

cedented in the annals of all modern religious enterprises.

An estimate may be formed of the success of this cause, when it is recollected that in half a century the British and Foreign Bible Society has issued forty-three millions of copies of the sacred scriptures—that the Bible has been translated into one hundred and forty-eight different languages and dialects—upwards of twenty of which had never been reduced either to an alphabet or to any grammatical rule, and that by this means the word of God has been rendered accessible to no less than *six hundred millions* of the human family!—there being scarcely a kingdom, a language, or a country on the earth, in which this greatest of modern institutions has not been doing its work of evangelization. The above facts and figures prove, that the organization has become one of no ordinary magnitude, and that the blessing of God has most signally followed its every effort, for the circulation of his own word.

If the gospel has not been “*preached unto all nations for a witness against them*,” it is manifest that, at this moment, it is being read, in almost every nation under heaven; and if the British and Foreign Bible Society should continue its great work for another half century, it will have placed the word of life within the reach of every man on the face of the earth!—thus fulfilling the command of our Saviour, and leaving every man without excuse. Such is the object it proposes, and who does not bid it “*God speed*”? Is there any man deserving the name of Protestant, who would be daring enough, or base enough, to lift his testimony against, or to withhold his support, from an Institution so purely scriptural and so purely evangelical? The cause is the cause of God and the cause of man; and every man who loves God, and would save his fellow-man, must bid it “*God speed*.”

We subjoin two of the many eloquent addresses delivered at the Jubilee Meeting of the Bible Society, in Exeter Hall.

THE REV. J. A. JAMES said, I have been invited to this Jubilee Feast as one of the earliest, and therefore one of the oldest, and I claim, also, to be one of the warmest, friends of the British and Foreign Bible Society. After a period of forty-seven years spent in promoting its interests, with something of the homage of a lover and the fidelity of a servant, it is no injustice on my part to claim the distinction, nor any usurpation to wear it. I can assure the assembly, that, among the highest objects of my desire, and what I consider to be one of the richest glories that can lie upon my humble brow, is to be regarded as one of the patriarchs of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Birmingham was once designated by that great philosophic statesman, Edmund Burke, “the toy-shop of Europe,” and he might also have added, its armoury. But Birmingham has other things to boast of besides the manufacturing of jewels for the fair, or arms for the brave: it has the distinction of giving birth to John Rogers, the proto-martyr in the reign of Mary. It is therefore meet that Birmingham should erect perhaps the most appropriate monument to his memory, by being the first provincial town in the kingdom to perceive the advantages of this noble Institution, and to organize in its support. It may be permitted, perhaps, to one like myself, who has almost reached the period of senility, to be a little garrulous, perhaps a little egotistical, on the present occasion. It is one of the most precious, and therefore cher-

ished recollections of my humble history, that the very day after I was ordained to the pastoral office according to the rites of Protestant Dissenters, I attended the first Public Meeting in the town of Birmingham for the formation of an Association in support of the Bible Society. On the first day I bowed with reverence at the altar of truth, and pledged myself before God and many witnesses to preach the faith as I understood it; and on the next day, with no less reverence, I bowed before the altar of charity, and pledged myself before other witnesses to be a minister of love. It was the conviction of my youth, and which still cleaves to me in maturer age, that the chiefest homage that can be paid to truth is to offer it the sacrifice of love; and indeed he is but an imperfect minister 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 Congregational Independency;” 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 principles and prejudices; but in the communion of such men as the Rev. Edward Burn—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 reared its form: no feathers waved, no ribbons streamed; for, with oriental delicacy and monkish prudery, 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 Thornton, a name dear to every one 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 Free-masons’ 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 sense, 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