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ANNIVERSARY SERMON ON BEHALF OF THE UPPER CANADA  
BIBLE SOCIETY,

PREACHED BY THE REV. GEO. M. MILLIGAN, B.A.,

*In Old St. Andrew's Church, Toronto, on Sunday, May 14th, 1882.*

II Timothy iii. 16-17. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

Two renderings are given of this verse. The one is that all God-inspired writings are profitable. This explanation of the passage has been objected to on the ground that there would be no need to tell us so simple a matter. We, however, must remember that many writings professed to be inspired of God which were not so, and the test by which the Word of God could be distinguished from "cunningly devised fables" was that the book given by God to men was profitable for the interests of true godliness.

The other rendering of the text is the one given in our version. It teaches that Scripture in all its parts is God-inspired, and is in consequence useful in promoting piety. The teaching of the text then is not that a book professing to be sacred is useful, and is therefore to be received as God-inspired, but that books God-inspired are useful for pious ends. Men are not to receive a book as given them by God because they perceive it to be spiritually quickening and edifying, and to reject it as uninspired when they do not. A God-inspired book is to be regarded as useful for "doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness," whether we perceive it to be so or not. Nay, we are to regard it as our duty to so live and meditate, and pray that we may come into those frames of mind that will appreciate what is written in the Word of God, which to the carnal and careless is hidden from them.

In short, two views obtain regarding the meaning of the text. The one is that the religious utility of the book is the test of its inspiration; the

other than the inspiration of the book imposes upon men the obligation to find it religiously profitable. The latter is the view we regard it as teaching.

The text tells us two essential things about the Bible which it is essential for us to know, and which we regard eminently proper for us to meditate upon on such an occasion as the present. It informs in what respects and for what end the Bible is profitable to men.

In meditating upon how the Bible is useful to us as set forth in the text we in fact are led to examine with greater or less brevity, what are its essential features or qualities. The text gives the Bible's own account of its character and purpose.

I. We shall consider in the first place the account the Bible gives of its own character.

1. It is preeminently a *teaching* book. It makes wise the simple. It instructs man regarding things he must know if it would be well with him. Such a book is a necessity and not a superfluity. It contains not condiments and luxuries for the feelings or fancy, but the bread and the water of life for the well-being of the soul. The disclosures of the Bible are not Chinese lanterns to add to the lustre of a festive occasion, but lighthouses upon dangerous coasts, to guide the seaman in his voyage to the desired haven. Scriptural doctrines are not intended to furnish entertainment for curious speculation or idle fancies, but truth to make our hearts strong and noble, and our actions just and fruitful. That it is a necessity and not a luxury its own account of itself amply shows. It is to us what the sword is to the soldier, the lamp to the benighted traveller, bread and water to the famished and thirsty body. It reveals truth, and truth is always *necessary* to men. "It is profitable for doctrine." "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."

Were all things one colour the eyes would be without enlightenment. Such is the condition of man by nature as regards spiritual truth. "All have gone astray." There is none righteous, as regards what God reckons righteous, not one. And to have only one colour is to have none. Hence the law of God, being unlike man's, brings the knowledge of sin. Man's thoughts are not those of God. Hence when God makes known to us his laws they enlighten the eyes. The most effective way to show that deformity is unsightly, is to place it beside beauty; and that unbelief is a weak and untrue thing or rather nothing, a nonentity, is to obtain the best description of it you can, and read it along with the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. True affirmation is "the besom of destruction" that will sweep away all refuges of lies, of false negation. The sunlight hides the stars more surely than any night of clouds. The bell ringing in the true is the sure death-knell ringing out the false.

2. The Bible, because profitable for teaching, is to sinful man in the first place profitable for rebuke. It gives such an exhibition of the character of God that it is the most powerful method of convincing sinners of the error of their ways. It gives "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God," being "the testimony of Jesus Christ," so that sinners are left without excuse, having no cloak for their sins. The Scriptures are profitable for teaching, and in consequence for reproof. Its truths alone can beget "repentance towards God." It exhibits the beauties of holiness in such a clear light that all but wilfully blind eyes must see and mourn their own moral deformity.

It is not in man who walketh to direct his own steps in the way of righteousness. The natural man, it is true, is far from perceiving this to be the case, and so far indeed that the characteristic truths of the Bible are by him regarded as foolishness. Men will pursue for years with minute and exact investigation their researches in the domain of physical science, who would regard as many weeks given to careful thought upon Scripture doctrine as an

evidence either of mental weakness or delusion. Men who make the speculative reason the test of all truth, hold in derision those who decide the most momentous interests of life on the sure testimony of God. Superficial moralists bar all inquiry as to what is profitable in doctrine and reproof by affirming that a good, moral life, as the world understands this, is all that God demands of men. Others deny the need of any profit from Scripture in the way of teaching and warning by advocating that "the one thing needful" in all religions is that men be sincere in what they either think or do. Is it necessary even to say that men's lives must be affected by the ideas they entertain of the objects they worship? "Do men gather grapes of thorns," or hope to find refreshing, grateful waters, flowing from impure and bitter fountains? Will honesty be found in a *sincere worshipper* of Mercury, the god of thieving? Would you expect to find in a *devotee* of Mars, the God of war, a valuable accession to a society for the promotion of peace among the nations of the earth? Would you be hopeful regarding any reformation that a house of refuge might effect in the morals of one who is *by conviction* a priestess of Venus? How could you by any possibility manage to make a genuine believer in the cruel Moloch apprehend as true the doctrine—"Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy"? A truce then to this empty talk about sincerity being the essence of religion. It depends upon what men are sincere about, whether their sincerity be an evil or a blessing.

