triumphed; a royal decree was issued to bury Joseph Guibord. Mr. Guibord was duly exhumed, and carried towards the cemetery; but the gates were barred, and a crowd had assembled round them. Stones were thrown; the cross was pulled down; the hearse was driven away. According to the last advices, an escort of troops had been asked for to convey Joseph Guibord to his grave, and to protect his corpse from his Christian brethren.

The Bishop of Montreal has threatened to "curse the ground if compelled by the *Privy Council* to bury Mr. Guibord." This brings out forcibly the truth of Mr. Gladstone's warning that, in a conflict between the civil power and the Pope, Catholics, though subjects of England, would side with the head of their Church. It is a pity for its own sake that Transatlantic Vaticanism does not think it necessary to sheath its claws in velvet, and this episode of the nineteenth century is a curious comment on the vaunted advance of *Christian civilisation*, on the power of "*Christian charity* and brotherly love over the passions."

In Spain, matters look very dark. The Pope's Nuncio has issued a letter to all the Spanish Bishops, which has evoked much popular indignation. This circular appears to have aroused a really strong

national feeling, and it is even rumoured that the Nuncio will have to ask for his passport. Article XI. of the proposed Constitution states that : " No persons shall be molested in Spanish territory for their religious opinions, nor for the exercise of their respective worships." This Article has much troubled the Holy See, and the Pope, through his Nuncio, denies the right of Spain to pass such an Article without his consent. The Nuncio states that no worship, save the Roman Catholic, should be tolerated in Spain, " all consent to the exercise of other worships " should be withheld. Further, the Spanish Bishops have the right, by the Concordat, to invoke " the efficacy and strength of the secular arm, wherever these might be necessary to resist the malignity of men," who spread false doctrine and print heretical books. But this promise of support is perfectly useless if religious toleration is to exist in Spain, and the Nuncio adds that the nation " rejects freedom, or even toleration, of worship, and asks with loud voice the re-establishment in Spain of her traditional religious unity." It is surely a welcome " sign of the times " that this circular has been received with one shout of indignation, and that " the press of every colour, save the Neo-Catholic, is up in arms." Even Spain is not, as she once was, the complete slave of the Papacy.