

Word of God was years ago publicly burned to dust and ashes. If God has interposed so marvellously in the past on behalf of His own truth and His own divine honour, can we entertain for a moment any fear or apprehension that He will desert that Word and leave it to the fate apprehended for it by some in the near future. Oh, no ; it cannot be ; it rests upon the rock, and that rock is immovable. Just because, therefore, of the blessings that this good book brings which the Bible Society represents ; on this ground I claim most confidently that the unbelief of the present day which would rob us of that Word is an element of grossest cruelty.

But what are some of those blessings ? It is scarcely necessary, brethren, that I should enumerate some of them to you, but it may perhaps assist your minds if I do so. I might say broadly, then, that whatever you have in your possession to-day that makes life best worth living for, whatever you have that gives you promise of the life to come and a well-grounded hope in the hereafter, you gather and derive from the inspired Word of God. Now you are well aware that those who are opposed to the Word, and would even wrest it from our hands, are wanting to point us to the past and draw comparisons, or to induce us, if they can, to draw comparisons between the condition of ancient Greece and Rome, and the condition of Rome to-day as evidence that the Word of God has accomplished nothing for society. Look back, they say, to ancient Greece and Rome ; see the marvels that were wrought there by art, science, literature, philosophy ; read over the names of those who towered over the heads of their fellows as far as the monarch of European mountains towers above the little hills that cluster around its base ; and they will tell us that after all we have not made so much progress in consequence of the diffusion of the Word of God. Now, brethren, it is quite true that a few philosophers can be found here and there in the history of the past, who did attain considerable strength : they were, as a modern writer says, unconsciously seeking after God ; no doubt they did make great progress in art and science, literature and philosophy ; but when I appeal on behalf of the word of God, that it and it alone is the true parent of the Christian philosophy, what I have in mind is not the overtowering genius of a few philosophers, but rather the general tone and condition of society as a whole, the condition of the masses at large. When we bear that distinction in mind and look back for a moment to the past, we will see that the boasted philosophy of two thousand years ago certainly had failed to accomplish very much on behalf of the masses. Take for example, the popular amusements of the time, and we may lawfully regard the public amusements of the community as furnishing a certain test of its morals, and what were these amusements ? Go into the Roman amphitheatre you will see there twenty thousand of the Roman populace present ; within its numbers the fairest maidens, the noblest matrons, of imperial Rome all gathered together to gloat over the sufferings of the captives taken in war, butchered to make a Roman holiday. If the inscriptions, as some tell us, that are found on the city walls are to be taken as a test of the morals in society, go back and read some graphic scribblings that are to be found on the exhumed walls of Pompeii and you will find that they are so vile and filthy that, as a modern writer says, the only marvel is that the lightnings of heaven did not sooner descend and bury Pompeii under the dust and ashes of Vesuvius, and that so deeply as to render her resurrection for ever impossible. If the condition of woman is, in a community, as it may be fairly regarded, a test of its moral and social position, go back to Greece and Rome, and what was the condition of woman then ? Let the Christians gathered in this sanctuary remember their condition in Greece, the land of myth and poetry, and legend ; woman was regarded in such a light there as to be fitted only for the drudgery of domestic life ; if she attempted literary culture, she did so at the risk