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THE
BIBLE ADVOCATE,

A MONTHLY PERIODICAL,

PUBLISHED BY THE

MONTREAL AUXILIARY

BIBLE SOCIETY.



MONTREAL:
PRINTED BY CAMPBELL & BECKET,

MUIR'S BUILDINGS, PLACE D'ARMES.

1838.

THE
BIBLE ADVOCATE.

VOL. I.

MONTREAL, MAY, 1837.

No. 1.

PROSPECTUS

OF A MONTHLY PERIODICAL, TO BE ENTITLED

The Bible Advocate,

TO BE PUBLISHED UNDER THE SUPERINTENDENCE
OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE MONTREAL AUXILIARY
BIBLE SOCIETY.

THIS work, as its name suggests, will advocate the increased circulation and perusal of the HOLY SCRIPTURES (for which it is to be lamented there is in this Province so much necessity), by diffusing important information on the subject, making earnest appeals to the consciences of Christians, and bringing into view the success which has attended those means in other countries. The interesting facts and anecdotes furnished by the operations of Missionaries will particularly be noticed; while the proceedings of the Parent Society and of all others connected with it, or engaged in the same cause, with the state of the Branch Associations of the Society in Montreal, will also form part of the contents of the Paper.

It is hoped, and may be expected, that Ministers of the Gospel, and the friends of Religion and Morality, will not only contribute to the design by furnishing original articles or other interesting matter to the pages of the ADVOCATE, but will also exert themselves to obtain Subscribers, and send their names, previously to the issue of the paper, to Mr. WILLIAM GREIG, 197, St. Paul Street, Montreal, to whom all communications (post paid) should be addressed.

TERMS: per annum when delivered in town, 1s. 3d. per single copy, or 1s. each for ten and upwards: when sent by mail, postage included, 1s. 9d. per single copy, or 1s. 6d. each for ten and above.

Montreal, April 3, 1837.

Extracts from the Report of the Sub-Committee, stating the advantages likely to result from the publication of THE BIBLE ADVOCATE.

1. Other Societies, infinitely inferior in importance to Bible Societies, have their pe-

riodicals, by which they sometimes very successfully support and advance their cause: your Committee, therefore, recommend that the Montreal Auxiliary Bible Society should have its periodical, through which it may advocate its cause, and disseminate, within its sphere of operation, the salutary effects of the Bible on the minds of even the most uncivilized and barbarous.

2. So much of novelty is associated with a periodical, that the prying disposition, or idle curiosity, of many who care little for the Bible, might, when such a paper is brought before them, be sufficient to induce them to read it—and its reading might give existence to a desire to possess the Book it recommends.

3. The infidel and the atheist, who despise Bibles, and Bible Societies, might, from a scornful curiosity, be tempted to bestow a transient glance on the pages of such a paper, to obtain some slight information about the proceedings of those bodies; and to know what, forsooth, they could possibly say in defence of their cause; but which glance might possibly meet with something which would prove an arrow too penetrating to be resisted by any panoply furnished by even their creed. Therefore a periodical, such as that which is hereby recommended, if ably supported, may be calculated to do good in a variety of ways.

4. Those, friendly to the cause of truth, may have it in their power to do good by distributing copies of such a paper, or reading them to individuals, when they would fail to do any by either circulating or reading the Bible. For foreign news, or interesting intelligence, told in pointed and pathetic language, even of a religious character, are often read or listened to, when the contents of the Bible, because heard and told a thousand times, possess to them nothing sufficiently interesting to arrest attention. A BIBLE ADVOCATE, therefore, offers this further advantage.

5. A periodical paper may be employed as a very useful vehicle to communicate, from time to time, selections of Scripture, containing the most essential doctrines of revelation; and also of such passages as strikingly prove their Divine authenticity and superhuman sublimity and excellence. Thus it might be

employed as a legitimate co-operator with Bible Societies in circulating, "without note or comment," the *Word of Life*. The Sub-Committee, would, therefore, strongly recommend such a co-operator.

