

means, combined with the loftiest talents, and with labour that never wearies in its self-denying exertions, will accomplish nothing that is effectual or permanent in relation to the spiritual triumphs of religion in the world if the human element alone prevails—if reliance be placed simply and exclusively upon an arm of flesh, and all gracious influence and power from on High be withheld. In the building of the Church as a whole,—that vast spiritual edifice which has been so many centuries in the course of construction, and in which so many busy workmen have been engaged, depositing “gold, silver and precious stones;” the toil and energy, the skill and vigilance of the under builders will be labour in vain and strength spent for nought, unless the great Master Builder take the work in hand; and then the glorious structure, fitly framed together, and deriving from His Spirit vitality, strength, and beauty in every part, “groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord.” The principle applies with all its force to a Society like yours. Broad and seemingly strong as may be its foundation, increasing in the magnitude of its proportions, rising higher and higher in its superstructure, “unless the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.” The wisest counsels, the most prudent contrivances, the most zealous services will be of no avail unless He deign to vouchsafe His blessing and render His Word a mighty power in the earth to demolish the strongholds of sin and Satan.

But there is a subordinate and more material application of the passage of Scripture, just quoted, which carries a special significance to the minds of your Committee on the present occasion. This Anniversary is coincident with a note-worthy epoch in the Society's History, and rises above the level of an ordinary Anniversary, by reason of the associations with which it is identified. Three years since, within a few weeks, the first stone of the new Bible House was laid, with fitting ceremonial, by his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and an enterprise was commenced of very deep interest and grave responsibility. It is needless to recapitulate all the preliminary circumstances connected with this important step. It is well known that it did not originate in any alternative that might have been avoided, or in any restless craving to raise a more conspicuous and imposing edifice than that in which the Society was so long content to dwell. It was a simple and absolute necessity which the Committee had to face, and to deal with in the best manner attainable. The period during which the building has been gradually advancing towards completion, has cast upon the gentlemen composing the Building Committee a very large amount of most anxious and laborious duty. It has not been an easy thing to strike a happy medium between tastes and opinions somewhat conflicting, but they have conscientiously endeavoured to make the new Bible House a structure worthy of the Society which it represents, and worthy of the grand object at which the Society aims. The building is not for man, but for God,—dedicated to the Divine Glory, and to be henceforth employed as the great storehouse whence copies of the Holy Scriptures shall go forth in all the multiplied languages of the human race, and to every part of the habitable globe. It is with sincere satisfaction that the Committee now report that the great undertaking has reached its final stage, and that the Society occupies the spot where for generations to come, long after the builders have gone to rest, its operations will be conducted—and may it not be hoped, conducted with growing success and richer tokens of the Divine blessing, so that in truth, and not in figure merely, the glory of the latter house shall eclipse the glory of the former. From first to last your Committee have been impressed with the conviction that “Unless the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it,” and His help and direction have been invariably invoked; and there are circumstances, to which brief allusion may be allowed, which cannot fail to demand an explicit and grateful recognition of the Divine goodness and mercy that have been experienced throughout. It should be stated that during the progress of the work, and amidst the many dangers inseparable from it, there has been no loss of life, and scarcely an accident of any sort entailing serious personal injury. It may also be men-