

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

ABSTRACT OF THE REPORT, 1891-92.

The Committee meet the members of the Society at this anniversary with many grounds for thanksgiving, and one for vigilance, if not for anxiety.

The eighty-eighth year of the Society's history has finished its course. A "never-failing Providence" has, throughout, graciously kept the Society from disaster, and has opened to it many a door for successful advance. Though it be still "tried to the uttermost" in the furnaces of friendly or of hostile criticism, the Bible is the book for which men everywhere ask as they ask for no other. Thirteen thousand copies of it, in whole or in part, are asked at this Society's hands for every working-day throughout the year. Versions of some part of it in over seventy languages last year claimed the careful attention of the Editorial Committee. Nine of these languages find a place for the first time among those privileged to convey to men in their own tongue the Gospel message of the Most High.

The total circulation of the year in Bibles, Testaments and detached books of Scripture only falls short of four millions by 10,785 copies.* It shows an advance of 62,680 copies on the issues announced in 1891; an advance of 196,952 on those of 1890; and an advance of 1,050,670 on those of 1882, ten years ago. The advance is in this respect specially satisfactory in that it is due to increased issues from depôts abroad. They reached 2,118,197 copies.

The copies sent forth by the Society since 1804 have been 131,844,796.

The issues of the "Penny" Testament since its first appearance in July, 1884, have been 5,000,668 copies. The disparity between the cost of these Testaments and the price at which they are sold has of late been considerably reduced, and the large-type Gospels at a halfpenny are still further mitigating the loss by taking the place of these Testaments.

Financial relief in some form has become a pressing necessity. For three successive years the story told at these meetings has had its one disappointing feature in the inadequacy of the year's receipts to meet the year's expenses. Three years ago the deficit announced was £13,508; two years ago it was £15,488 more; last year it was £14,434 more. The warning note then sounded brought in some welcome special donations, but it has had only a small appreciable effect on the aggregate Free Contributions received from the Auxiliaries at home and abroad. The legacies paid within the year have come to £23,833, but that is less by £6,320 than the amount in the previous year. From all sources the

* The issues have been:—

	Bibles.	Testaments	Portions.	Total.
From London for Home and Abroad.....	648,074	669,686	472,133	1,779,893
From Depôts Abroad.....	175,239	624,526	1,399,557	2,199,322
Total.....	823,313	1,294,212	1,871,690	3,989,215