6. Other Societies find their periodicals of considerable service in repelling the attacks of enemies, and thus defend their cause as well as promote their object. But it happens that Bible Societies have no such instrument for defence. Might not such a paper be of some use to our Society, even in this respect?

7. Besides giving more publicity to the various exertions, and multifarious operations of Bible and other religious Societies (which itself is no small recommendation), the paper referred to, should it meet with the encouragement which they think it deserves, would become a source of profit to the funds of the Society.

These are a few of the advantages which, in the opinion of the Sub-Committee, a periodical, advocating the cause of the Bible, offers; and these afford, in their opinion, sufficient ground for adopting the following Resolution, viz:—

"The Sub-Committee appointed to consider the expediency of publishing a periodical paper under the management of the Montreal Auxiliary Bible Society, to advocate the circulation and reading of the Bible, having duly and deliberately considered the subject, unanimously agreed in opinion—*That the cause of the Society must derive so much advantage from a Bible Advocate, (should it meet with sufficient encouragement and be properly conducted,) as to justify them in recommending this part of the motion.*"

The Bible Advocate.

MONTREAL, MAY 1, 1837.

The friends and supporters of the *Bible Advocate* are requested to notice that the first number, now issued, is a specimen rather of the *form* than the *manner*, in which it will be conducted. We hope not only to improve by experience, ourselves, but also to be favoured with Communications from Correspondents, increasing in number and interest as our little work pursues its progress.

Keeping in view the main object of this publication, as detailed in the Prospectus, our friends will at once perceive the propriety of confining their Letters, Papers, and Essays, to those topics which are most directly

conducive to its avowed design,—that of encouraging the perusal and circulation of the Scriptures.

HISTORY OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

That the Bible is an inestimable treasure, bestowed upon us by the adorable author of all good, every Christian is fully convinced; that it is the duty of every one who loves and values the Bible to aid in thus circulating it, he will readily admit. It is to stir up Christians to their duty, to promote the extension of God's word among all people, and to encourage the daily perusal of it, that our little Periodical is undertaken.

Let us suppose for a moment that the great object is accomplished, and dwell in holy imagination upon the result. Let us conceive, not only that the Bible is circulated through the world, but that the principles of the religion which the Bible teaches are cordially received and acted upon by every nation under heaven, and by every individual in every nation; and what a scene should we behold. How equitably would rulers govern, and how cheerfully would subjects obey; what integrity would prevail in all the transactions of man with man; what diligence in business—what fervour in spirit; what concord would subsist among the nations of the earth; what sweetness and harmony in domestic life; what peace of conscience in every breast! Regarding each other as brethren, children of one common father, redeemed by the same Saviour, partakers of the same hope, and journeying to the same celestial city, how would men learn to promote each other's welfare, and rejoice in each other's good. Those high and daring faculties, which now produce so much mischief in the earth, having a higher object to engage them and a nobler purpose to pursue, would contribute to

the advancement of human happiness, and the extension of the Divine Glory. Then, indeed, would be exemplified and proclaimed universally the Gospel of Christ, in all the purity and sublimity of character ascribed to it at its first announcement in the world—**GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE—GOOD WILL AMONG MEN; GLAD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY—TO ALL PEOPLE.**

And is this, after all, a Utopian speculation, a picture drawn by fancy, unauthorized by the word of God? Is it not rather a sober anticipation of the promised glories of Messiah's reign? Surely, the language of the Prophet, highly figurative as it is, in announcing this grand event, will justify the expectation of such a state of things. **THE DESERT SHALL REJOICE AND BLOSSOM AS THE ROSE. THE WOLF AND THE LAMB SHALL FEED TOGETHER. EVERY VALLEY SHALL BE EXALTED, AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL BE MADE LOW. THE GLORY OF THE LORD SHALL BE REVEALED, AND ALL FLESH SHALL SEE IT TOGETHER.**