Nay, further, this unthinking plea that sincerity is all in all in religion, and in consequence that doctrine is nothing, and that reproof of error has no meaning or place, would compel us to regard Isaiah, and Paul, and John, aye, and our Lord also, as persons of contracted minds, who made "mountains of mole hills," and also, whilst aiming to win men's ears in order to guide and cheer them by heavenly harmonies, spread among them "jarring dissonances," and who whilst affecting to promote unity among men have sown plentifully in the world what has brought forth the fruit of "dividing asperities." Verily all these have sent not peace but a sword into the earth.

Unlike the character of man, and alas! the tragic history of our species, are melancholy demonstrations of the necessity to men of God-inspired writings, "profitable for doctrine and reproof," especially when we consider that they are the message to us regarding the person and salvation of Jesus Christ. The Scriptures are "the testimony of Christ." "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." Who by any skill or hardihood of mere human searching could have found out this indispensable doctrine? In the Scriptures alone is "the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." Without it we would perish for *lack of knowledge*.

And the first effect of such a knowledge upon all minds who receive it is to beget *godly sorrow* for sin, is to convince us that our ways are far other than God's ways, that even our righteousness are but "filthy rags," and that when we have done our best it becometh us to say, "We are unprofitable servants." All true teaching, that is all true widening of their horizon, humbles men. The history of all true discovery in the sphere of mind or matter demonstrates this. Men deepen in humility as they rise in knowledge. And humility in spiritual things does not consist merely in the consciousness of littleness and finitude, but also of guilt. It is not the feeling of mere creatureliness, but that I ought to have done what I have not, and ought not to have done what I have—the sense that God has given us the awful liberty of obeying or disobeying Him. So that spiritual teaching yields its first dividend in the way of spiritual profit in the shape of reproof, in convincing the sinner of the error of his way.

3. Scripture, however, reveals to us our undoneness, not that we may sink into despair, far less rest satisfied with a surface healing of our spiritual sores. That which is lame is not to be turned out of the way. Rather is it

to be healed. Conviction is to gendur not perdition, but correction. It points out our real ill that we may call in the help that can deliver us out of it. True conviction of our state before God assures us that not any mere reformation of our habits and lives will suffice to reach and remove our moral malady. Would we have our hurt healed not "slightly" but rightly, our prayer must be—"Create for me a clean heart, O God." This is *thorough* dealing in things spiritual. The Bible is unique in the dark disclosures it makes of human sin and misery, in the righteousness God requireth of men which is far other than that of the Pharisees, and yet in the mighty invitation with which it beseeches men to become partakers of God's righteousness. Is it profitable for reproof, being quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, "and in being a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart?" It is that "correction" may also by it be brought up for our profit, for "blessed are the poor in spirit for their's is the kingdom of heaven." To what man will God look? To him that is of a humble and contrite spirit. To him experiencing the profit of "reproof" cometh also that of "correction," for good things, like evil, come not to men singly. By conviction of what God is and of what we ourselves are by nature, are we prepared to appreciate what deliverance from the guilt and power of sin means.

The Word of God is profitable for Doctrine inasmuch as it teaches us "repentance towards God, and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ." It reveals our ills to us in such a manner that no one but God can avail to heal our hurt and to correct our errors. We must become in a very literal sense the children of God ere we can do aught aright either in this world or the world to come. We are profitably convicted and corrected when we are sincerely persuaded that without Christ we can do *nothing*, neither *to-day* nor forever. "This is the *record* that God hath given of His Son."

"He that believeth *hath* everlasting life." The child of God *begins* the heavenly character *here*. In earthly conditions he is called upon to be a true son of God "in thought, word, and deed." For this end he requires a guide-book to strengthen him in meekness, and enlighten him in darkness and perplexity. The Word of God is adequate to supply this requisite.

4. It is also profitable for "discipline in righteousness." What righteousness? Ceremonial? No. This we shall never believe for the honour of the Bible itself, although the whole earth should become enamoured of candles, and incense, and ecclesiastical millinery. Let people love these, as by use and wont they may have become endeared to them, provided they do not idolize them as ends, or even as indispensables in religion. The righteousness which the Bible would discipline us in is something far other and more lasting than dress and genuflections—something that will be with us when these are far from us—how far! Often does biography sadden us when we think of the melancholy services great minds have been bound to by an inappreciative world. Indignant grief takes possession of us when the practices of many show their belief to be that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for instruction in ceremonial righteousness." What a heresy! How much is a man better than a candle, or robe, aye or than ecclesiastical polity even?

It is not even secular righteousness in the technical sense in which the Bible profitably disciplines us.

It may be wise in sense-bound men to welcome the Bible and religion by observing that they promote temporal well-being. They, however, receive them only as being useful for earthly ends, which are the only ends they can see and live for. Qualities of mind and heart are promoted by religion which it is easy to see have an important bearing upon worldly prosperity. All other things being equal, a religious community is, in virtue of being such, temporarily a thriving one.

Religion enjoins upon men thrift, perseverance, honesty, and thorough-

ness in all work you undertake—all very vital elements in worldly success. So marked is the bearing of religion upon secular well-being, that some have advocated its support and spread in the world on that ground merely. "It promotes," say they, "industry, and benevolence, and order in the world." It is clearly an article of their creed that "godliness is profitable for the life that now is." Any further assertion about godliness we cannot and should not expect an earthite to make. How can he make more? Regarding him the inquiry can pertinently be made which was groundlessly asked concerning Job—"Doth he serve God for nothing?" Has not the Bible, already been by some regarded as a function of the state like statutes and constables, and its support advocated solely on this ground. What a poor drill-book has the Bible been reduced to by the blindness and selfishness of state-craft and priest-craft.

The Scriptures exhibit to us an everlasting righteousness to be started here into life and action in the hearts and doings of men. It is this fact that makes life real and earnest. It has been said that "the central part of us is the sense of the Infinite Nature of Duty." This sense when it operates aright informs us that right-doing is high as heaven, and wrong-doing deep as hell; that even now the judgment is taking place in men. The judgment-day for each of us will simply manifest what is *being done in these our earthly days*. This truth believed in as it ought would be the death of all "greatest happiness" theories of virtue, and antinomian theories of grace; and the life to the declaration—"all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable"—"for discipline in righteousness."

