

Rev. Mr. Gemley, her father. A letter was also read from Mr. Frank Hope thanking the Board for its grant of Bibles. The Rev. Dr. Johnston brought up his notice of motion, which, after consideration, was referred to a special committee for report at next meeting. The Permanent Secretary reported progress in the Jesse Ketchum Trust for City Sunday Schools. The routine business was disposed of and the meeting was closed with prayer.

Bible Society Recorder.

TORONTO, 1ST APRIL, 1891.

BIBLE SOCIETIES.

BY WILLIAM WRIGHT, D.D., IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES.

This latest century, now coming to a close, has been distinguished from all the centuries that preceded it by its organized philanthropy. Homes for the poor, hospitals for the sick, asylums for the insane, homes for orphans, prisons fit for human habitation, schools for common children and hundreds of similar institutions for the suffering and the helpless, are not only the outgrowth of Christianity, but are largely the products of our century. The nineteenth century has recognized the fact that our obligation to our neighbour is not fully discharged by Oriental hospitality or medieval doles; that neither the cup of cold water from the table of the sumptuous glutton, nor proxy benefactions from ecclesiastical hands, relieve the civilized State from further concern as to the wants of the people; and hence our Christian civilization has during our century made provision, however blunderingly, for the physical and temporal wants of the needing.

But the philanthropy of the century has not been limited to local and material needs. It aims at nothing less than the bringing of infinite grace to the infinite wants of man's moral nature, and in its all-embracing energy it takes in those that are afar off as well as those that are within its narrow sphere. In this work of universal beneficence the great central agency is the Bible Society. That Society began its career in the early days of the century, and in the composition of causes which have gone to the formation of what is noble and true and self-sacrificing in the century, it has been the dominant and leading factor.

The immediate incident that led to the formation of the Society was the hunger cry of a little Welsh girl for a Bible. The tears were fruitful. The cry in Wales was not only effectual in securing Bibles for the principality, but for the whole world. The Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala, told the legend of Mary Jones, converted by reading a neighbour's Bible; of her earnest desire to have a Bible of her own; of her pennies hoarded for several years; of her long and weary journey, barefoot, to purchase the book when she had saved the price; and of her bitter disappointment and grief when she found that the supply from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge was exhausted to the last copy, and that that copy was already promised to another. The story fell on sympathetic ears. William Wilberforce, the philanthropist, the friend of the oppressed, heard it. Granville Sharp, the patriot, who resigned office rather than do an official act in furtherance of the American war, heard it. Zachary Macaulay, a greater man than his more famous son, the historian, heard it. Samuel Mills, Owen, Hughes, Steinkopf, heard it.