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"Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, good will toward men."

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## ANNIVERSARY.

### LONDON ITINERANT SOCIETY.

[Formed a few years since for the purpose of preaching the Gospel and inculcating its principles by means of Scripture-readers and Preachers, in such parts of the metropolis and kingdom as most stand in need of enlightenment.]

Monday, May 18.

The yearly meeting of this society was held this evening, at the City of London Tavern. In the absence of T. Wilson, Esq. T. Chalfin, Esq. was called to the chair; and the Rev. Mr. Timpson opened the business of the evening with a prayer.

The Chairman, after regretting the absence of Mr. Wilson, who had, however, sent a donation of ten guineas, expressed his regret at the thin attendance he then witnessed, and hoped that the meeting would endeavour to satisfy themselves as to its cause. It was of the highest importance, that in meetings like these they should connect all their exertions with Christian principle, and the designs of Heaven. Too often was it the case, that the interest that played about their minds, and the emotions which were kindled in their hearts, upon occasions like these, passed away, instead of assuming the permanency of principle. The excitement produced had been like the shining of the sun in the winter, which left all beneath it cold and lifeless. Why had it been so? Were they only to be exalted and impressed for an hour, and to be without those principles which alone could give a right direction to such excitement, and render it productive of good! Oh! that they would strive to catch the feelings, and imbibe the spirit, of those holy men, of whose successes, under God, they would be so delighted to hear. He then took a very extensive and detailed review of the state of morals and religion in the metropolis and the surrounding villages, urging upon the meeting the necessity that existed for renewed exertions in the sacred cause.

The secretary (the Rev. S. Evans) read the report, from which it appeared,—That many of the places in which the Gospel had been introduced by the itinerants of the society were in a very flourishing condition; many churches were formed; schools were established; and it was only the paucity of the funds which limited the operations of the institution. The contributions during the past year amounted to £271 16s. 5d. and the expenditure to £222 11s. 1d.; leaving a balance due to the treasurer of about £39.

Mr. Stewartant said, that in moving the adoption of the report, he could not conceal the gratification it had given him. Although he thought with his chairman, that the society was not so liberally supported as its important objects required, there were, nevertheless, ample grounds of thankfulness in what had been done. With the preachers employed in the labours marked out, the society has every reason to be well satisfied with what they had been enabled to accomplish.

The Rev. T. Harnur seconded the resolution.—Some of the reasons which induced him to give the society his humble countenance and support were, that it was a society which illustrated the importance and advantages of religious liberty—a possession of no value, except as it furnished them with the opportunity of preaching the Gospel of Christ—because it gave facilities to those who would otherwise be overlooked, for preaching the Gospel to the poor; it only required, that its agents should be men of decided Christian principle, and members of a religious society—and because it thus did honour to the Holy Spirit of God, by testifying that human learning, however valuable in its place, would not suffice for the salvation of sinners.

The Rev. John Edwards moved the next resolution; and related a number of anecdotes, illustrative of the success with which the honest and zealous labours of some of the home-missionaries had been crowned, and concluded by calling upon those present to thank God; take courage, and go forward.

The Rev. Mr. Dunn said, that when he looked around the platform, he could not help thinking of the beautiful sentiment with which the report was closed—"Behold how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." In the person of their respected chairman, they had the treasurer of the Christian Instruction Society—in the person of the last speaker, the secretary of the Baptist Home Missionary Society, and then he (Mr. D.) had been announced as connected with another institution, of a kindred character. That was as it should be; if there were a cause under Heaven in which men should blend together in harmony, and co-operate in their exertions, it was upon occasions like those. They had heard, too, of the success with which God had blessed the efforts of the society. There was something delightful and cheering in the word "success;" and though it should not constitute the ground or measure of their exertions, they might still dwell upon it with pleasure. The ground of their operations was something higher than that; it was the command of the Saviour, who had said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The resolution pledged the meeting to renewed exertions; and he would impress upon them the binding nature of that pledge.

The Rev. Mr. Deering moved the third resolution—"That this meeting recognize the importance and utility of introducing the plan of the Christian Instruction Society into all the villages connected with this society." The spirit of Christian benevolence had quitted the shores of Britain to range over the wide surface of the globe. The Itinerant Society wished to limit the field of its own operations to the villages surrounding London.

