

view of the state of mankind before the promulgation of the revealed will of God, I behold a scene of darkness and uncertainty; there were a few who, by the faint glimmerings of unguided reason, could infer the immateriality and immortality of the human mind, grounding their axioms on its amazing capabilities and unbounded desires; but the evidence though strong was not by the many considered as demonstrated; though "Plato reasoned well" he convinced but few; even the Jews themselves, who were favored above "all the families of the earth," (vide Amos, iii, 2.) were not agreed about this most momentous and essential truth.— Though the dispensation with which they were favored, was the most perfect in its day, it was only "the shadow of things to come." (Heb. x, 1.) the substance of which is the Gospel by which "life and immortality are brought to light." Even after the institution of the Christian religion, the promulgation of the Gospel, and the acute and demonstrative reasonings of the Apostles, what gross darkness rested on the minds of the people, occasioned principally by the Scriptures being withheld from them. Wickliffe was the first in our Mother Country who translated the sacred Volume into the vernacular tongue, (in 1380,) but printing not being then found out, but little publicity could be given to so rich a treasure. Tindal I believe was the first who printed the Scriptures, and he durst not do it at home, but went over to the continent, and was hunted by his enemies and brought home and burnt in Smithfield; and after this blessed Book had struggled through the opposition of bigotry, it fell into the hands of infidelity and envious speculation: one condemned it as absurd, without proving it so, from a spirit of retaliation; its interdicts were too strict, and its mandates too imperative, for the ungodly licentious infidel: the curious speculator tried it by the test of chronology, chemistry and Philosophy, and the more it

was analyzed the more precious it appeared. Having silenced many and baffled all its enemies, it came forward to the people under the august sanction of King James; but still it was but seldom seen; it came into various parishes, and was chained to the reading desk, and the people had reference to the divine prisoner only at stated times.

The value set on the Scriptures, has been so great, that some have been known to give a load of hay for a single page: and considering its intrinsic worth, as being truth without obscurity or error, and truth of the most important kind, 'tis not to be wondered at. But, Sir, how are we favored in the present day: we live in days of candour, when party distinction is lost, when sectarian opposition is absorbed by Christian charity, when all are uniting and assimilating into one spirit and making a simultaneous effort for the distribution of the Bible, and that without comment. Who could have anticipated at the accession of the present King of France, that a Bible Society would have been instituted in Paris? but this is the case. Long did the Bible act on the defensive, but now, behold it is assuming a formidable appearance, it is invading the enemy in his own country, and even in his Asiatic concealment. The cloud of Gospel promises is now hovering over Canada, and ready to discharge its glorious contents on these Provinces.

Acting in my official capacity, (which I would mention with all becoming humility and without that spirit that tickles the Pharisee's heart,) as a British Missionary, I have to penetrate these woods, and disseminate those religious truths elicited by the Gospel, in my excursions I oft find the people assembled in groups discoursing on the heterogeneous doctrines promulgated amongst them by the various sectarians that occasionally preach to them, uniformly appealing to the Scriptures, like the noble Bereans of old, to see whether those things are so.