

of the one, who does not take care to enforce the other. On the first of these days, I went within the barrier of one particular section of the Church of Christ; and on the next, I soared above these barriers into the amplitude of the Church of the First-born, breathed its pure air, basked in its sunshine, and enjoyed the brotherhood and liberty of those whose names are written in heaven. On the first day, I stood before the witnesses I have alluded to, and said, "I believe in the principles of Congressional Independence;" on the second, with a mightier swell of the bosom, and a loftier utterance of the tongue, I said, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, and in the communion of Saints." Nearly half a century since that time has rolled over me, and I am here with the shades of evening gathering around me, not to speak of the good that I have done to the Society, but of the benefit I have received from it. Like most young men, I set out in life with a character compounded of prejudices and prejudices; but in the communion of such men as the Rev. Edward Barn—a name ever to be cherished by this Society—and subsequently in the communion of the Rev. Thomas Moseley, late Rector of St. Martin's, and then in the society of the venerable Dr. Marsh, now sitting at my side, and still in communion with my excellent friend, the Rev. John C. Miller, the present Rector of St. Martin's, I have dropped my prejudices, but retain my principles. I will take the liberty to allude to the first Bible Meeting it was my privilege to attend. Of course I was very young, and had all the ardour and rapture of youth in seeing what was novel. The Meeting was not held in Exeter Hall; we had not at that time emerged into so much publicity; but it was in the Freemasons' Tavern. Here, thought I, is a meeting of men of all creeds in religion, men of all parties in politics, and all grades in society, and it appears to have something about it of the solemnity of a funeral and the merriment of a wedding; in fact, there was something of both; and it struck me that we had met together at the burial of bigotry, and, by a very strange conjunction of circumstances, at the marriage of truth and love. There was one peculiarity in that Meeting which happily does not exist in the present. There were ample folds of broadcloth, but no costly folds of silk and satin; abundance of hats, but not one humble bonnet veared its form: no feathers waved, no ribbons streamed; for, with oriental delicacy and monkish proddery, that sex which is now the grace, ornament, and efficiency of our Meetings and our Society, were all excluded, except a few heroines, who, venturing into the gallery, threw furtive glances on the proceedings, and went forth animated with a desire that gallantry should take its place by the side of charity, and that our efforts should be shared and participated in by them. And since that illustrious friend of the Bible Society, now grown grey in its service, Charles Stokes Dudley, has marshalled the energies of the female friends of the Society, they have to be spoken of with gratitude and affection, as the most important agency connected with its operations. But to go up from the era to the platform—and what a platform! I am not going to look back on past times with regret, considering whom we had, and whom we have lost, when I look around upon those who are occupying seats on this platform. When I see the nobleman who at present occupies the Chair, and presides over, not merely the business of this morning, but of the Society, had I tears I would wipe them away, and bless God that there have been found those who are willing to be "baptized for the dead," and worthy of them. But on that platform, as to-day, there were peers of the realm, dignitaries of the Church, and members of the Council. There was Vansittart, afterwards Lord Bexley, the warm and eloquent defender of the Society, and author of an able pamphlet, which floated over the land with that beautiful sentiment upon which the friends of the Society had ever acted, "If we cannot reconcile all opinions, let us endeavour to unite all hearts." There was Grant, who always lent his influence to the Society. There was Thomson, a name dear to every eye with any feelings of philanthropy in his soul. There was Macaulay—father of the most eloquent of our English historians. There also was Stephen, father of the present Professor of History at Cambridge. What galaxy then surrounded the chair of the noble President Lord Teignmouth! There was the eloquent and accomplished Owen, the charm of every assembly whom he addressed; there was the silver-tongued Hughes, the father, as we have been told, of the Society; and there was the venerable man who sits by my side on this platform, Dr. Steinkopf, and the only member of the original Committee present at this Meeting. It is most delightful for me to reflect upon those names, and to remember that I have been privileged to act with them. But there is one name I distinctly remember being announced from the Chair, the very sound of which in an instant brought up a thunder of applause that shook Freemasons' Tavern to its very foundation, and made even the pictures of the Royal personages that adorn its walls vibrate with sympathy—it was the name of Wilberforce. There he stood, with his laurels green upon him, which he had lately won as the liberator of Africa. His diminutive, and, to all outward appearance, insignificant frame, seemed instinct in every muscle, as well as every limb, with life; and the intelligence with which he wielded the great cause of negro emancipation through twenty long years, beamed in his eye, and all the benevolence which he carried to the cause sat on his countenance, and it seemed as if a glory from heaven irradiated his brow. I remember, and shall remember to the latest period of my existence, one part of the speech which Mr. Wilberforce delivered on that occasion, so characteristic of the man, and of the Society which he rose to advocate. Alluding to the treaty of alliance which had been formed between the King of France and the King of Spain, the former rejoicing in the act, exclaimed, "The Pyrenees are no more!" So Wilberforce, at the top of his shrill, but musical voice, alluding to the fact of the formation of the Bible Society, and the sinking