Among the means to be employed by Christians for the advancement of this happy era, the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, the dissemination of the "good seed of the kingdom," appears to be one of the most direct and effectual. He who has declared that his "word shall not return unto him void," has in a remarkable manner smiled upon and prospered the efforts of his people in this cause. To give the greater effect to their operations the friends of truth have united their energies, and in associated harmony marched forward with the standard of the Gospel, "holding forth the word of life." The British and Foreign Bible Society stands foremost among these hallowed confederations. Its foundation were laid in faith; and though small in its beginning, and often obstructed in its progress, it has become a temple of

the Lord, and attained a magnitude and a splendour which have attracted the eyes of all nations, and from it have issued streams of light and glory to illuminate many of the dark regions of the earth.

Though all our readers are acquainted with its present character and rejoice in its prosperity, but few of them have been able to trace its progress from its origin to its present state. It is our intention, therefore, in this and some future numbers, to lay before them a brief sketch of the history of this admirable institution. It was the year 1804, in the stormy period of the French Revolutionary war, that this design to extend the kingdom of the **PRINCE OF PEACE** was first conceived and undertaken. But there are some preliminary steps and incidents which require to be previously noticed.

The primary occasion of all those measures which gave rise to the institution of the British and Foreign Bible Society, was the scarcity of Welch Bibles in the principality of Wales, and the impracticability of obtaining a supply from the only source then known. As early as the year 1787, this scarcity began to be more sensibly felt and deplored; and many pious Clergymen and others exerted themselves for a long time in vain to remove it. Scanty supplies were sometimes procured; but these were insufficient; and the want continued to increase. Application was made to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; but for some time without success. The poor Welch were unable to provide a remedy for the evil of which they complained, and their friends in England could not then offer a sufficient inducement to those who alone were competent to provide it. At length, in 1796, the Society just mentioned issued an order for a new edition of the Welch Bible to the amount of 10,000 copies.

and in 1799 this order was executed. These copies were soon disposed of; and as thirty years had elapsed since the preceding edition, the demand was far from supplied, and another edition was called for, but in vain. The Society had either done its utmost, or erroneously conceived, in the face of evidence to the contrary, that it had done sufficient; and no hope remained of farther aid from that quarter. While some private individuals were considering how to supply the deficiency by procuring a competent impression of Welch Bibles, and circulating them cheaply, an occurrence took place, which changed the whole complexion of the business, and laid the foundation of a permanent supply of the Holy Scriptures, not only to the inhabitants of Wales, but to the whole human race.

In the month of December, 1802, the Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala, an ordained Minister of the Established Church, but officiating in connection with the Welch Calvinistic Methodists, a man of zealous piety and indefatigable exertion, and by his habit of itinerating and promoting Sunday Schools, rendered intimately familiar with the wants of his countrymen, was in London; when he proposed a contribution in aid of the plan for printing and distributing the Scriptures among them. On the 7th of that month, the subject having been introduced by Mr. Joseph Tarn in a circle of friends* who had met to transact a different business, Mr. Charles preferred his suit on behalf of his countrymen; describing the want of Welsh Bibles, and the failures of all attempts to obtain them in the usual channel, and urging with important earnestness the necessity of resorting in this painful extremity to 'new and extraordinary means.'

* The committee of the Religious Tract Society. Mr. Tarn was afterwards Assistant Secretary and Accountant of the Bible Society, till his death on the 10th of January last.

" This proposition gave rise to a conversation of some length; in the course of which, it was suggested, that, as Wales was not the only part of the kingdom in which such a want as had been described might be supposed to prevail, it would be desirable to take such steps as might be likely to stir up the public mind to a *general* dispersion of the Scriptures. To this suggestion, which proceeded from the Rev. Joseph Hughes, a Baptist Minister, and which was warmly encouraged by the rest of the company, we are to trace the dawn of those measures, which, expanding with time, and progressive discussion, issued at length in the proposal and establishment of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

" The propriety of exciting the attention of the public to the general dispersion of the Scriptures having been thus casually suggested, Mr. Hughes was desired to prepare, in writing, such an Address as might contain, in a more digested form, the substance of his unpremeditated observations; in order that the project, if it should, upon revision, appear practicable and important, might be regularly submitted to the consideration of the Public.

