

building is erected. There is a moral grandeur about this Society which exists nowhere else to the same degree.

3. Look at the *Society as machinery* for putting a book into the hands of man everywhere, and say for what *other* book, besides the *Bible*, such a piece of mechanism at such a price would be kept in motion. If men were not *heartily* convinced that this book is what no other book is, and has claims which no other book has, would men consent, at such an immense expense of men and means, to keep this society in operation. To my mind, all the surroundings of this book go to prove the deep inwrought conviction of the Divine origin of the book.

The Hindoo has his Shaster, the Mahomedan has his Koran, the Roman Catholic his Missal, they value them, but *where* is there an organization like this to put *either* book into the hands of the world. The answer is—*No-where!*

Our enemies call us *Bibliolators*, and we are not ashamed of the *reproach*.

It is not, however, the *letter-press* but the *great truths* which the letters convey, that we meet periodically to do homage to, and stir up in each other a greater devotion to God's Written Word.

On these occasions God's people *proclaim* this book as God's Revelation of himself.

In proportion as men know God, they will love God, and men for God's sake. Shall we *profess* to love God and man, and not circulate the book of the *knowledge* of God?

The more I contemplate the origin of this Society the more I am convinced of its being a Divine suggestion to bless the world, whether you look at the *precise time*, or the *manner* of its origin, or its *character*. May, 1804, its birth-day, was a time of singular perturbation and distress. The Old World was groaning and travelling in pain. England, the home of its birth, was in the midst of a long and bloody war. The whole continent of Europe was one vast troubled sea, lashed by the passions of men let loose by *infidelity*.

At such a crisis a combination is formed, wholly unsectarian in its character, the plan to embrace the support of Christians at large; the concurrence of persons of every description who profess to regard the Scriptures as the *proper standard of faith*. Soon as the invitation was given, good men and true met, looked each other in the face, and saw at once a family likeness, and hailed each other as *brethren*. They organized. Now say, if in its *very organization*, such a heavy blow was not dealt at the sect spirit as it has never recovered. Its first President was Lord Teignmouth, then just returned from India, as Governor of Madras, appointed at the suggestion of Dr. Porteus, Bishop of London, whose chaplain, the Rev. J. Owen, was one of the first secretaries, in connection with Rev. Mr. Hughes, a dissenter from the Established Church, and Rev. Mr. Steinkopff, a German Lutheran.

Before the end of the next month the Society had the support of the Bishops of London, Durham, Exeter, and St. Davids, and soon after Salisbury, with Henry Thornton, Esq., as its Treasurer, all members of the Establishment. I ask, where else could such neutral ground be found,—*neutral, because common?* And what it was then, it has continued to this day, *nobody's* ground, because *everybody's* ground, where every man has so much as he can occupy, not a life-lease but a love-holding; *all tenants in common* who love the Bible above all books.

Another feature of the British and Foreign Bible Society deserves to be noticed. The character and rank of those who *rallied around its infancy*. It would seem as if the organization was so in keeping with the book, that one of its prophecies should apply to this Society. See Isai. xlix. 23. Among the first was the father of our Queen, the Duke of Kent, third son of George III. May we not suppose that her succession to the throne may be a providential acknowledgement on God's part of this honour of his Word.

The honour of its origin, the work of ministering to its growth, have been given to Great Britain. Why? Did no other country *need* the Bible? Yes,