

the fountain head. It gave us a true idea of the Christian ministry—not sacrificing priests, but ministers of God. It gave us a true standard of real scriptural holiness, not going into monasteries or nunneries, or wearing peculiar dresses, or putting on peculiar faces, but doing our duty, each one of us, in the shop, in the Parliament, behind the counter, behind the plough, as men and women. In that particular station of life to which God pleases to call us. For all this I desire to thank God. What has been the grand instrument in bringing about this mighty change? I am bound to say it was the translation of the Holy Scriptures into the vulgar tongue and the placing of the Bible in every parish. Henry VIII., with all his faults, was the instrument, under God, who made use of him as He did of Sennacherib, in making the Bible known to the people of every parish in the land. This laid the foundation of the Reformation, enabling the people everywhere to see what the Bible contains about justification by faith, about the blood of Jesus Christ, about the work of the Holy Ghost, about the nature of true holiness, about the true character of the sacraments, and the real nature of the ministry. Men's minds were leavened by thinking on those matters which they found in the Bible. It was not merely the preaching of the best preachers, or the writing of men like Cranmer and Ridley, but the Word of God on one side, and the blood of the martyrs on the other, that won the Reformation, and I regard the British and Foreign Bible Society as a standing witness to all the world wherever its name is known, that there are thousands and tens of thousands in England who will always testify their firm belief in the supremacy and sufficiency of God's written Word as the only rule of faith and practice by which we in England mean to steer our course. Now, I need hardly say our lot is cast in times to which the Archbishop of Canterbury has called your attention—times of shaking, times of doubt, times of questioning, times of free thinking. Let me urge all the friends of the Bible Society not to let their hearts tremble for a single moment at what they hear said against the Word of God. The Bible itself is its own best answer to the objectors. This fact cannot be explained away, that a Book which came from a nation that has no literature besides—a Book that came from a few Jews in a remote corner of the world—has now, after 1,800 years, more beauty, more power, more life about it, and has done more good than all the folios of the Fathers, than all the works of the schoolmen, and all the books that ever were printed. There remains the great fact which can never be explained away, that wherever that Book has gone it is for the healing of the nations. You have but to turn to any map of the world and mark out the nations where the Word of God is known, and those where it is not known, and you will see a broad distinction between the state of those nations which any child in a Sunday-school cannot fail to understand. Wherever the Bible is known, the standard of knowledge, of civilization, and of fellowship between man and man is infinitely higher than in those countries where the Word of God is not known. I remember myself, many years ago, when preaching in Hyde Park was permitted, going forth on a Sunday afternoon to hear the preaching. I heard some that was good and some that was not. I heard one man speaking against the Word of God and against the ministers of all denominations—denouncing not only the Church, but the Dissenters. "Those long black things," said the man, "with white chokers round their necks, are not to be trusted, and the Bible is a great imposition." When he had done his talk, and was out of breath, a working man came forward and answered him. He challenged him to say whether, if he looked at the world, he would not find those countries to be the happiest and best governed where the Bible was known and read. He asked him further to look at our own happy land of England, and to go to those families in this very city where the people read the Bible morning and evening, where the children are sent to Sunday-schools, and where the Bible is the recognised rule of life, and to say whether among those families there would not also be found the most sobriety, good temper, and holy living. He