Amid the many isms that hurt, and distract, and paralyze the Church, there is one of dire and deep prevalence in our time, that of *somnambulism*. The gulf fixed between right and wrong, the endeavour is made to bridge by plausible theories of morals, so that much darkness and deadness involve moral distinctions. Men too largely take to religion as a moral opiate or emotional stimulant as the need may dictate or the humour suggest.

Religion does not exist to furnish pleasure and soothing for men. The Church of God is neither a restaurant nor a literary club. The truths of the Bible are not to be ours by dreaming about them, neither are we in anywise to so relate ourselves to the ordinances and doctrines of the Bible as to imagine that, elevator-fashion, we are to attain to what is high in the sight of God without the use of our own feet. It is true the saints of God, whether Jew or Gentile, are made to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." It is, however, no less true, that the vantage ground given them in Christ is not intended to be a secure retreat for indolence to luxuriate in, but a superior position from which to work and fight for the Lord. There are high places in the spiritual realm to which we must *climb*, and never hope to be lifted. In Christ and for Christ we have a battle to fight and a race to run, and hence we are supplied with all that is requisite for our training in righteousness; for the principles of religious truth must be kneaded into our souls by constant and strenuous endeavours to do God's will in good and evil report, against the frowns or jeers of the world, the pleadings of our carnal nature, and the devices of Satan. The Bible sets before us the character of God to humble us, our heavenly Father's love and pity to cheer and help us, and the awfulness of human responsibility to sober us and render all we do genuine in God's sight. In these unspeakably important respects is the Bible useful to man. God has provided for men a literature sacred because inspired by Himself to give to all true men the light and strength which will fit them to fulfil their vocation.

II. This brings us to notice now the account the Bible gives in the text of its own purpose. Does God hear the ravens when they cry? Is there implanted in us by Himself the hungering after spiritual bread, and has He made no provision for us, or has this hungering no meaning but that he may tantalize us by offering us a stone instead of bread?

The man that makes God his portion and trust will not lack any good

thing. "The man of God" will be supplied with all needed outfit for his work in this world, and hence among others with the Book requisite, to show him his path, to strengthen him while walking in it, to feed him with spiritual bread, and refresh him with spiritual drink, until he appears in that world of which the Lamb Himself will be the light. This is why God-inspired Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. The principle that makes us believe in the Divine Providence incites us to believe in the Divine Word. God has made provision for the wants of His creatures. Hence there is dew for the flower, grass for the cattle, and a Bible for the man of God. The Bible is a proof and part of Divine Providence.

It is sufficient to guide man in all emergencies, in joy and sorrow, in plenty and want, in youth and old age, in peace and war, in life and death. By it he is thoroughly furnished unto all good works. It is not a Book of a mere historic interest, showing us what was vital to men in those distant days, but which to us is as foreign for all practical ends in its teachings and obligations, as the tent and sandals of Abraham would be, had we them in our possession. It is a living Book. Its words are spirit, and truth, and life for all time. It tells every age and condition of men what they are to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man. It is the Supreme rule of "faith and manners." Its truths are Catholic. It is not for the man of Europe, or Asia, or Africa, the man of learning or ignorance, the man of poverty or pelf. It is for the man of God, the man that makes God his trust and portion. It so equips him, that every condition of life yields treasure to him whether he occupies a prison or a palace, whether he inhabits a cot or a castle. It gives true aim to life for adult and child. It points out what is the proper purpose of existence for man whether he be young or old in years.

This being a Book not for men who believe in popes, or prelates, or presbyters, nor for those who adhere to adult or infant baptism, but for men of God, it is evident that all true men are agreed regarding its essentials, because upon these they live.

III. In keeping with the Bible's own account in the text of its character and purpose, and suggested by the presentation now given of these, a few considerations offer themselves in conclusion for brief notice.

1. The truths of Scripture constitute a system. They are so related that one truth explains another. They are to one another as the members in the body.

If one truth is honoured all the others are also. The mind which degrades one hurts all others. Scripture truth is marked by solidarity. Its truths, therefore, mutually explain and protect one another. For this reason the Bible is the most easily translated book from one language to another. Its truths can either turn the idiomatic power of different languages to account, or it can so elevate the words of other tongues as to create out of them a new genius for itself. In the Pagan Greek, the word meaning "meek" in the Christian system of truths signified one who was mean-spirited, a nobody. In the Christian system we are to be nobodies, to have no minds of our own that we may have the mind of God. The meek mind is then an objective one which makes all things ours.

The teaching of the text presents reproof in inseparable connection with correction, or setting men right, and these two again as we have seen, are linked together with "instruction in righteousness," not to be separated therefrom unless we deny that there is any relation between men's present actions and their eternal destiny, and that they will not reap as they sow.

The text is an epitome of the nature of the Old and New Testaments, as well as the end common to both. The Mosaic Dispensation was a ministration of condemnation. It was "profitable for reproof." The Christian dispensation is a ministration of righteousness by setting men right, and being profitable therefore for correction, whilst both conspire to furnish the man of God thoroughly unto all good works.

This *systematic* feature of Biblical truth is a guarantee in its very nature of its indestructability and incorruptibility. Hence there is a unity of teaching in the Word of God.

