

been practically at a stand-still, and the number of those speaking the language has probably decreased. So with Spain, which two or three hundred years ago seemed to have a very much grander prospect than had England, and the Spanish language than the English tongue. Now, I ask myself to what is that due? No doubt blood goes for something, but yet the Saxon—or the English blood if you prefer it, for it is not purely Saxon—existed before the beginning of the present century, and even from the time of the Reformation down to the year 1804 the English people and the English tongue had not made marked progress as compared with some of those other tongues and those other nations which I have indicated. And when I have sought for reasons, no doubt as I say blood does tell, and the colonizing instinct of the English has told in large part: and yet, I think, in the good providence of God, that this is more due to the free circulation of the Word of God than to any other cause that can be indicated; and I believe that the English character during that time has been built more upon the Word of God than that of any other nation. I believe that this large number of copies of the Word of God in the English tongue which have been circulated by the British and Foreign Bible Society, as well as the large numbers which have been circulated through other instrumentalities, have gone to form the character of those who have been speaking that tongue in a manner which does not prevail to the same extent in any other land; and I do not think we can find any other cause which will adequately account for the great prosperity that has attended this nation, that has attended that tongue, during these years. Now, we live in times when many of our best people are apprehensive about the future. Especially do they seem to feel an apprehension about the Word of God. These various influences that would tend to depreciate the Word of God and to belittle it seem to have gathered their force within recent years. I am old enough to remember—and I suppose there are persons here who can remember—additional grounds to those which have occurred within my own memory, as to attacks upon the Word of God which made many of its sturdiest defenders fear that it was not the impregnable rock that one of our greatest statesmen has named it. I remember in my student and college days when many people thought that the science of geology was going to overthrow the Word of God. They thought the new science, as it was at that time, was in conflict with the story of the creation as given to us in the Book of Genesis; and yet I think that the ripest scholars to-day have come to this conclusion: that although the first chapter of Genesis was not written primarily as a scientific record, yet the foremost geologists of the world to-day have come to the conclusion that the first chapter of Genesis is a correct record of the story of the creation as revealed to us in the other record—that which is found in the crust of the earth itself. And not very long after that, I remember, just about my own college days, that good people were very much disturbed by a work that had come from a very high ecclesiastical dignitary, one who was esteemed at the time, one of the highest authorities as a mathematician, and yet a great many good people thought that he, if he had not disturbed the whole of the Scripture, had at least disturbed the authenticity and the correctness of the Pentateuch; and yet people did not have to live very many years before they were able to learn, and learn with a great deal of exactitude, that it was Moses who was right and that it was Bishop Colenso who was wrong; and I think that the