

THE RELIGIOUS PRESS.

SHALL WE HAVE PERIODICALS?

REQUESTS have long since been made, asking us to pay some attention to the position, power, and practical utility of the press, and the duty of religious men to employ it for the liberal extension of those principles by which they were themselves set free. The subject until now has been deferred. Months have passed away, and these calls are yet without response. For this seeming indifference we offer two reasons: 1st, Other subjects had a prior claim. 2nd. There was no certainty of a full and candid hearing while the question was so engagedly discussed by others. And if any one desire a third reason, he may have it in the anticipated possibility, that, had we put our pen into the subject previously, some sinister motive might have been attributed to the effort. As matters now stand, this is not only highly improbable, but altogether impossible.

But, at the very commencement, may we ask, has it become necessary to turn logician for the purpose of arguing this question? Has the power of the press, to any one, in any cause, become a debatable point? If so, our task is intolerable beyond the boundary of hope, provided, indeed, we are expected to produce conviction. Logic in a case so forlorn would be lost. Arguments are for those who reason—contemplate—reflect; but he who cannot, at a glance, in this age of light, perceive the potency and utility of the press, may be safely set down as out of the reach of logical approach. The attempt would be equal to proving that trees grow green leaves for the benefit of a person without eyes.

Still, among those who can see, there is such a thing as seeing dimly and seeing clearly, and then we have degrees such as more clearly and most clearly. Presuming, therefore, that those who request particular attention to the claims of the press, require no additional light on their own account, and presuming also that they are chiefly desirous that others may see their duty as clearly as they have been led to see it, we shall, with these things before us, offer a few observations upon the whole premises.

There is, indeed, a class of well meaning Christian men who seem to regard every thing with suspicion that they cannot find in so many words on the pages of the inspired oracles. These, we might say, are scrupulous over-much, and they not unfrequently, by their stringent rules, work out, in practice, a heavy judgment against themselves.