2. There is also a unity of testimony in the Bible. The Bible in one sense is a literature; viewed, however, as possessing unity of testimony, we would rather contemplate it as a book. Written in the most diverse conditions, and by men of varied pursuits and gifts, and during a long reach of centuries, its testimony is yet one. It testifies in one form or another, from Genesis to Revelation, of Christ. It is "the testimony of Christ." The Rock that followed Israel was Christ. It was Christ that Israel tempted in the wilderness, when they were bitten with serpents. The temple with all its appointments prefigured Christ, and fulfilled its mission when He came. The whole Scripture is only luminous to us as we see in it Christ who is "the Prince of life, the Fellow of God," the same "yesterday, to-day, and forever." Being the testimony of such an One it never can become obsolete, for He ever liveth. It can be no other than "Spirit and life," in all ages and to all people. In proof of this, let me ask by what other kind or system of truths could thousands be brought together from week to week to listen as attentively as they do but to Bible truth? Why, if a play of some literary genius runs successfully for a few weeks, it is reported as a marvellous achievement. But you say, is not political discussion interesting to men, for have they not a supply of it daily in the newspaper? I would like to know how many read political articles in the daily papers; I believe the number who look at the heading of articles and finding they are political, pass them by, is far from few. I believe if people were united together to listen to political matters from week to week as they are summoned by God to do in regard to Scriptural truth, that very soon few would respond to the invitation. In short, let me say, that no truth can so deeply and protractedly command the attention of men as that of the Bible. The most successful churches are those which are most Scriptural in their teaching. God honours those who honour Him by believing in His Word with such steadfastness, that they invariably seek to proclaim, as well as conform to, its teachings.

3. The aim of the Bible is grandly and vitally practical. It is none other than that the man who makes God his portion in life may be thoroughly equipped for the discharge of every duty.

The Bible has intellectual and ecclesiastical interests for men. It contains too what is pleasing to their literary tastes. It has considerations also by which "proud philosophy" will find its attention arrested. But this is not its grand, its appointed purpose. It is given us to train us to become like God. How widely and sadly has it been turned from "this high emprise!"

We pity the stars when we think of the tragic uses made of them by superstition and astrology. They were set in heaven to guide men on land and sea, but they have been made the occasion of sad misguidance to thousands by the perversity of man. The Word of God, given us to discipline us in everlasting righteousness, think of it used only to drill us in ceremonial, or political, or social *proprieties*! It does not specify to us how to divide an earthly inheritance, but enjoins that we beware of covetousness—a warning that we must observe, would it be well with us, in all transactions and at all times. The righteousness in which the Bible is profitable to discipline us is of the heart and not the outward estate. It requires us here to cease to be profane, and to die rather than sell our heavenly birthright for any material good, however tempting the guise it may assume, or severe the necessity that may press it upon us. We are in this world to be like God, to imitate Christ. To think that this vocation is ours in any real sense only at death, is the most fatal delusion. It is thinking that goes in the teeth of the very "reproof and correction, and instruction in righteousness," with which God freighted the Scriptures and thus made them profitable to us.

Is it necessary at this point to affirm that we by the circulation of the Scriptures give the best proof of our confidence in its power, triumphantly

to cope with all error. To spread the Scriptures in the land is moreover the best patriotic work in which we can engage, for it instructs us in that "righteousness which exalteth a nation."

Is it not the most benevolent work that can lay claim to our prayers or services, when without it men must perish for lack of knowledge?

This is the work of the Society under whose auspices we now have the privilege to preach, and for whose interests we now ask your means. In doing so we would exhort you to remember in reference to the Bible, whenever and however its claims may come before you—

"Yet he who bath, and will not give,  
That heavenly guide to all that live,  
Himself shall lose the way."

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## Bible Society Recorder.

TORONTO, 1st OCTOBER, 1882.

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### BOARD MEETINGS.

The usual meeting of the Board was held on Tuesday, June 20th, at 7.30 p.m., the Hon. William McMaster in the chair. The meeting was opened with prayer, led by the Rev. R. Wallace. The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed, a report was submitted from the Standing Committee on Agency and Colportage, recommending plan of operations for the current year. This report was adopted. A letter was read from the Bishop of Algoma, accepting the office of Vice-president, and thanking the Board for the honour. Communications were read from the Presbyterian Synod of Toronto and Kingston, and from the Conference of the Primitive Methodist Church, in answer to the circular letter addressed to those bodies, and expressing hearty sympathy with the objects and work of the Society. Dr. Hodgins verbally reported that the circular was laid before the Synod of the Diocese of Toronto, and a committee appointed to report to the Synod on the subject. The report was moved by the Hon. G. W. Allan, and seconded by the Rev. Provost Body, and adopted, and a reply would shortly be sent. The Depository's cash account was submitted, and other routine business transacted, and the Board adjourned to the third Tuesday in September. The meeting closed with prayer, led by the Rev. A. H. Baldwin.

The Board met again on Tuesday, September 19th, at the usual hour, the Hon. William McMaster in the chair. The meeting was opened with prayer, led by the Rev. Professor Gregg. After the reading and confirmation of minutes, letters were read from the Solicitors, and from the Parent Society, in reference to the Haslam bequest. The appointment of Directors in place of the Revs. J. B. Clarkson and Robt. Cade, who have removed from the city, was postponed to next meeting. The Secretaries were instructed to advertise for a collector for the City of Toronto, and to report at next meeting. A very interesting letter from the Bishop of Athabasca was read, thanking the Society for sending Bibles for a depository at Fort Chipiwywan, and

wishing to have another depository at Fort Simpson, on the Mackenzie River. Grants of Scriptures were made to the Methodist Indian Mission, and for the Young Men's Christian Association work in the Volunteer Camps. Very encouraging reports were submitted from Mr. Taylor, the Society's colporteur, who has been labouring all summer in Manitoulin Island, and on the North Shore of Lake Huron, and also from Mr. Jackson, who has been labouring in the County of Bruce. The Depository's cash account was submitted, and other routine business disposed of, and the meeting closed with prayer.

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EXTRACTS FROM ADDRESSES AT THE LAST ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF THE PARENT SOCIETY.

