

quested this day to plead. We have, as separate churches, each our own missionary institutions to uphold. But that should not prevent us from saying to others engaged in the same glorious work, *God speed*, or from stretching forth a helping hand, as God gives us the ability. I rejoice, therefore, in the present opportunity and privilege of advocating the claims of the British and Foreign Bible Society, because whatever denominational distinctions may otherwise hinder a closer fellowship, there is here common ground on which we can meet—the union and sympathy which, if we are truly the people of God, ought to bind us together in spreading abroad His revealed will—the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. The B. & F.B. Society needs no eulogy from any one. Its first conception was remarkable in the Providence of God. The seed was singularly planted, and gradually it has grown up to become a mighty tree whose branches spread over all the nations, and to the distant isles of the sea. Its action has contributed to the formation of almost every Bible Society throughout the world. The benefits which it has conferred upon the world in the dissemination of the Word of God are incalculable. Directly or indirectly it has been the means of presenting the Bible to the nations and tribes of the earth in more than 200 different versions, in almost every known language—the last being, I suppose, that of the eminent missionary, Dr. Moffat, in the language of South Africa. It seems to have been the cherished wish of that devoted man that he might live till he could be able to present to the people among whom he had laboured with so much self denial for more than 50 years, the Bible in their own tongue. And God has mercifully granted his desire.

The object of this Society, then, is not only to circulate the Bible among the degraded or destitute population of our own country, but to stand ready to enter in wherever God in His Providence hath opened up the way with that tree of life whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. It does this in the confidence that however high and insurmountable the mountains of heathenism and popery, and mahometanism, and infidelity, and every system of error may appear to be, there is power in the Bible, when accompanied by the omnipotent agency of the Spirit, to level them all. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds."

The times too in which we live are peculiar, quickening our expectations of the overthrow of every system by which the empire of iniquity and error has been maintained and of the coming of the reign of righteousness and truth over the earth.

It is reasonable to suppose that before this grand consummation the nations should be in some measure prepared for it by the incorruptible seed of the Word being scattered from place to place among them. And it is remarkable that at this time the attention and the hearts of Christians should be directed, beyond anything of the kind before, to this object. But what makes it still more remarkable and astonishing is, that it has taken place in circumstances which, to all human apprehension, must have appeared of a very unfavourable character. I refer not only to the shaking of kingdoms, and the overthrow of thrones, nor of any of those civil principles and maxims by which the minds of the people in the different countries of Europe have been agitated. But I speak of infidelity openly showing itself and spreading its baneful influence, of the industrious propagation of false views of Divine Truth, of the alarming progress of profanity and vice, and of worldliness in every form; yet, in the midst of all this, the hearts of God's people seem to be more strongly drawn out at the present time to the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom upon the earth, and the bringing of multitudes of precious yet perishing souls to the knowledge of Him.

What an evidence is this that the hand of the Lord is here! And when He begins His wonderful operations in so extraordinary a manner, may we not hope that the time to favour Zion is come, yea, the set time which He hath appointed; indeed the long expected period of the great and final strug-