of our prejudices, exclaimed, "The Pyrenees are no more! the Pyrenees are no more!" Would that that illustrious man were present to-day, with all his catholicity of feeling, with all his philanthropy, with all his wisdom, and with all his eloquence. Perhaps, unseen by scene, he is present; and who would not say, "Enjoy thy repose, illustrious man! thy name is still fragrant, and thy example is animating the minds of multitudes, who are still endeavoring to break off the shackles of slavery from the body as well as from the mind." Just for a moment or two, let me refer to the Society. In the first place, it has solved the problem never proposed, perhaps never thought of, from the commencement of English history down to the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, whether it is possible to have unity without uniformity; co-operation without incorporation; practical working without heretical latitudinarianism. And this has taught the bigots of all churches, all countries, all future ages, that there may be freedom of thought, expression, and action, but all combined with union, among those that differ, without subverting the throne of truth, relaxing the bonds of society, or disorganising any Church in existence. This is a great lesson for the world—a lesson for all time, and will go through all ages. We have been told that the principle upon which this Society is founded is calculated to disorganise society; that it is a vast quicksand; that it will crumble to pieces by its own weight. Now, has it? Where are the prophets? Where are their anticipations? The prophets are dead, and their predictions, like the leaves of Sybil, are scattered to the winds. But where is the society? Here, in all its integrity, and bearing full proof, not merely of its past success, but its present usefulness, and giving promise of yet much greater glory in the future. This Society has done much towards repelling the rising tide of Popery. I confess that I did not partake of the panic of many people on this subject. It was said by Sheridan, in relation to a corrupt ministry, "Give it the prerogative of the Crown, the keys of the Treasury, a vernal house of Commons, but give me the liberty of the press, and I will explode it all." Now I will say something like this of Popery—Give it a triple crown, give it all its claims of keys and swords, give it the Inquisition, give it that detestable grant to Maynooth, give it a Cardinal Wiseman, canon law, and a hierarchy, and with that little instrument, the Bible, with freedom for its universal circulation, and, by the blessing of God, I will effect its complete destruction. With the Bible at the low price of tenpence, with education going out, as I hope it will go out, over the length and breadth of the country, on Bible principles, and that Bible in every man's hand, and every man taught to read it, to understand, and to practise it, I think we may ally some of our fears about the aggressions of Popery. * * * But not to trespass more than another minute on the attention of the Meeting, I will just turn from the past to the future. I am full of hope, not, however, I must confess, unmixed with fear. In taking a retrospective view, we have more reason to feel humiliated that we have done so little, and not done it better, rather than elevated by the thought that we have done so much. The next generation—the present will soon be off the stage—will see greater things than have yet been witnessed. Let none of us, however, forget that a time of success is a time of danger. When an instrument becomes mighty, there is a tendency to repose upon itself: and it becomes all the more important, therefore, that we should not forget our sole dependences must ever be upon the Most High. Go on, then, I would say; go on, my country, to support this and kindred Institutions; go on to guard the sanctity of thy Sabbath from desecration; go on to circulate God's word, and exhibit it in all thy conduct; go on to consecrate thy power, thy commerce, thy wealth, thy science, thy art, to Him from whom all thy greatness proceeds, and then never will come the time when thou shalt be seen, like ancient Tyre, a dreary and barren rock for fishermen to dry their nets upon; but thou wilt be preserved in thy strength and thy majesty, and be foremost among the nations that shall bring their glory and their honour into the new Jerusalem, the most munificent contributor to the splendour of the millennium, and the largest and happiest sharer of its ineffable felicity.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL supported the Resolution. I am present at this Meeting partly in an official character. I come here as President of the Scottish Bible Society. The meeting may perhaps be aware that at one time between the English and Scottish Bible Societies there existed certain differences of opinion, which led to difference of operation. Scotchmen are very apt to adopt some separate line of action in order to show their national independence. But I believe these two Societies have long been in a position of earnest co-operation; while I dare say that our English brethren will acknowledge that we have done something in the great work of Bible circulation. I am anxious to explain, however, that I am not present at this Meeting simply in my official character; I come urged also by personal feelings and affections. The fact has been referred to, in the course of the addresses which have been delivered, that the original institution of this Society had been opposed as being of the nature of an unprincipled coalition. Perhaps, on this subject, I shall be supposed to entertain a bias toward coalition. I confess that I have a great bias for coalition of the kind which I see around me. I am not one of those who would depreciate the importance of the labours of those good men, whether in ancient or modern times, who have set themselves to define within stricter limits their own views of God's truth, so that they might gather around them those among their own countrymen, or the nations at large, who accorded in their views. I am not one of those who would depreciate the importance of separate religious communities, apart altogether from the question, whether or no these forms of worship or of discipline are in accordance with the word of God. But I must confess, that at times I fear some individuals are