The Bishop of BATH AND WELLS said:—"My Lord, my brethren in Christ, I rise at the bidding of our chairman, to propose the adoption of the report. That report, as I doubt not you have all felt with me, has led us through a very deeply interesting course of operations. It has made our thoughts and our interests travel over a very wide portion of the surface of our habitable globe, and it has brought our Christian sympathies and human interests into contact with a great number of men of those various tribes and races and nations which are scattered all over the face of this world of ours. The more we know of these different countries, of their natural features, of the individual races who inhabit them, and the more we can throw ourselves into an attitude of sympathy with their various conditions either of happiness or unhappiness, their various capacities or their various incapacities, the more shall we enter into the interest of a report like that very interesting one to which we have just been listening. It must be a very great satisfaction, I am sure, to all of you, to feel that in the progress of the work of this Society over the globe, and among those various races to which I have alluded, its operation has been invariably, and in an unmixed way, a beneficent one. It has been the diffuser of good, and of no evil whatever. We are often told and no doubt there is some truth in it, that even the terrible ordeal of war itself, with all its miseries, is very often the harbinger of civilization, that it breaks down barriers which could not be broken down in any milder or softer way, and that though the immediate effects of war are so terrible and so sad, yet we may sometimes be compelled to look upon it as a necessity, and comfort ourselves with the hope that hereafter it may bear good fruit. It may be so, but at all events it is a very great comfort to feel that the operations of our Bible Society carry unmixed benefits, and that there are no drawbacks of any kind whatever to interfere with the blessings of the conquests it makes.

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"But there is one special effect and benefit of the distribution of the Scriptures such as that carried on by this great Society which has very much engaged my attention lately in reading that great missionary book, that book of books as illustrating missions—I mean the Acts of the Apostles. I think we learn most distinctly from that book, that one of the great providential purposes of the diffusion of the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures is to prepare the ground for the future work of the evangelist. It has not, I think, been sufficiently noticed—though, of course, it has been noticed—that the great success of the first preachers of the Gospel—St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Barnabas, and the rest of them—was, in the first instance, always among those who had been prepared to receive the preaching of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by a previous knowledge of the Scriptures of the Old Testament. And I have no doubt that this was the reason, under God, why we find that those first great missionary apostles in every case went first of all to where

there were Jewish communities, and where, there being those large and important Jewish communities, a considerable portion of the heathen population had been led to attend the synagogues, and there, whether they were actually proselytes or not, had heard the Holy Scriptures read Sabbath after Sabbath, and so had their own minds and souls and spirits prepared for the evangelization which was carried on by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you just look at it for one moment in detail, you will recall to your minds the instances; you will remember that the first heathen convert, the Ethiopian travelling in his chariot on his way back to Ethiopia, when overtaken by Philip the Evangelist, was doing—what? Reading the Prophet Isaiah. He did not understand it, and he did not know what it meant, but still there were his heart and mind prepared by reading those Holy Scriptures, &c., &c.

\* \* \* It seems to me, therefore, that one of the most important works that this great Bible Society has to effect is this: By a wholesale distribution and dissemination of the Word of God among different populations and different people, sowing the Word here and there, not knowing exactly why, they are preparing the way for the time when the missionary shall go forth with his feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, and there, upon prepared ground, deliver the full message of God's grace."

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 The Rev. W. S. SWANSON, in seconding the resolution, said:—"My lord and dear Christian friends, I rise to second the resolution that has just been put to this meeting, and I do so with feelings of the very deepest pleasure; because I know full well the immense benefits that this noble Society has conferred upon the land where I have spent the last twenty-three years of my life. I feel that this Society is one of the most substantial, one of the truest, and one of the most real missionary institutions we have in this or any other land; and I feel a deep debt of gratitude to this noble Society when I think of the magnificent work which it has been privileged by God to do in the land that lies very near in all its highest interests to my own heart—I mean the immense empire of China. And I second this resolution not only with a feeling of gratitude for what this Society has already done in China, but with a lively expectation of benefits to come in the same great land from this British and Foreign Bible Society. I feel, my lord, in supporting this resolution, and with a special view to the interests and wants of China, that I have to speak on one of the most important questions that can occupy the attention of Christian people in this or any other land. I sometimes think that there is no subject in all the world so much misunderstood, or so little understood, as this great question of China, and the work for Christ in that empire; and I am perfectly certain that in the measure in which a knowledge of the importance of this great question is brought home to the hearts of Christian people in this land of ours, and to the hearts of those who have the ruling and the guiding of this Society—in that measure will this Society lend itself to our help in the immense empire of China, and with double the vigour and force that it has ever done in the past. There is no empire in all the world like China; if you think of it in its extent, in the multitude of its people; if you think of it in its grand old history, stretching back over 3,000 years, with the wonderful civilization which we find imbedded in that history, with a literature all along the line of that civilization—a literature existing at a time when there was no literature in any other part of the world. And when I think of China to-day I come to the same conclusion. I go East, and pass down the Red Sea; I go out into the Indian Ocean; I pass the Bay of Bengal, and I go up through the Straits of Malacca, and I come to China, and I can fearlessly say that there is no country or people that I pass on my way exerting the same influence in the world to-day as the empire of China, and as this Chinese people. I made a voyage the other day from China. I went down to the Straits of Malacca, and I found what sixty years ago was a wild, uncultivated jungle, undeveloped by its aboriginal population, a perfect garden—one of the most wealth-producing parts of the world. And who did it? Why

