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AS THE BOARD MEETINGS are now to be held on the third Tuesday of each month, instead of the second as heretofore, the RECORDER will hereafter be issued on the 1st of October, December, February, April, June and August, instead of the 15th of the other months.

ANNIVERSARY SERMON PREACHED IN QUEEN STREET METHO-  
DIST CHURCH, TORONTO, ON SUNDAY, MAY 9TH, 1880,  
BY THE REV. GEORGE COCHRAN.

THE TRUST AND THE DUTY.

"Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem."—Isa. ii. 3.  
"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."—Rom. x. 17.

Religion is a universal fact—coeval with man upon the earth, and co-extensive with the human race. When man first opened his eyes to look upon the world in its new-made beauty, the imperial ways of physical sense furnished avenues to the knowledge of the seen and temporal; at the same time an inward and spiritual sense, a three-fold intuition of dependence, responsibility and reverence opened towards the Infinite and Eternal, and man's heart cried out "for God, for the living God." This cry was answered by a Revelation, through which man was made acquainted with the law of life and duty, and rose into fellowship with the God and Father of his spirit. Thus religion is rooted in the very nature of the human soul, and nourished by communications from God Himself; and though this ideal life was obscured by sin's eclipse, it has not been lost, for God who revealed His wisdom in creation, has revealed His love in Christ, by whom sin is condemned and the sinner redeemed. The unfolding of this love, that it may have practical effect, is the purpose of Divine Revelation as contained in the Holy Scriptures. "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son."

*I. Knowledge of Divine Truth comes by Revelation.*—Comparative Theology has shown that all nations refer the origin of Religion to a divine source. None claim it as the invention or discovery of man. Plato affirms that even the names of God were not of human origin, but given by divine revelation. The universal tradition of certain central truths of Religion, harmonizing with the Scriptures, and in possession of peoples long excluded from communication with one another, argues a common source whence those traditions must have sprung; and the nearer we approach the cradle of the race, the purer do we find the traditions of the people. We have the testimony of the best scholars that the early Egyptians and Hindoos were Monotheists. It was only as the original traditions grew dim and were corrupted, because there was no written word, that in the lapse of time these nations glided into polytheism and idolatry. All nations turn toward the cradle lands as they trace the current of their traditions to the original source. Greece looked toward the East. China looked toward the West. The power of the human soul to find out the truth about God, duty, salvation, destiny— independently, has not been made manifest, and never can be proved. Man has always and everywhere been surrounded by religious influences of some kind; some seeds of religious truth have always been in his mind. If you throw into a human mind a truth, or the germ of a truth, by instruction from without, you alter the condition of that mind forever. Those who live within the environment of the Holy Scriptures are influenced thereby, whether consciously or otherwise, toward their best and truest attainments in the knowledge of God and of divine things. Even those to whose ears nothing better than the faint and tremulous voice of tradition has been wafted, can never be looked upon as instances of natural reason attaining to the knowledge, or even the conception of God and religious truth. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."

*II. God's Word written has conserved the purity and progress of Revelation.*—The tendency of mankind toward polytheism and idolatry, renders it essential that God's Word should be written in a book and committed to the care of special custodians for the benefit of mankind. The Jews were selected for this purpose, and in their hands the Book grew with an "increasing purpose," through a period of fifteen hundred years, into the marvellous literature comprised in the Hebrew Scriptures of the Old Testament. It then passed into the hands of the Christian Church, and the Sacred Canon was brought to a fitting close by the addition of the New Testament. These two portions comprise the one volume of the Book—the one Revelation of God to man, a Revelation luminous with the features of a structural unity which shows it to be an organic whole, vital throughout with the same elements of doctrinal and ethical truth, the work of one mind. "Given by inspiration of God," it is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It is a fact, easily verified by the reader of history, that wherever this Book has not been known, or has been withheld from the people, there Religion has become corrupt and has tended ever toward worse and worse degeneracy.

*III. The Word of God has always been both light and power in the moral progress of the World.*—The Bible is a perfect standard of truth and duty, always in advance of man's actual condition. Its shout is *eccelsior*—nor will it cease to guide the purest and the wisest until they have entered the gates of light and dwell in the presence of the glory of God. Human nature is always below Revelation, and no culture of the intellect, no practice of virtue can ever become so perfect as to have outgrown this guide. The source of Revelation is in heaven, and as the stream can never rise above its fountain, the Bible will always be equal to the highest elevation of the human mind.

