

"Surely a Society might be formed for the purpose, and if for Wales, why not also for the Empire and the world." From this single suggestion, which was immediately adopted, and actively circulated, arose that great Society whose fiftieth year we now celebrate. Its first public meeting was held on the 7th of March 1804, and was attended by three hundred persons. The first president was the Right Honorable Lord Teignmouth, and the first subscription announced was £700.

When the Society commenced its operations it was found that fewer copies of the Scriptures were in circulation in Great Britain than was supposed, and that in fact they had become more and more scarce. In the Highlands of Scotland, and in Ireland, they were rarely to be met with, and in France they were confined to the few family Bibles to be found among the descendants of the Huguenots. In Germany, too, there were not many copies, and those existing were exclusively to be seen among Protestants. In the rest of Europe, with few exceptions, and almost in the whole of Asia and Africa, the Bible was an unknown book. In America, wherever the English language was not spoken, it was equally rare. This was the position of the world when the Bible Society commenced its movement.

Its progress was slow at the outset—Europe was engaged in war, and the Continent therefore barred against its efforts. It did not for a long time meet with a very cordial support among some portions of the Christian community in England, its constitution was assailed, its object misunderstood. Difficulties seemed to surround it upon all sides, but the work was of God and for the extension of his Son's kingdom in the world, and therefore His blessing was upon it, and it was carried triumphantly through every difficulty, and even became the more vigorous by means of the very opposition it had to encounter. When peace took place opportunity was afforded for an extension of the work abroad, and then commenced those efforts which have never since been relaxed. Similar societies were soon formed, first at Nuremberg, afterwards removed to Basle, at Berlin, Wirtemberg, and elsewhere on the Continent. In America an Association was in existence as long ago as the year 1808. The Continental societies were at first in connexion with the Parent Society, but difficulties having arisen, it was considered best that they should act independently, each association adopting such a course as seemed most judicious under its peculiar circumstances. Subsequently to this arrangement the system of agencies was adopted by the parent Society for carrying out its objects on the Continent and elsewhere, and by this means an immense circulation of the Scriptures has been made in France, Belgium, and Germany, in addition to the efforts of the local societies. The agencies were soon extended to the North of Europe, the Mediterranean, and Turkey, and the results of these operations are now apparent in our own day. Auxiliary associations had in the meantime arisen in the British Colonies, and in the East Indies, and efforts were made upon China, and thus at last was completed the mighty machinery of the British and Foreign Bible Society which we now see, and which by its associations, agencies, depots, and establishments, is now making its aggressive but salutary movements upon the greater part of the habitable globe.

Your Committee need not dwell on the great object of the Society, which is now so well appreciated in this Province. It is simply the circulation of the Holy Scriptures without note or comment. Neither need they dwell upon the catholicity of its constitution, which affords an opportunity to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and desire to advance his blessed Gospel, to meet upon one broad basis, and unite in the extension of his cause in the earth. Such an union was at first opposed to the feelings of many a sincere christian, but gradually prejudices have been removed, and the Society has arrived, at the period when Christians of all deno-

minations can meet upon its Jubilee platform, when Her Gracious Majesty the Queen has become one of its patrons, and the jubilee sermon was preached by the Primate of all England, His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Thus looking at "all the way which the Lord hath led" the Society during the past nine and forty years, your Committee would proceed to exhibit some of the results which have followed its operations. The following statement published under the authority of the Society, will afford a brief compendium of its wonderful success.

1. At the present time the societies in connexion with the Bible Society are—	
In Great Britain	3249
In the Colonies and other Dependencies,	498
Ireland has	510
Foreign Societies with Branches, about	4000

Making a total of 8257

2. When the Society was first established, the translations of the Bible in whole or in part, may have been about fifty; but since then the number has greatly increased. There are now one hundred and forty-eight languages or dialects in which the Society has promoted the distribution, printing, or translation of the Scriptures. The number of versions (omitting those which are printed in different characters only) is 175. Of these 121 are translations never before printed.

3. The circulation of the Bible shows also the following increase.

During the first four years the number of copies was	81,157
Last year alone at home and abroad it was	1,168,794

The total issues from the commencement have been 26,571,103

Assistance has been given to other societies in the distribution of about eighteen millions more; so that the circulation by means of these combined societies, cannot be less than Forty-three millions of copies of the Holy Scriptures in whole or in part.