" In the mean time, certain measures were pursued, which tended materially to advance the progress of the undertaking. A communication was made of the object contemplated, to some persons of distinguished reputation for piety and philanthropy. Among these, was William Wilberforce, Esq. who, at a private interview, conferred with the parties who had solicited his advice; and furnished such hints as his enlightened mind and liberal heart would be likely to suggest, in order to improve their plan, and facilitate introduction to public acceptance. A similar communication was made to Charles Grant, Esq., and attended with a similar result.

“The Rev. C. F. A. Steinkopff, Minister of the German Lutheran Church in the Savoy, and one of the Society's present Secretaries, voluntarily tendered his services to promote the design, in the course of a journey which he was about to make to the Continent of Europe. His offer was thankfully accepted, and he was accordingly requested to inquire particularly into the want of the Scriptures in such places as he should have occasion to visit. Similar inquiries were directed to be promoted in Ireland, and in other parts of the United Kingdom; and the following queries relating to the same object were addressed to the country at large, through the medium of certain Periodical Publications:—

“1. Can the poor in your neighbourhood generally read?”

“2. To what extent are they furnished with the Holy Scriptures?”

“3. Do they discover a solicitude to read them?”

“4. What has been done towards supplying this want?”

“5. Are there persons in your neighbourhood willing further to encourage the distribution of the Holy Scriptures in our own and in foreign lands?”

“These transactions took place antecedently to the close of May, 1803; and in the course of that month, Mr. Hughes presented an impression of an Essay, prepared in compliance with the wishes expressed at a primary Meeting, under the title of ‘The Excellence of the Holy Scriptures an Argument for their more General Dispersion.’ In this Essay, which may be regarded as containing the rudiments of the future Society, the author expatiates on the transcendent excellence of the Holy Scriptures, enumerates the different Religious Societies more or less concerned in promoting their circulation, and describes the limitations of their respective constitutions, and their consequent

inadequacy to the work of a general distribution. Mr. Hughes then represents the importance of an association of Christians at large, with a view exclusively to the circulation of the Holy Scriptures; and points out a variety of advantages, both direct and collateral, which might be expected to result from the operations of such an Institution.”*

(To be continued.)

To the Editor of the Bible Advocate.

DEAR SIR,—The following extract is the conclusion of an article in PHILIP'S *Young Man's Closet Library*, entitled ‘Manly Realizations of Christ in the Bible.’ It is worthy to be written in letters of gold; and I trust you will give it a place in the columns of the *Advocate*; and that it may be written on the hearts of all who read it, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, is the fervent prayer of, your's respectfully,
W. G.

“Since, then, all scriptural light has sprung from the gift of eternal life in Christ, how shameful and sinful is it to trifle with the light of the gospel. This is a crime of far greater magnitude and malignity than appears by saying, of the careless, they do not read their Bibles, nor reflect upon the word of God. This would, indeed, be bad enough, whatever the Bible contained. This is nothing, compared with their neglect; they are trifling, not so much with eternal law as with eternal life; not so directly with Divine authority as with infinite love. You may imagine that they are only evading duties not convenient at present; only postponing things not agreeable. Deluded judges! They are pouring contempt upon the most glorious salvation which the united Godhead could devise; risking souls, which all heaven rushed to save; trifling with eternal life. What a

* Owen's History of the Bible Society.

