

past, and hath granted it such signal success, will carry it forward to still greater things if its object is only faithfully maintained. And who that marks the aspect of the times can doubt that this noble society will not be one of the principal engines in the hand of Providence, in completing the conquest of the Gospel of Peace. It prepares the way for the Missionary of the Cross, and silently deposits the seed in the ground which only requires the culture of the evangelist to result in an abundant harvest. Take the instance of Turkey, where we see, under a Mahometan government, a Bible Society formed in Constantinople itself, with the British Ambassador as its president, and a new Evangelical Church springing up to bear witness to the value of Bible dissemination. And what shall we say of India and China with their teeming populations?—Shall we not view them as about to add new trophies to the cause of the Bible? From the latter country the parent society had by last advices received intelligence as late as the first of last June. In a letter of that date to the Committee the writer uses the following language:—“By this mail I send you information of the wonderful movement now going on in China. Making every deduction for the manifest extravagance of these men, the work is truly marvellous. With the Scriptures among them, and other books of unexceptionable character, we may surely hope that many of them may be made ‘wise unto salvation.’ There are manifest indications of the existence of two parties amongst them; one of persons who would seem to be sincere in their profession of Christianity, and who really wish to make that the first thing; the other that of ambitious schemers, who merely take Christianity for what it is worth as an instrument to promote their own designs. Surely however this movement is big with hope. It may be that whilst Christians in England are giving thanks to God for the victory already achieved by ‘the sword of the spirit’ unsheathed and wielded by your grand Society, God is opening up the 300 millions of China to your Christian enterprise. No one can look upon the present aspect of things in the East, without feeling persuaded that the days of eastern exclusiveness are at an end, and soon may we see the Sun of Righteousness rise upon China and Japan and dispel all the thick brooding mists of idolatry and ignorance.”

Your Committee would only add in conclusion—may this be the case, not only with China and Japan, but throughout the world, wherever there is a soul to be found without a saving faith in the Crucified.

The 1st Resolution—“That this meeting hails this year of Jubilee as a fitting occasion of commemorating the divine goodness so abundantly vouchsafed to the Society in its origin, early history, and subsequent progress”,—was moved by the Rev. GEORGE HILL, who spoke to the following effect:

When the Sovereign of Great Britain receives the Royal Sceptre, as a part of the Coronation ceremony, a copy of the Bible is presented, accompanied with these words, “Take this as the most valuable of your treasures”, or words of like import. Thus is the value and importance of that Book impressed upon the mind of the Sovereign and upon the hearts of the nation, under circumstances calculated to render that impression peculiarly affecting and lasting. And well may it be so, for the Bible is the Book of books;—God’s revealed will to man—His “unspeakable gift”, exhibiting all the rich treasures of His grace. Material possessions are unsatisfactory and speedily vanish: but this yields solid enjoyment, undying honors, mansions in the heavens, and riches which cannot fade away. Earthly treasures may serve for this world, and other kinds of wisdom and knowledge may conduct

to the grave; but that wisdom which cometh from the Word of God, maketh wise unto salvation, and conducts to glory, honor and immortality.

And just what one Bible is to a single individual who receives the truth in the love of it, so is a multitude of Bibles to the vast multitudes who are brought under the same blessed influence. Hence I deem the British and Foreign Bible Society one of the most noble institutions in the world. I cherish, I need not say, the most sincere regard for the Church to which I belong, and I honor all her institutions for blessing mankind; and I honor every section of the Christian Church engaged in the same cause. But no society, which is confined within the sphere of one denomination, can do every thing. They are necessarily limited in their operations. Why should our Church encroach upon those portions of the field where the gospel is faithfully preached by the Wesleyans or others. And so again of them: they cannot take the whole field, because we have taken a part. But this Institution embraces the whole field—the whole world. It sustains every other society—proffering assistance on a large and liberal scale to all who are engaged in the work of disseminating the gospel of the grace of God. Yes, Sir, viewed in the light of its world wide usefulness, the objects it aims to accomplish—the glory of its achievements, it cannot but be deemed the most magnificent Institution in the world. “What advantage hath the Jew, or what profit is there of circumcision”, asks the Apostle. And he answers the question—much every way; but chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. This, then, is the very work of this Society. To it as a representative is entrusted the oracles of God—to seat or the word of life far and wide over the face of the whole earth. It is the arsenal from which each individual soldier, composing the great hosts of the church militant, obtains his spiritual weapons. It goes forth breathing good-will to all—to the Jew and to the Gentile—to the high and to the low—to the rich and to the poor—to the bond and to the free. Wherever human souls breathe, it is to be found in its work of faith and labour of love.

