

responsible step I had taken, it was hard indeed that I should be a stranger there. I said as much to those around, and kind and friendly men in their goodness met me with sympathy, and arranged that I should be no longer a stranger, that I should be a friend : and I, who formerly felt difficulties in reference to the inclusiveness of the Society and its breadth of co-operation, having myself by the teaching of experience—the best of teaching—seen that God's Word indeed is a blessed bond of unity, am now here, nothing doubting. And now I pass at once to the more graceful task of alluding to the noble Report that has been read.

After a deservedly high encomium upon the Report, the Bishop proceeded :

“What a future seems to present itself, when we think of this our present ! We have heard in the Report statements made which must have thrilled all our hearts. The one perhaps that is uppermost in the minds of most here present is that signal announcement that Rome is now open to the Word of God. I read, dear friends, with the utmost interest, and I advise you to read it, in the February number of the proceedings of this Society, an account of that memorable entry. The writer seems to have been moved with a kind of enthusiasm to describe vividly and eloquently the strange circumstances, how the army entered through the gates, and how through the Porta Pia five faithful colporteurs entered with their precious burden, and how through another gate, the Porta Giovanni, another of the same brave band, six faithful men in all, went into the city, and in the name of the King of Kings, our Lord and Master, took possession thereof. My Lord, we often hear, when our enterprising countrymen pass over stormy seas and find some isolated uninhabited rock, how with glad hearts they plant there our national flag and claim the country for our own. But what a flag was that when these faithful men entered, carrying with them two portions of Scripture, one, strangely and significantly indeed, the blessed pages written by the Apostle St. Peter, and the other the Gospel according to St. Luke. These are things to gladden us, to give us joyfulness of heart, to give us encouragement, to unite us more and more together, and enable us to look forward to a blessed and to a widening future. This memorable year has also seen other strange signs. I think I did not hear in the Report, but I heard it two or three days ago at the Bible Society's House, at a committee meeting over which I had the honour to preside, that when very lately the troops of the King of Italy swore their allegiance to their sovereign in the city of Rome, they did so no longer on the crucifix, but on the Scriptures. I am told that a long table was placed in some spot suitable for such a ceremony, that copies of the Holy Scriptures were laid along the table, and that soldier after soldier came and took his oath of allegiance, his military sacramentum, and took it no longer on the image of our dying Lord, but on the eternal Word of the living God. * * * But I must pause, and return to the subject-matter of my resolution. I do commend this Report to your very serious consideration. There is matter in it to warm and encourage. Remember that these are very trying times. Remember that infidelity is making its desperate progress ; that it is showing itself in quarters where it has not to the present time shown itself. If any of you have had the misfortune to read, as I had to hear, portions of evidence as to the modes and the effects of the teaching pursued at one of our ancient universities, as to the loosening and disintegrating process going on in the minds of many at these schools of Christian instruction—if you have seen these things, and need reassurance, turn to the best of sources of encouragement, think over the peaceful, the secure, and I may say the unhopèd-for progress that the Word of God is now making all over the world ; take encouragement from this fact that there is a plain rallying—I know no other term—round the Book of Life. I believe people are becoming wearied with their negative philosophies. I believe that true spirits are now beginning to see that all the insoluble and inscrut-