the Chinese, under our own rule. There are over 200,000 Chinese in the Malay archipelago to-day, and they have developed all the resources of these islands. I passed the Philippines, where there are about 100,000 Chinese. I went through the Moluccas, and found Chinese there. I went to the north-western corner of Australia, and the first man I met was a Chinaman. I passed round the north side of Australia and down its eastern coast, and I came to no town where I did not find Chinese. In the colony of New South Wales I found between 20,000 and 30,000 of them. In the colony of Victoria I found 13,000, and in South Australia there are 4,000 or 5,000. I passed across to New Zealand, where there are 4,000 or 5,000. I passed by the Fiji and the Samoan groups, and I found the Chinese there. I came to the Sandwich Islands, and found 15,000 there; and I was informed of another fact—I was told that about forty-two years ago there was not a single Chinaman in the Sandwich Islands, and there were over 200,000 natives in that group. What is the case to-day? There are about 15,000 Chinese there, and only about 50,000 natives. I passed over to San Francisco, and in the State of California I found over 100,000. I found them in all the cities of America, and I have been told that they have come to London. I feel that a people like this, pressing themselves throughout the whole world, and carrying their energy and their industry with them, are bound to be a factor in the future history of the world; and on this account China is one of the grandest fields for the operations of this Society. My lord, I look at this in another point of view. I wish this Society to double what it has done in the past, because I cannot but think that a stream of population going away out of China into almost every part of the habitable globe, is carrying with it not only the native energy and industry of the Chinese people, but it is carrying something else—it is carrying with it the heathenism of the Chinese people. I remember the day when I thought heathenism was idolatry, that a heathen was a poor mean creature and an idolater, who bowed down to stocks and stones; but now I know that behind heathenism there lie filth and pollution and putridity all around the ethical circle. In spite of its education, in spite of its civilization, in spite of all the good qualities I have mentioned, there exists this foul heathenism. I come home to this country, and I am told that Buddhism is not such a bad thing after all. I am told that by those who do not know anything about it. I am told, also, that Confucianism is not such a bad thing after all, and I am told that, also, by those who know least about it. I find this—that distance in these matters ‘lends enchantment to the view.’ But if there is one lesson that has burned itself into my heart during the twenty-three years I have been in China, it is this lesson—that any moral precepts, that any ethical system apart from a Christian foundation, will never produce the results that you and I wish to see produced. I feel, my lord, if we had some of these men who theorize about these subjects, and who put a philosophy behind these systems, that no one would be so astonished to know that they possessed as the very people who profess them—if they went and saw China, and went down with us into that moral degradation into which this great people has fallen, I hope they would come back more charitable to us at least, than they have hitherto shown themselves to be, as we try to grapple, to fight, and to cure in God’s strength and grace those fearful evils that we find in heathen countries; if they did not get burned into their hearts what we have got burned into ours—the fact that nothing will ever lift that people but the wonder-working Spirit of God, applying to their hearts and consciences the glorious gospel of His grace. I believe that this lifting up is going to take place. And I believe that these people are worth the lifting. I say this fearlessly. Take them on any line, put them on equal lines with ourselves, and they are not inferior to us. I remember once an American captain asked me, ‘You have been many years in China, what do you think of the Chinese?’ I was a Scotchman, and I replied, ‘What do you think?’ He said, ‘I think that a man has to be up pretty early in the morning if he wishes to get to the weather side of a Chinaman.’ I believe the same thing,

and I feel that if only this people were lifted out of the degradation into which these heathen systems have cast them, they would be as they go throughout the world a savour of life unto life, instead of, as they are to-day, a savour of death unto death. I am here to thank this Society for the noble work it has done in China. We are dealing in China with people who value reading, and who, when the Word of God is once in their hands, exercise their faculties upon it; and results have been produced here, that if you keep in mind the difficulties, have been produced nowhere else in the world."

The Rev. ROBERT BRUCE said :—" My lord and Christian friends, it so happens that for exactly the same time, viz., for twenty-three years, that our brother has been labouring in China I have been engaged in a very different sphere among Mohammedans, and during all that time I ever valued, though at first from a distance, the British and Foreign Bible Society. But it is only within the last few years that I have really learnt to love that Society. You cannot love anyone till you know him, and it is only latterly that I have begun really to know the members of this Society; and I may confess, my lord, that I love them more, not only because I have found that they were a centre from which the Word of God goes forth into every land in nearly 300 dialects, but because I have become acquainted with their Agents in Russia, Poland, and other parts of the world, and I have found them full of a missionary spirit. It is not my part to speak of this Society and the work which it does in Christian lands. It is my part to speak of it only as a missionary society. The Rev. Henry Venn, who was for so many years the chief secretary of the greatest missionary society in the world, said in his old age, ' When I was a young man I used to think of the Bible Society as the handmaid of missionary societies, but I now think that she is the queen's daughter who is all glorious within, and we missionary societies are the virgins, her companions, who bear her company.' When we consider the work of the Bible Society and the object which it has in view—that the Bible has been translated into nearly 300 dialects in the lifetime of men who are now living, and that the Bible Society, without stopping to ask whether we have results or not, urges on the missionaries in every land to scatter the seed of God's Word broadcast, we see there is no agency which does more to hasten the second coming of the Son of God.

" Missionary societies and Bible societies must go hand in hand. Just at the very time when our church and school were sufficiently trained to be able to supply colporteurs, we had the great blessing of a visit from Mr. Watt, who is now the Agent of the Society in Germany, and who was then Agent for South Russia. I must say that I cannot express too highly my opinion of Mr. Watt, not only as Agent of the Bible Society, but as a man who is filled with a missionary spirit; and I grudge him to any Christian land. I wish I could get him in the East, for I never saw a man who was more filled with a missionary spirit. What I particularly admired in him was the way in which he lived as a brother with a native clergyman and with the native converts, and the way he threw himself into the mission work while he was in Persia. I grudge him to the churches in Europe. I should like to have him in Baghdad. Mr. Watt travelled all through Persia to find out what were the best places for getting up Agencies for the Bible Society in Persia; and, among other places, he went just beyond the frontier to Baghdad; and he found that Baghdad was, in one way, the centre of the whole of the Shiite Mohammedans of the world, and that just as the Turks go on pilgrimage to Mecca, so all the Shiites of the world go on pilgrimage to Baghdad; and it was owing to his visit there that, the year before last, I took a journey, at the request of the Bible Society, to Baghdad; and this led to the Church Missionary Society determining this year, in connection with the Bible Society, who are going hand-in-hand with us, to commence a station in Baghdad. I would just mention, for I am sure it will interest you

