

are clever men who tell us that Milton was inspired in his way, and that Shakespeare was also inspired in some of his works. Now I do not believe it—they were clever men, but were not inspired ; inspiration belongs to the Book of God alone.

BISHOP RYLE, of *Liverpool*.

WILBERFORCE AND THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

Many well-known names occur in connection with this Society's early proceedings, and amongst them that of Wilberforce occupies a conspicuous place. His diary records small parties at his house, on "Bible Society formation." "Hughes, Rayner, and Grant breakfasted with me." In 1803, he writes, "A few of us met at Mr. Hardcastle's counting-house on so dark a morning that we discussed by candlelight and resolved on the establishment of the Bible Society." This item occurs in his accounts, "Mr. Charles, and schools in Wales, £21." In 1815, he left the death-bed of his beloved Henry Thornton to attend the annual meeting at Brighton, when it was said, "as he entered the room he seemed so pale and fatigued, it was feared he would scarcely be able to speak ; but he no sooner began than his countenance lighted up and he became animated and impressive."—"Life of William Wilberforce," by Dr. Sloughton.

PORTIONS OF AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE SEVENTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE MASSACHUSETTS BIBLE SOCIETY.

BY THE REV. ALEXANDER M'KENZIE, D.D.

* * * It is truly written that the word of the Lord endureth for ever. It is also written that the word of God is not bound. Its permanence is not that of the mountain which presses down upon the plain, and remains the same from century to century. It is rather the permanence of the tree, which keeps its identity and holds its place, yet sends its roots deeper down and its branches further out, and multiplies its leaves for the delight and refreshment of man. Rather it is the permanence of the man who retains his personality, yet, if he be manly, increases in wisdom and love, grows in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, and makes to himself a greater power for good.

If we regard the Bible in its relation to the necessities of men we shall mark its increased value. I speak especially of our English Bible when I say that men never needed its instruction more than now, and were never so much shut up to it. The truths which it was given to impart cannot lose their importance. In the quickened activity of our time their interest cannot but be enlarged. Men are searching the unseen world they live in, and sending their questions through the spaces where we see no inhabitant. Of God, and duty, and destiny they are inquiring. The whence and whither of life they ask to know. The chief end of man and the way to his chief well-being they are seeking to find. Whatever the motive or the spirit, these sublime themes are diligently, painfully pursued. Meanwhile the voices of nature grow more confused, and the voices of teachers more divided. The oracles have grown dumb. How far this is warranted we need not now pause to consider.