

ANNUAL REPORT.

Your Committee, in presenting this the twenty-seventh annual Report of the Guelph Branch of the Upper Canada Bible Society, would not fail to render thanks to God for the success vouchsafed by Him towards the great work of Bible circulation during the past year. Though your Committee cannot point to any land where the Bible has been introduced for the first time—though there has been no bursting of the light of the Word in a single day over lands which have been in darkness—as when the treaty of Peking opened China and the sword of Garibaldi opened Italy—yet the resources of the Parent Society have been unimpaired, and its objects are as deeply rooted in the affections of the people of God throughout the entire extent of the British Empire as ever. Though no new fields have been opened up to the operations of the Society, those already opened have been cultivated with untiring energy and increased success. This is especially the case in Madagascar, where the natives are now permitted and encouraged to read the Bible and attend to religious teaching, from which they were debarred by the cruel persecutions of the late queen. In China also, a new and interesting field has been opened, and the Society, ever alive to the great objects for which it was called into existence and kept in operation, has increased its efforts in disseminating the Scriptures among the immense population of that empire. In India, too, under the blessing of God, the work has prospered, and abundant evidence has been given that the labors of the Society have been blessed. A most cheering record of progress comes from Italy. No sooner had the sword cut the bonds which fettered its people, than the light of the Gospel broke over this interesting land. Provinces, cities and towns were thrown open for the reception of the truth. The circulation of the Bible continues daily to increase, and good tokens have already been given that its blessed influence has been felt among the people. While these facts afford the friends of the Bible abundant cause for rejoicing, they have still to regret that some portions of Europe have as yet refused to allow the Bible to be introduced: in contrast to the cheering facts already given, are the persecutions that have taken place in Spain, where men are now expiating at the galleys what the priesthood declares the crime of reading the Word of God.