horrid spectacle is a careless man in this point of view! The Father beseeching; the Son bleeding; the Spirit striving; and yet the sinner resisting, and smiling at the ease with which he can take the matter. Heaven open in all its glory; Hell uncovered in all its gloom; and yet the sinner standing as unmoved as if he were an idiot, or expected to be annihilated at death! What shall I say? I could speak daggers to the unconcerned, if I could forget that I myself was once equally thoughtless; but I cannot forget the wormwood and gall of that state: my soul has them still in remembrance, and is humbled within me! Oh! view not the great salvation in a wrong light! It is your life; your eternal all is involved in it, and every act of neglect is an outrage upon boundless, beseeching, bleeding, dying love. Have pity, have pity upon your own immortal soul; all heaven cares for it; and will you care nothing? By the mercies of the Lord, by the terrors of the Lord, I implore you to pause and weigh the matter! Since, then, all scriptural light has sprung from eternal life, with what lively attention and adoring wonder we ought to study the word of God. Regarding it merely as a lesson or lecture about Religion, or even as the standard of truth and holiness, is a poor, tame, soulless feeling, when eternal life is the substance of the Bible. Why, revelation is mercy rolling back the curtain of the eternal throne, to unveil the God of love; is mercy moving forward that throne, to render the Lamb slain visible in the midst of it; is mercy disclosing the river of life, flowing full and free from it; is mercy pointing to crowns and mansions of glory; is mercy exhibiting myriads of redeemed spirits, once guilty and vile as we are; is mercy leading forward eternity, glowing with the immortal splendour of all that God has done or will do, laden with the weight of glory, re-

sounding with the alleluiahs of the universe, and teeming with the future wonders which through everlasting ages shall bless, as they blaze, the general assembly of saints and angels. Man! immortal! awake to the grandeur and grace of thy Bible! It is the telescope by which two eternities are rendered visible; each thronged with stars which shine, to guide, to cheer, to exalt; and which will shine for ever and ever. The past eternity, like the milky way of the material heavens, is seen crowded with the redeeming purposes and plans, and covenant of grace: the coming eternity, rich and radiant with the scenes and felicities of glory."

NOTICES OF NEW PUBLICATIONS
RELATING TO THE BIBLE.

The PICTURE BIBLE for the young. Containing Sacred Narratives in the words of the Holy Scriptures. Illustrated by Engravings. Religious Tract Society, London, 1834.

The PICTURE TESTAMENT for the young: Containing a Harmony of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. Illustrated by Engravings. Religious Tract Society, London, 1835.

Though these volumes have been some time before the British Public, they are but little known in this country. Whatever attracts the minds of the young to the Sacred Records, or throws light upon their contents by illustrative embellishments, is worthy of encouragement; and all such will be welcomed as pleasing coadjutors in the work of Religious Education. The steel engravings and the wood cuts are very numerous, and for the most part well designed and executed. Those parents who can afford to treat their children with occasional presents of books, elegant in their form and useful in their tendency, will find these volumes well adapted to the purpose.

The HOLY BIBLE, with notes practical and explanatory. By the Rev. Henry Stebbing, A. M. M. R. S. L. London, 1836.

The text is in three columns; and the whole forms one of the most compact and portable editions of the Old and New Testaments, in one volume, that we have seen.

From a Secretary of an Auxiliary Society.

December 8, 1836.—I am happy to send you the inclosed five pounds. This sum consists of divers savings made by a young lady, who had accumulated it for the express purpose of procuring a gold chain for her watch. After reading a well-known publication, called "Mammon," and thinking for some days on the obligations of Christ's followers to promote His cause, she resolved to devote the purchase money for the gold chain, to aid the efforts of the British and Foreign Bible Society. When it was suggested to her, by her Mamma, that an additional week's deliberation might be prudent, she replied, "I have already thought of it, dear Mamma, for some time, and am resolved to do it." It comes warm from the heart of a young disciple, whose future years, should her life be continued, promise much zeal and usefulness in the ways of God. The British and Foreign Bible Society has been distinguished by many holy consecrations, both of property and labour; and God has made it a blessing to the world. That the God of Truth may continue to bless your labours and attentions in this good cause, is the prayer of &c. &c.—*Monthly Extracts.*

THE CORNER STONE.

"The stone which the builders refused, is become the headstone of the corner."—PSALM cxviii. 22.

