

The issues necessarily follow the diminished receipts, and are affected by the same causes. The Home issues are :—Bibles, 641,902 ; New Testaments, 870,146 ; Portions, 275,033 ; in all, 1,787,081. The issues from foreign depôts are :—Bibles, 168,239 ; New Testaments, 613,536 ; Portions, 1,108,348 ; in all, 1,890,123—making a grand total of 3,677,204, showing a total decrease of 528,828 copies, more than five-sixths of which consist of New Testaments.

WORDS OF FAREWELL.

BY THE REV. JOHN SHARP, M.A., SECRETARY B. AND F. SOCIETY.

Mr. Sharp's summary of the Committee's instructions to its Agents is worthy of special attention, not only for its own sake, but as an expression of the views of the Society with reference to the duties and the policy of those engaged in the foreign field, and face to face with the problems of thought and action which await them there. He spoke as follows :—

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST,—This day wherein the Committee bid you, with all their heart, God-speed in your errand to further the translation and circulation of the Bible in distant lands, is for them, and they trust also for you, "a day of gladness," "a good day" (Esther ix. 19). It is a day of answers to prayer. It is an earnest of blessings to come.

By this leave-taking the Bible Society shares in the great sending forth of labourers into the mission field in which other societies are this year, by God's goodness, permitted to rejoice more than ever before. "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see." Prophets and kings in by-gone days saw no such accessibility in all the world for the written Word and the proclaimed Gospel as we now see. In unwonted numbers Christian men and women are going forth to preach to Jew and Gentile "the unsearchable riches of Christ." Gifts for teaching and gifts for healing are increasingly being devoted to preparing the way of the Lord. There is more of interest in, and of sympathy with, and of giving to, the great missionary enterprise. And each year sees the number of translations of God's Holy Word into the languages of the human family enlarged, the quality of previously-existing versions improved, and the tide of their diffusion throughout the world rise higher. Let these signs of God's active working around us, and of the fulfilment of His gracious promises to our race encourage you, dear brethren, as you go forth to take your part under Him in promoting the beneficent object of this Society. It was founded simply to encourage the wider circulation of the Holy Scriptures, in the full assurance that they are the inspired revelation of the will of God to all mankind, and that under the inner teaching of the Holy Spirit they are able to make "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." It is only in the belief that your own heart's experience has convinced you of this power in Holy Scripture, that the Committee send you forth to promote the diffusion of the same Word of Life among others. Such a conviction will keep you from feeling irksome and unimportant any details of your work which are needful for the successful promotion of its high spiritual aim.

The other cardinal feature in the Society's constitution is its unrestricted catholicity of co-operation with all those who are willing to promote its sole object. The Committee ask you to cultivate large-hearted and harmonious relations with all those who are ready to aid the Society in providing copies of the simple text of the Bible, and in circulating them among mankind. In the same spirit the Committee wish you to maintain cordial sympathy with the sister Bible Societies of Scotland and America, where you meet with their representatives in the field.

In regard to religions other than Christianity with which your spheres of duty may bring you in contact the Committee would have you always remember that the aim of this Society is to diffuse truth rather than to