

N.B.—During the erection of the new building, business will be carried on at No. 48 King Street West, formerly occupied by Mulsons Bank.

JOHN HARVIE,  
*Permanent Secretary Bible Society.*

A. F. MCGREGOR,  
*Secretary Tract Society.*

Bible and Tract Depository,  
Toronto, Sept. 7th, 1885.

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## ANNIVERSARY SERMON.

ON BEHALF OF THE UPPER CANADA BIBLE SOCIETY.

*Preached by the Rev. H. B. Ridgeway, D.D., of Evanston, Illinois, in the Metropolitan Church, Tuesday Evening, 19th May, 1885.*

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.”—1 COR. iii. 14.

I remember to have read a statement to the effect that on one occasion Mr. Wilberforce invited Mr Pitt to accompany him to hear the Rev. Richard Cecil preach. Mr. Cecil was at the time one of the acknowledged leaders of the evangelical party of the Church of England, and he no doubt preached one of his most spiritual and edifying sermons. As the two great men walked away from the church, Mr. Wilberforce asked Mr. Pitt what he thought of the sermon. The reply was, “I understood it no more than if he had talked in an unknown tongue.” Here was a remarkable admission. Mr. Pitt, then in the fulness of his powers and fame, who was moulding all Europe by his diplomacy, was incapable, by his own admission, of understanding and appreciating a pure, simple evangelical sermon. And so it is. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him,” etc.

Human nature is represented in the new text under three aspects—the natural man, the carnal mind, and the spiritual man. The first might mean man in his mental or rational nature without regard to moral condition; the second man as depraved; and the last man renewed by the Holy Ghost. As, however, the scriptures uniformly consider human nature as never separated from its moral or ethical condition, they always imply that the natural man, in the absence of a positive change of heart, is under the taint and dominion of sin. By the phrase then, the natural man, we may understand, human nature unregenerate and unsaved. Of such it is affirmed “he receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.”

By the expression, “the things of the Spirit of God,” we are to understand the distinctive doctrines of divine revelation; those truths, especially, which centre in and group about the work of grace. While the fact of God’s existence may not be one of these, yet the mode of his existence as Father, Son and Holy Spirit may be considered as a distinct teaching of the Spirit. So also the personality and work of Christ, the union in him of the divine and human natures, the redemption for mankind accomplished by his death and resurrection, and the personality, divinity and work of the Holy Spirit as his agency is experienced in the human soul when he enlightens the mind, renews the heart, witnesses to adoption and seals the believer in Jesus as a child of God and an heir of eternal life. These and the doctrines directly relative to them the natural man *receiveth* not; i.e., he does not believe them; they are not to him living verities. If we speak to him of the morals