To shew the liberality by which the work has been sustained by its friends, it may be mentioned, that the Society has been placed in funds so as to expend, in carrying out its operations from the commencement to the present time, the large sum of £3,950,993 7s. 5d., nearly four millions of pounds sterling.

In looking at this great work it will not be out of place to glance at some of the means by which it is carried out. And of the various agencies employed, that which most interests us as peculiarly belonging to this Society, and which bids fair to be adopted as the most efficient means in the dissemination of the Scriptures throughout the world, is the colporteur system. This was commenced in the year 1830 by some friends of the Society in France, who sent out two or three colporteurs or pedlars of the Scriptures in that country. The name states the occupation of the individual, as it means literally in French "neck carrier," from the mode adopted by the colporteur in carrying his books in a leather bag slung over his shoulders.

These humble individuals were so successful in the new enterprise, that in 1837, under the direction of M. de Pressense, the agent in France, the system was fully adopted in that country, and forty-four men of tried piety were sent forth, engaged solely in disposing of the Scriptures among the people. Since that time 1,692,998 copies have been distributed by this means in France alone. Similar success has attended their labors in Belgium, Holland, and Germany. The colporteur, from his position and calling, has access to all classes, from the highest to the lowest, and it is ascertained that to him, under the blessing of God, the Bible Society owes its distribution in Roman Catholic countries. It would have been impossible to disseminate such a number of Scriptures in those countries in any other way. The results have been apparent in the well authenticated instances of numbers of the

French people—in some places whole communities—turning from their former faith, and becoming openly Protestants, in parts of the country where a Protestant had scarcely before been known.

The success of the colporteurs has led to the adoption of agencies of something the same character in England, Ireland, India, and elsewhere. It is considered that the great religious revolution in the West of Ireland has arisen, under Providence, from the adoption of similar means, and the Missionaries in Syria attribute the commencement of the awakening of the Armenian churches to agents of the like character employed by the Society. It is also asserted that the extraordinary revolution now taking place in China may in no small measure be traced to the employment of the same kind of humble laborers in the distribution of the Scriptures.

Your committee would now turn to that which more particularly refers to the present occasion, viz., to the Jubilee movement of the Parent Society.

When the fiftieth year of the Society drew near, it was considered that so interesting a period in its history should be specially commemorated. Resolutions to that effect were passed by the parent committee, and a circular was drawn up which was addressed to the Auxiliaries and friends of the Society throughout the world, embodying the views of the committee on the subject. Among other things it was recommended that a day should be set apart for a special Public Meeting by all the Auxiliaries, Branches, and Associations, throughout the world, and it was subsequently proposed that the day upon which we now meet should be fixed for that purpose. It was also recommended that there should be a special Jubilee Fund, to which contributions were solicited from all the friends of the cause. [This fund was to be appropriated for the furtherance of certain objects which have already appeared in the previous numbers of the *Jubilee Remembrancer*.]

On Tuesday, the 8th of last March, the Public Jubilee Meeting of the parent Society was held in Exeter Hall, in London. On this occasion there appeared upon the platform an assemblage of the foremost men in England in intellect, in birth and station, and in christian philanthropy, such as no similar meeting had ever before evoked. The noble statesman, the dignity of the church, and the missionary of the cross who had borne the burthen and heat of the day in foreign lands, came forward with other eminent individuals to do honor to the occasion, and by their eloquent addresses to acknowledge the goodness of the God of the Bible in raising up such a Society. At the close of the meeting it was announced that the contributions to the Jubilee Fund then amounted to £7000, and they have gone on increasing so that by the last accounts from England, it is mentioned that the fund has already reached the sum of £29,957 0s. 7d.

As has been mentioned, a commemorative sermon on behalf of the Society was preached on Wednesday, the 9th of March last, at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, by His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, and on the following Sunday sermons were preached and collections taken up for the Jubilee Fund throughout the country.

From the commencement of the Jubilee movement in the mother country down to the latest accounts, your committee learn that the interest taken in it has gone on increasing, and that meetings of the most gratifying character have been held, and others are about being held, all to help on the good cause.

Your committee would now turn to our own humble Auxiliary, and lay before you a short outline of its history, before mentioning the steps which have been taken here to carry out the views of the parent committee, as expressed in their Jubilee circular.

The Nova Scotia Bible Society was formed on the 24th of November, 1814. Its origination was in a great measure due to the unwearied efforts of Lieutenant Colonel Addison, the militia