

God that He may continue to shed His abundant blessings upon you. My dear friends, I pray for you sincerely. You have had great advantages in London since I knew it. The spirit of the Lord is abroad ; it is working in the opening up of fresh fields, and I pray God that you may know the day of your visitation, and that the men and women and children here present to-day, all having an interest in the circulation of the Scriptures, may testify to the power of the Word in their own souls. The more you study it, the more rich discoveries you will make of God's grace, and, instead of its being in any way a dreary book and a heavy book, the light will shine brighter and brighter in every page, and when you want it most, when your flesh and your heart fail, you will find that God will be the strength of your heart and your portion for ever.

Dr. Joseph P. Thompson, of New York : My lord, ladies, and gentlemen,—I have been requested to submit, and I have great pleasure in submitting, the following Resolution :—

“That this meeting, recognising in the Bible the inspired voice which breaks the silence between heaven and earth, and reveals to men, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, the way of their salvation, rejoices in the continued vigour of a Society which unites all bodies of Christians in the simple yet Godlike work of spreading this Book amongst the nations of the earth, and cordially supports the Committee in their purpose of responding to the growing confidence shown towards the Society, by a bold, and at the same time prudent, enlargement of its operations.”

My Lord, it is my privilege and honour this morning to bring to the British and Foreign Bible Society the fraternal and Christian salutations of the American Bible Society, a Society formed upon your own model, governed by your own principles, administered after your own methods, and co-operating with you in the single work of circulating the Word of God in every tongue. In the foreign field we, for the most part, use the versions which your liberality has provided ; in other instances we have been happy to supply you with versions prepared by American missionaries and placed at your disposal ; and there have also been cases where we have shared with you the expense of the translation and the issue of foreign versions. Then, as to the field at large: with a wise and Christian courtesy we have divided that field so as to work in it jointly without interference, having the same grand endeavour to put within the reach of every inhabitant of the globe a copy of the Bible. No nobler emulation, my Lord, could stir these two great peoples ; may nothing less worthy ever arise to incite them! \* \* \*

But where shall we find character, where gain the basis of character as we have it in this Book ? What guarantee for the future of a people like building continually upon the Word of God ? Our strength has not outgrown dependence upon it, our wisdom has not made us wiser than its teachings, our wealth has not enabled us to say, “We have no need of thee.” Just at this point, my Lord—and it is the one point to which, for a few moments, with your permission, I beg to speak—I shall be met by the cry so common in England and in Germany, and echoed among us, that this is mere book-worship ; that you are setting up for your guide, a book ; for your authority, a book ; that you are neglecting reason, and nature, and conscience, and intuition, and are no better off really than the African with his fetich, or the Papist with his superstitions and idolatries. If there be any weight in this objection, surely such a resolution as this ought not to be passed, in which we proclaim this Bible as the voice that breaks the silence between heaven and earth, and urge you to go forward in distributing the Book. Book-worship ! What is this book-worship that our critics sneer at ? Is a truth any the less a truth that it is written and handed down in a book ? Suppose Sir Charles Lyell has discovered and settled for us the gradual process of the earth's formation ; suppose Darwin has discovered for us the solution of the origin of species ; will that be any the less true that they have written it in a book ? What would not any one of those