

side by side with it, that it is an inspired Book, and that the same Spirit who made known its contents to holy men must in some measure be received by every one who would correctly interpret it. In these times men need to approach the Word of God reverently, and to depend with childlike teachableness upon the Holy Spirit that its meaning may be understood, and its infinite richness fully appreciated. And whatever else God may deny to men, He will not deny His Holy Spirit to them that ask it.

THE EIGHTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

The Annual Meeting was held on Wednesday, May 6th, in Exeter Hall, London. The Chairman, the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., President of the Society, said :—"Dear friends, perhaps you will allow me, before we proceed to the business of the day, to explain that I can make no speech, and that I can remain with you but for a very short time. It has pleased God to lay me altogether aside for nearly twelve months, and this is the first public duty that I have been able to discharge during that time. I feel most deeply grateful to be permitted to do so, for it would have gone to my heart if now, for the first time in more than thirty years, I should have been unable to be present at this anniversary, particularly when there is such a Report as that which we have just listened to, which records that there has been a larger circulation of the Scriptures during the past year than has been known in the previous history of the Society for more than eighty years.

"Do let me press upon you what I consider to have been almost the greatest work achieved by the Society during the past year—I mean the publication of the Penny Testament, which has been given to the public in a decent form and in legible print. I believe that the Committee, and the public at large, have no conception of the mighty influences for good which they have set on foot by this production, and of the mighty results which are to follow.

"Now, it has not been in my power during the last twelve months to go among the people as I was always in the habit of doing; but I have had my information from most reliable sources, and it is in full confirmation of what I saw myself about a year ago. What I am about to say is almost incredible, and I dare say those who listen to me, who are not very much in the habit of going among the most destitute and degraded classes of the community will hardly believe it; but in no period of the history of the world was there ever such a movement among the most degraded, the most miserable, and apparently the most abandoned and hopeless class of the community towards a knowledge of the Word of God, as there is at present. It is almost incredible; but it is positively the fact that hundreds of the poorer sort—even the very roughest of lads—in all their degradation and nudity, come to those different institutions with which I am connected, more especially to those in Whitechapel, praying to be admitted to Bible-classes. I should hardly have thought it possible, if I had not seen it with my own eyes, and heard it with my own ears. I accept it as the intervention of some very especial, notable, and miraculous sign, that hundreds and thousands of these poorest of the poor should be brought to such a desire for the knowledge of the Gospel, and should be praying to be admitted into the fold of Christ. And you have only got to multiply your operations, and give them the means of coming to you, and you will be surprised at the thousands and hundreds of thousands who will throng your institutions. In such circumstances, then, how opportune is the publication of the Penny Testament! At my own small place in the country, where there is a scarce rural population scattered over a large surface, no sooner was it announced that there was a nice, comfortable, decent New Testament to be had for a penny, than the demand came in so rapidly that it could not be met, and in the course of one week, more than 200 names