The Rev. Mr. Drake seconded the resolution. The Rev. Mr. Timpson moved—"That this meeting appreciate the kind and Christian labours of the preachers and teachers who voluntarily engage in the service of this society, and embrace the present opportunity of presenting to them expressions of sincere respect and affection." The Rev. gentleman said, it had been erroneously supposed, that the agents of the Society were illiterate men. The fact was, that many of them were highly educated. At any rate, every agent had read and digested the Bible, and could communicate the knowledge of it to his less-informed fellow-creatures. He scarcely thought that the labours and privations they underwent had been duly appreciated. An itinerant preacher often travelled thirty-five miles in a day in winter, and delivered three discourses at a time; while his remuneration barely covered his expenses. (*Here, hear.*)

The Rev. Mr. Saunders seconded the resolution, and passed a high eulogium on the self-denying zeal of the itinerant preachers.

The Rev. Mr. Lovelace, a missionary to the East Indies, bore testimony to the high importance of the objects embraced by the society.

The Chairman announced a subscription of ten guineas from a friend of the society.

The Rev. Mr. Manning, in moving the next resolution, said, if they divested themselves of the association of ideas, they would see a moral desert around them. They could not expect to introduce the heresy of spring or to make the rose of Sharon blossom by their unassisted exertions; but still to them belonged the honour and privilege of bringing to that moral desert all the means and instruments they could employ.

The Rev. John Press briefly seconded the resolution. He said, he had laboured for eighteen years in the service of the society, during which time he had gone over upwards of 16,000 miles, 14,000 of which he had travelled on foot.

The Rev. Mr. Babner moved a vote of thanks to the chair.

Lieut. Handley, R. N. in seconding the motion, said, he had travelled through the world, from China to the North Cape; and wherever he went, he had witnessed the advantage of Sunday-schools, and field preaching. He had also had the gratification

of seeing the best labourers in their respective fields; he had beheld Morrison, Carey, and others; and his observations had convinced him, that the mustard seed must be sown in the spring. Every thing, indeed, that met his eyes, looked beautiful to the sight; but the people were in a state of moral degradation—the poison of asps was under their lips, and enmity was in their hearts.

The Chairman said, he had hoped that every thing like thanks to a chairman or treasurer would have long since been dismissed from public meetings. He was decidedly opposed to such a proceeding.—He trusted that the meeting would not forget the objects that had called them together. They were only at the dawn of the day; the sun of righteousness had only begun to streak the horizon of their benevolence. Was it not delightful to consider, that a beam of immortality might descend into their hearts, to guide them through the shadowy path of life? That consideration ought to awaken an attachment to the cause which would never die. (*Applause.*)

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Address of the Committee of the Sunday-School Union to Ministers of the Gospel, on the subject of Bible-Classes.

With the most respectful deference, and the most cordial attachment, the committee of the Sunday-School Union beg leave to solicit the attention of the Ministers of Christ to a subject which appears to them to have a direct bearing, not only on the interests of Sunday-Schools, but also on the general efficiency of pastoral exertion.

They believe that they shall not encounter any difference of opinion, when they express their fears, that, with comparatively few exceptions, the general standard of scriptural knowledge among the clergy and the young who form an interesting part of Sabbath congregations, is lamentably low and defective, they fear that there is too much reason to entertain this apprehension, not only a reference to the children who are received into Sunday Schools, but also as it regards many who are not dependent on gratuitous education.

It may be deemed scarcely necessary to remind their revered instructors, who sustain the honorable and respectable office of the Christian Ministry, that of all orders of influential men, they possess the simplest means and opportunities of elevating the standard of Bible knowledge, and diffusing among the young, of every grade in society, the grand principles of the doctrine of Christ. With this conviction, the Committee of the Sunday-School Union are anxious to suggest the views which they have been led to form, after much inquiry and deliberation, of that species of religious instruction which has been recently adopted by not a few of the best friends of the rising race, and which is included under the comprehensive designation of Bible-Classes.

With the utmost regard to consciousness of statement, the Committee beg leave to advert, first, to the object of Bible-Classes, and then to the advantages which may be anticipated from their formation. The leading object of Bible-Classes may be stated in one sentence. It is, to convey to the minds of the young as accurate and extensive a knowledge as may be found practicable of the most important contents of the Bible. It is impossible to conceive of any effort more in unison with the grand object of a Minister of the Gospel, than the attempt to render intelligible and interesting to the young of every class, the vital truths, the pure precepts, the instructive histories, and the precious promises of the word of God.

The characteristic principle of Bible-Class instruction is that of *catechetical* instruction. This principle has the sanction of immemorial usage; having been adopted, with success, by the wisest preceptors in successive generations. Catechisms without number, not only for the purposes of religion, but also