to hear, the vastness of the field which, as a joint Agent of the Bible Society and the Missionary Society, I have to work in. From the nearest mission in Turkey in Asia, which is at Mardin, to the Punjaub, for the thirteen years that I was in Persia up to the last two years, I was the only clergyman of any evangelical denomination in a district of 800,000 square miles; and just at the time when Mr. Watt came, we were able to set apart for him four colporteurs for the work of the Bible Society in this district. We have now taken up the city of Baghdad, as a second station of the Persia mission. When I was there a little more than twelve months ago I left two young men in Baghdad who are carrying on a Bible Agency there. One of them is an Armenian, the other is a Nestorian Christian, and they have been labouring ever since without any European superintendent."

The Rev. Dr. GOULD, Secretary of the National Bible Society of Scotland, said:—"I fasten especially on one clause in the resolution. At the outset of it the Society rejoices to offer a cordial welcome to the representatives of kindred institutions. It is in that character that I appear before you to-day, and accordingly my first duty is to fulfil the commission which I have received from the Directors of the National Bible Society of Scotland, in whose name I have the honour of appearing among you and addressing you. They charged me to express to you their grateful acknowledgments for the friendly co-operation that for many years has subsisted between the two Societies, and their earnest desire for the continuance and increase of the brotherly feeling with which the Directors of both have laboured together for the advancement of their common object—the diffusion of the Word of Life. \* \* \*

"It is not out of place to remind you that a great result has been attained in this blessed and brotherly co-operation between the Bible Societies in England and Scotland. \* \* \*

"There are, it is true, differences between your Society and ours, differences in our administration and practical working, but no such difference as to afford the slightest excuse for antagonism or opposition. On the contrary, in the main principles by which you are guided, in the noble simplicity of your purpose and object, in the devout and religious spirit which your reports and proceedings breathe, there are grounds on which we can rejoice with you in your joy, and any check to your progress would occasion north of the Tweed a deep pang of unfeigned regret.

"Our own history within recent years is perhaps the most cogent argument for united action—a happy illustration of the benefits resulting from it. There was one leading Bible Society in Scotland, the Edinburgh Bible Society. But there were several other Societies. The strength of the Christian community for the spread of the Bible was divided and broken. We effected a union in 1861. The result has been that instead of weak, provincial and denominational Societies, we have one great national Society for Scotland, which now ranks as the third Bible Society in the world, though it follows yours at a long interval.

"The important question of prices needs constant adjustment, and renders harmony among the great Societies supremely desirable. It may seem a paradox, but it is a truth, a truth so certain as to amount almost to a truism, that you can circulate the Scriptures more extensively by sale than by gift—by the exaction of a price than by gratuitous distribution. I speak of the work prosecuted on a wide scale, and continued for a succession of years. Give away twenty Bibles, a shilling in cost, and your circulation is twenty. Sell them at half-price, and you have a sum on hand for the circulation of double the number at the same rate. To avoid the mischief of underselling each other, and to secure a far higher object, a thorough understanding for what regions and countries special reductions should be made, it is well that every encouragement should be given to reciprocal confidence and harmonious action among our leading Bible Societies.

"The records of Bible Societies teem with evidence of souls converted,

congregations formed, whole churches called into existence and organized by the mere circulation of the Scriptures. Bishop Horsley tells us the Bible is its own best interpreter. The Word can fight its own battle and force its own way into the hearts and consciences of men. No book ever written in its defence is half so cogent and convincing for the purpose as the Bible itself."

### THE TESTIMONY OF CHRISTIAN WORKERS ABROAD TO THE SOCIETY'S EFFORTS FOR ROMAN CATHOLICS.

*(As a pamphlet has lately been circulated by a rival organization, finding fault with the Parent Society in this matter, we reprint this article from the RECORDER of April 1876.)*

A general view of the reasons which support the Committee in adhering to the practice of upwards of half a century was presented to our readers last month; and for the more complete information of the Christian public, a pamphlet has been issued by the Committee, under the title of "*The Work of the British and Foreign Bible Society among foreign Roman Catholics.*" This pamphlet, which may be obtained on application at the Society's House, is greeted on all hands as temperate, dignified and conclusive. Thus one clergyman in Sussex says: "I have read with the greatest pleasure the defence of the Society; . . . it is perfectly unanswerable, and, I hope, will open the eyes of those who have been exposed to the danger it so well meets. . . . I rejoice that the great Society in which I have always taken so deep an interest stands firmly by the determination to follow the rule of common sense as well as spiritual duty." Another clergyman writes, after reading the pamphlet: "It would be murder to souls not to circulate versions from the Vulgate; and the Vatican would indeed rejoice."

The criticisms which have been urged against the use of the translations from the Vulgate are essentially superficial; they appeal to ignorance, and vanish before the light of investigation.

Thus it is alleged that the course adopted by the Society is one of expediency unsupported by principle: it is "doing evil that good may come;" and it is said, Rather leave a Roman Catholic without the Bible at all than give him anything but a "pure" and "Protestant" version. It needs only that such objectors should know a little about the excellence of the Vulgate, and the thoroughly evangelical tone of its modern renderings by De Sacy and others, to convince them that the circulation of these versions is in itself a righteous act and solemn duty in the case of Roman Catholics, of whom the vast majority "will not touch a Protestant translation with the tips of their fingers."