It is a very fitting occasion at this Jubilee celebration to look back upon the past, and to remember what God has done in blessing the nations of the earth through the instrumentality of this Institution. The Jubilee of old among the Jews—whence we derive the name—was an occasion of universal joy.—Then were the prisons thrown open—the captive was set free—the slave returned to his home to take possession of the inheritance of his fathers; all debts were discharged, and the shrill notes of the trumpet on that auspicious morn heralded universal gladness. And, Sir, this is a joyful day for the world. The notes of gladness and thanksgiving, heard throughout the length and breadth of the land, will cause thousands of hearts to leap for joy. Thousands of captive souls have been set free through the instrumentality of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The swelling notes will resound from mountain to mountain, and from valley to valley, and the angels in heaven will rejoice over us, and myriads of the spirits of the just made perfect during the past fifty years will lead the song, and ascribe salvation, and glory, and honor, to God and the Lamb. And surely our hearts cannot but beat in unison with theirs. We, too, rejoice in the great and manifold blessings thus con-

ferred upon ourselves and upon our race.

It is proper on this occasion to glance at the origin of this Society. I need scarcely remind you how it began with the Welsh ministers, who, deploring the destitution of Bibles in Wales, and consulting how this deficiency might be supplied, started the idea of forming a society for accomplishing the object—and hence the great idea of extending the same heavenly boon to all the nations of the earth. Now, indeed, we may thank God and take courage. He put those holy desires into the hearts of those men and their coadjutors. He employed them as instruments in his hands. Their own hearts were influenced by the love of Christ. They rejoiced in the glorious truth that he had shed his precious blood for sinners. Having themselves tasted of the word of life, they were desirous that others might share the same blessings.

The Rev. gentleman mentioned the names of several of the early promoters of the Institution, and referred to the striking fact that men of honor, wealth, talent and influence, were among its advocates. This enabled them to do good on a large scale. Still their wealth and talents and honors were only to be viewed as the means made use of by the Almighty, to whom all the honor and praise are due.

He then referred to the excellent principle adopted in the circulation of the Bible; that of sending it abroad to tell its own story, not in the words of man’s wisdom, but in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, *without note or comment*. Surely we should give to the nations the very Book of God itself, unadulterated, that men under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who is promised to all who ask for his direction, may learn the way of salvation and walk in the narrow path of life.

The Rev. Speaker continued in a very judicious and proper manner, to mention some of the difficulties which the Society had to encounter before its principles had been tested, and its tendencies had been realized. Many good men in the Establishment started at the idea of uniting with dissenters, lest it should give birth to latitudinarianism, and laxity in doctrine and manners. Perhaps he (Mr. H.), being a minister of the Establishment, could mention these things with more propriety than some of the other speakers. The fact at all events was well known, and his sole object in referring to it, was simply that the good Providence of God might be recognized in overcoming these obstacles, and removing such scruples. Thank God almost all the Bishops are now lending a helping hand, with the Primate of all England at their head.

But we have had opposition from other quarters. Rome has opposed the objects of the Bible Society with all her might. She dreads the light, and well she may, while her deeds are evil. She knows well that as soon as the light of Divine Revelation shines forth with unobscured rays, her own deformity must be revealed. Like the glorious orb of day, rising in majesty and splendour, it must put to flight the darkness and mists of error and superstition. Why does the Roman priesthood ever deny this? Why ever deny that they are opposed to the universal circulation of the Scriptures? Why not, like their late champion in Parliament, boldly and honestly confess the truth—that Rome is and always must be antagonistic to this great Protestant principle? Additional facts were mentioned, clearly showing that Rome is not the friend of the Bible. Still he (Mr. H.) did not wish to be deemed her enemy because he