

realize the obligations that the Bible and the God of the Bible have laid upon us to do what we can for the dissemination of that blessed Book which has been the source of light and joy to our own souls. I do not think the thanks of this meeting are due in any great degree to us, for we owe far more to the Society than the Society owes to us; and I have long felt that the different Churches of this land do not realize as they ought to do the obligations under which they lie to the Bible Society and the relationship we hold to it. Where would our ministry be without the Word, and where would our Churches be without the Bible Society? The British and Foreign Bible Society is the armoury of the Churches, and it would be just as foolish for Her Majesty to send a whole body of regiments to Africa or elsewhere without guns as to send ministers over the country without their Bibles. And where do we get the Bibles? When we want the Bible for any purpose—for Sunday schools or our day schools—we must come to the British and Foreign Bible Society. It is the great armoury of the Church; and if our ministers, and elders, and churchwardens, and others, realize that we are really depending on this Society for the weapons of our warfare with darkness and spiritual death, the Society will receive far more generous support from the country than it has hitherto done. I cannot understand clergymen of different Churches coming with begging appeals for a hundred Bibles or five hundred Testaments, or a thousand Portions of Scripture, and walking off with a load of books, never feeling that there is any obligation upon them to support the Society that gives so largely to the work. I cannot understand a man coolly coming to the Committee for a hundred Bibles, and then, when asked for a subscription a short time afterwards, saying, "Oh, there is plenty of money given to this Society; you need nothing from me." Every man has a personal obligation to this Society. Whether it be for the light God has given to our land, or the light given to our own soul, or whether it be for the obligation conferred by the Society upon different Churches, every minister, to whatever denomination he belongs, every Christian man, every Christian woman, every Sabbath school teacher, every scholar, owes a personal debt of gratitude; and I do not thank anybody for paying that off in mere words. I agree with the man who said, "I sympathise with the movement to the extent of £5." I like practical sympathy. I do not believe in the sympathy that evaporates into air. I believe that in supporting this Society we are enjoying a very great privilege, and fulfilling a very great responsibility. Can we forget, first of all, that the Word of God, in its written form, is the instrument by which the Holy Spirit works upon the soul of man? Whatever may be the eloquence of the intellect—from that of the reverend prelate down to the humblest Sunday school teacher—whatever be the intellectual power brought to bear upon the exposition of the Word, the Spirit of God uniformly acts by the Word itself. In the conversion of every soul, in the enlightenment of every mind, it is the written Word, the inspired, the authoritative and unerring testimony of the Third Person of the Godhead to the personal work of the Second and the everlasting love of the First—it is the written Word which is the Spirit's uniform instrument of implanting life in the soul of man; therefore, every man in whose soul that Word has implanted spiritual life is brought by the very fact of his being thus converted and quickened, under a personal responsibility to diffuse that Gospel which God had blessed to his own soul. I do not think that Christian Churches understand aright the responsibility which is imposed upon them in this respect. Can we forget that prayer in the opening of the 67th Psalm—"God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us"? Why? Is it that you and I are brought into personal union with Christ that we may enjoy happiness here, and go to heaven when we die? Is that all? No, my dear Christian friends; observe what follows: "That Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations." Therefore, the grand object for which God enlightens us is that I may enlighten my fellow men. The grand object for which He gives me His Word is that I may give that Word to my fellow sinners. The