And if it be said, as it has been said again and again, by those who should first have acquainted themselves with the facts of the case, that there is no necessity for circulating these versions, inasmuch as the so-called Protestant versions are accepted with equal readiness, it only needs fair inquiry to show that such is the very reverse of the truth.

It is with the aim of shedding light upon the whole question that we now offer the substance of a variety of testimonials from Christian workers abroad—men devoting their lives to combating the errors of Rome, and bringing forth her captives into the joy and freedom of the truth as it is in Jesus—men of whom it is not for a moment to be believed that they would support the Society in a course which "favoured Rome."

Let us begin with Belgium. The following memorial has been presented from the pastors of the Belgian Evangelical Society, five or six of them being converted Roman Catholics. In answer to the question, "Is it still necessary to offer the Holy Scriptures to Roman Catholics, in the versions approved by the authorities of their Church?" they say:—

"We reply without hesitation: Yes, it is absolutely necessary, if it be not wanted to diminish, and in most cases to render impossible, the dissemination of the Word of God in the midst of populations still in submission to the Romish clergy.

"If De Sacy's version were not circulated, the priests would speedily succeed in persuading all that we have falsified the Scriptures.

"We therefore earnestly beg the British and Foreign Bible Society to continue offering Roman Catholic versions to those who refuse Protestant versions.

"Rev. LEONARD ANET, Brussels; Rev. CLEMENT DE FAYE, Brussels; Rev. L. DURAND, Liège; Rev. LOUIS NICOLET, Liège; Rev. G. POINSOT, Charleroy; Rev. — SERIE, Frameries; Rev. ALBERT BROCHER, La Louvière, and others."

One of the above, M. Sérié, of Frameries, writes:—

"Not only do I feel it a duty and an honour to sign the above declaration, but as an ex-Romish priest and preacher, knowing by long and painful experience the character of the Catholics, with its exigencies and invincible scruples, I declare that, in my opinion, to suppress De Sacy, with the usual approbations, would be to shut out the Scriptures from that interesting minority of sincere and pious Catholics, who, until the hour of their enfranchisement would believe they were committing a *horrible crime* if they read a version not authorized by the heads of their hierarchy."

With regard to the effect of the circulation of the versions of Van Ess and Kistemaker in Germany and Switzerland, the Society's agent, the Rev. George Palmer Davies, whose thoroughness and conscientiousness are well known, gives a long and careful report, which we regret being unable to insert in full. He brings forward testimonies from several German gentlemen of experience and undoubted Protestant principles, shewing the good that has been done by the Society in circulating these versions where Luther's version would not be received. Among these is a letter from Dr. Hegel, President of the Prussian Bible Society, which itself does not circulate these versions. In his letter, he says:—

"I should therefore regard it as a deeply-to-be-lamented loss for the cause of the Gospel were the British and Foreign Bible Society to give up circulating the Van Ess and Kistemaker translations among the Catholics of Prussia; all the more so as the Prussian Bible Society would not be in a position to undertake the work, inasmuch as the carrying out of such a work is only possible through the agency of colporteurs, and the Prussian Bible Society is not so organized as to be able to avail itself of this agency."—Reporter.

RECEIPTS AT THE BIBLE SOCIETY HOUSE, TORONTO, FROM BRANCH SOCIETIES, FROM 1ST MAY TO 30TH SEPTEMBER, 1882.

	On Purchase Account.	FREE CONTRIBUTIONS.		
		U. C. B. S.	B. & F. B. S.	Sundries.
	\$ cts.	\$ cts.	\$ cts.	\$ cts.
Eglinton Branch.....		2 44		
Wroxeter do.....			(1) 73 00	
Cæsars and Sandhill Depository.....	12 65			
Keswick and Medina Branch.....		4 34		
Hillsdale (Collection).....		1 40		
Medonte Branch.....		1 07		
West Flamboro' do.....		2 60		
Scarborough do.....		20 10		
Marmora Depository.....	4 77			
Thornbury and Clarksburg Branch.....	10 84			
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Durham do.....	11 57			
Burrard Inlet do (B.C.).....		15 25		
New Westminster do (B.C.).....		4 75		
Thamesville do.....	16 76	20 00	10 00	
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Percy do.....	19 70	50 00		
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	\$ cts.	\$ cts.	\$ cts.	\$ cts.
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Seaforth do		28 00	50 00	
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Tavistock do		12 00		
Bethany do		21 00	21 00	
Ivanhoe do	5 39	4 00		
Plattsville do	13 41			
Galt do		90 00	210 00	
Wellandport do	3 50	3 00		
West Darlington do		10 00	9 60	
Glanford do		10 00		
Greenwood do		19 50		
Berlin do	31 28	66 11	50 00	
Rosemont do		25 90		
Cooksville do		19 58		
Bruce Mines do	29 47	8 00		
East Williams do		84 00	82 00	
Stayner do	21 80			
Stouffville do	10 00			
Shakespeare do	22 58		36 00	
Acton do		100 00		
Rothesay do		8 00		
Oshawa do		44 00		
Drayton do	6 00	15 00		
Malton do		18 75	18 75	
Winnipeg do	5 08			
Whitevale do	5 00			
Kintore do	5 00			
Belleville do	187 00	70 00	70 00	
Aldbrough do		12 00	12 00	
Parry Sound do		4 00		
Midland do	18 00			
Huntville do		2 00		
Bracebridge do		11 35		
Gravenhurst do		2 40		
Duffin's Creek do	4 86			
Embro do		21 27	42 53	
Blairton Depository	1 00			
Garden Hill Branch		13 78		
Copetown do		23 00		
Watford do	30 17			
Tiverton do	1 95			
Warton do	16 78			
St. Ann's do	19 27	11 00		
Smithville do		1 56		
Elfrida do		2 03		
Keene do		90 00		
Walkerton do	1 11			
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(1) For Turkey.

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