

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

At a Special General Meeting of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, held on the 29th November, 1819;—Present, their Lordships the Bishops of London, Lincoln, Bangor, Carlile, Ely, Chester, Gloucester, Peterborough, and Landaff, Lord Kenyon, &c. &c.

The Secretary read from the Minute Book of the Committee for Correspondence with the Diocesan and District Committees, the following Report :

“ The Committee for Correspondence with the Diocesan and District Committees, having considered, with the attention due to its importance, the matter in reference under the resolution of the 2d of November, beg leave to submit to the General Board, that they find the stores of the Society amply furnished with defences against the designs of those who endeavour to propagate Atheism and Infidelity amongst us, as such designs have been heretofore carried on; but that of late the modes of attack having been for the most part changed, as well with regard to the parties assailed, as to the instruments of assault, a similar change in the means of defence is indispensibly required.

“ It is not therefore so much against the specious arts and arguments of the Sceptic, addressed as formerly to the middle and higher ranks, and to them almost exclusively, (though these are not to be lost sight of, in the measures to be adopted by the Board,) that we have at this time, principally to provide. The peculiar and more pressing danger of the moment arises from a diffusive circulation, amongst the lower classes, of short tracts, which, however otherwise to be despised, are but too well calculated, by bold fallacies and blasphemous assertions, to shake the faith of the ignorant and

uninformed, and by an unceasing repetition of attacks in daily and weekly numbers finally to overthrow it; and to these the attention of the Committee has been more particularly directed.

“ With respect to the first, the Committee are of opinion, that great good may be effected by an increased circulation of many valuable Tracts, now on the list of the Society's books, and that such increased circulation may reasonably be expected from the Christian zeal of members in every part of the country; but they also submit that it is desirable to promote a still wider dispersion of these and similar pieces,—by a reduction of the present prices.—by an immediate notice to District Committees of such reduction—and by Special Meetings or otherwise, the most extended distribution in their power.

“ Your Committee, however, apprehend, that when all this has been done, and all these means have been most actively and usefully applied, much will still remain to be done; and the most effectual means of counteraction will still be found wanting; as, in the opinion of your Committee, the alarming evils of this frightful crisis can only be successfully met, in many cases, by the prompt application of remedies, perhaps as novel as the mischief, which calls for them; adapting themselves to the varying aspects, under which it may from time to time appear; and especially so far accommodated to the parties, for whose benefit they are designed, as to insure their acceptance, and give the most reasonable promise of relief.

“ With remedies of this description the Society's stores, as might naturally be expected, are at present unprovided; and it is feared, must, from its character and constitution, in a great degree, ever remain so, inas-