

ple must be regarded as an important factor in the problem of civilization. And were there no other claim for the existence of the Bible Society, this one alone will be regarded by thinking people a sufficient reason for the support of this noble institution. These are far from being its strongest claims. There are reasons of much greater weight, as much greater as the moral transcends the intellectual; and still a higher phase of life is opened up to us by the book it circulates, and upon this last, the spiritual condition of man, does the permanency of his moral and intellectual attainments depend.

Without an authoritative criterion there cannot be a sound foundation for moral laws, and no guarantee for intellectual progress. No doubt nations have risen to a certain height, and others may rise, but they must fall back into a moral chaos, and their civilization break down beneath the load of corruption which besets humanity. The surface of the earth is strewn with the wrecks of the nations which have perished.

Such has been the case on this continent. Mexico rose to eminence in wealth, in commerce, in the conveniences of life, in luxuries—but she had no standard of morals. And who cannot recall the historian's description of that dreadful night when the boom of the monster gong fell upon the ears of the Spanish prisoners who knew that the first beams of the morning sun would witness their bodies stretched upon the stone of sacrifice—their breasts cut open, their hearts torn out, and, whilst still palpitating, thrown upon the burning altar. And yet a handful of hardy soldiers under Cortes blotted out an empire which had culminated in effeminacy and was stained with the blood of human sacrifices. In the old world Egypt embodied her once elevated thoughts in forms and symbols; bowed before them in adoration, and buried her centuries of civilization deeper than the lands which cover the monuments of her greatness. The kingdoms of Asia were once civilized and prominent among men, but now the stranger digs among the ruins of empires