The idea of the corner-stone repeatedly alluded to in the Scriptures,

is not to be taken from the science of modern or classical architecture, but from the practice of building in remote and ruder ages. Imagine a massive stone, like one of those at Stonehenge or Abury, cut to a right angle, and laid in the building so that its two sides should lie along the two walls, which meet at a corner, and thus binding them together in such a way, that neither force nor weather could dissever them. The term does not necessarily signify that it would be put at the top of the building; it only necessitates the idea of a very important position, which it would have, if it lay a few courses above the lowest, so as to act by its weight on those below, and to serve as a renewed basis to those above.

"The stone which the builders have thrown away, is made to be the corner-stone." I understand this literally. It appears that, probably at the building of Solomon's temple, one of those stones which David had taken care to get provided and made ready for use, was found fault with by the builders, and declared to be useless; and that God, for altogether different reasons, commanded, by a prophet, that this stone should be made the corner-stone. The orientals regard the corner-stone as the one peculiarly holy stone in a temple, and that it confers sanctity on the whole edifice. It is, therefore, the more probable that, either by Urim or Thummim, the sacred lot of the Jews, or by a prophet, God was consulted, which stone he would direct to be taken for the corner-stone. The answer was—That which they have so perseveringly rejected and declared to be quite unserviceable. Certainly it must have been for a very important reason, that God positively appointed this stone to be the corner-stone. But the New Testament discloses it to us, in Matt. xxi. 42, and 1 Pet. ii. 7, showing us that it referred to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Jewish nation would conduct themselves towards the Messiah, precisely as the builders did towards this stone, and would reject him; but God would select him to be the corner-stone, which should support and sanctify the whole church.—*Dr. Smith, and Michaelis.*

Poetry.

THE BIBLE.

What is the world?—A wildering maze,
Where sin hath track'd ten thousand ways,
Her victims to ensnare;
All broad, and winding, and aslope,
All tempting with perfidious hope,
All ending in despair.

Millions of pilgrims throng those roads,
Bearing their baubles, or their loads,
Down to eternal night:
—One humble path, that never bends,
Narrow, and rough, and steep, ascends
From darkness into light.

Is there a guide to show that path?
The BIBLE:—He alone who hath
The Bible, need not stray:
Yet he who hath, and will not give,
That heavenly Guide to all that live,
Himself shall lose the way.

BIBLES FOR THE WEST INDIES.—

During the past year the British and Foreign Bible Society have sent out and distributed among the liberated slaves in the West Indies one hundred thousand Bibles. The only condition required was a certificate that the individual could read.—*Boston Recorder.*

ADMIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

—I very frequently used to retire into a solitary place on the banks of Hudson's river, at some distance from the city, for contemplation on divine things, and secret converse with God.
* * * I had then, and at other times, the greatest delight in the Holy Scripture of any book whatsoever.

Oftentimes in reading it, every word seemed to touch my heart. I felt a harmony between something in my heart, and those sweet and powerful words. I seemed often to see so much light exhibited by every sentence, and such a refreshing food communicated, that I could not get along in reading; often dwelling long on one sentence, to see the wonders contained in it; and yet almost every sentence seemed to be full of wonders.—*Jonathan Edwards.*

SOLITUDE.—Happy is the man who betimes acquires a relish for holy solitude, and accustoms himself to bear the yoke of Christian discipline in his youth; who can sit alone and keep silence, and seek wisdom diligently where she may be found; in the scriptures of truth and in the writings of the saints. From these flowers of paradise, he extracts the honey of knowledge and divine love; and therewith fills every cell of his understanding and affections. The winter of affliction, disease, and old age, will not surprise him in an unprovided state. Precious beyond rubies are the hours of youth and health; O let none of them pass unprofitably away!—*Bishop Horne.*

The Committee of the Montreal Auxiliary Bible Society beg to state to those persons in the Country, who may receive copies of this paper without having subscribed for them, that this method has been taken to extend its circulation, but with no intention of holding them in any way accountable; at the same time it is hoped that they will use exertions to circulate the copies sent, and remit any thing, if collected.

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