The Bible is not only light, it is also power; it comes with authority because it is the Word of God. The revival of a pure religious faith, and the practice of a better life, amongst any people who are fallen and corrupt, is

always owing to contact with those who have the written Word of God. When fifty-seven years of thoroughgoing persecution and idolatry had laid waste the temple and altar of Jehovah, in the reign of the wicked Manassah, the finding of a copy of the Law, and its public reading by order of Josiah, brought conviction of sin, amendment of life, and the restoration of a purer worship amongst the Jews of that period. The public reading and expounding of the Law by Nehemiah and Ezra, brought about a revival of pure religion amongst those who returned from the captivity. The translation of the Old Testament into the Greek language, 280 years before Christ, spread the bright dawn of a new morning over the nations round about, and prepared them for the clearer and fuller Revelation of the love of God in Christ, which the preaching of the Gospel and the writings of the New Testament spread throughout the Roman empire during the first and second centuries of the Christian era. And when the lapse into the night of ages crept over the Church, and flung the spell of spiritual paralysis over Europe, the Word of God was bound; and I need not tell you at any length, for you know it well it was the translation of the Bible into the vernacular, and its circulation amongst the people, accompanied by the earnest preaching of the Gospel, that brought back the thrill of life, and introduced the era of evangelism, which has continued with increasing power to the present day. Wherever the reformer moves on in the sublimity or moral power, the momentum that carries him forward is generated in the heart by the light which emanates from God's Holy Word and the vital impulse of Christ's constraining love. The Holy Scriptures have from the beginning held their place in the chief centres of the world's intellectual enlightenment and moral progress; and have ever been the chief agency in promoting and conserving both the one and the other. Wherever to-day the pulses of humanity beat strongly on the highway of liberty and in the path of moral progress, there we find the Word of God as pioneer, leading the world toward its millennial rest, that one "divine event to which the whole creation moves."

*IV. God has committed His Word to the Church in order to its uncorrupt tradition, and its world-wide circulation amongst mankind.*—The watchful care of Divine Providence over the written word, is seen in the manner of its transmission to our times. When we come to know the jealous regard of both the Christian and the Jew for the purity of the Sacred text, we see how impossible it is that there could have been any change, addition, or retrenchment, anything that would mar its integrity or sully the purity of its uncorrupted truth. Amongst the ancient Jews and also in the Christian Church there have been antagonistic sects and schools of thought, which have rendered it impossible that one party could have corrupted the Scriptures, even had they felt disposed to do so, without sure detection and exposure by the other. If the religious divisions of Christendom have served no other end, they have at least furnished a guarantee that the Holy Scriptures have been transmitted to us uncorrupt. The labours of the learned, since the revival of letters in Europe, in the criticism of the Sacred text, have been immense, well nigh exhaustive, and they go to show that the Word of God as we now have it, is pure, without defect, without redundancy, and not mixed with error.

The obligation to circulate the Scriptures is recognised and assented to by every Protestant. "Out of Zion shall go forth the Law and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." This is based on a sense of the importance of the Scriptures to the moral life of the world. Just here comes in the agency of the Bible Society, and its claims to our support. A society the most Catholic in its spirit, and the noblest in its aims; it seeks by union of Christian effort to circulate the Word of God, until that Word shall speak in every language, and every dialect, in every house and to every human heart throughout the wide world. Could any work be more simple? Can any effort be equally sublime? Is there any work with stronger claims to the support and sympathy of Christian people? Is there any work of such importance to the welfare of mankind? The Bible Society bestows its benefits unselfishly,

impartially, and for the good of all. It would promote the salvation of the world, and the welfare of the universal Church of Christ. Think of the service which it renders to our Sabbath-schools and to our Missionary enterprises. It opens a common fountain from which all alike may draw. What could we do in our Home Missions without the Word of God? And in the Foreign Field how could we ever get that Word into the language of the people without the help of this Society? Two years ago a company of Christian workers, the representatives of the chief Missionary Societies of Britain and America, met together in the City of Tokio, the capital of Japan, to consider how best, without loss of time, they might translate the Old Testament into the Japanese language. The New Testament, for years in the hands of a competent committee, was drawing toward the verge of a happy completion. Two whole days were spent in fraternal conference and a unanimous and satisfactory conclusion arrived at as to the mode of procedure. But supposing the Book translated—the channel of communication opened up—how shall these missionaries find means to print and publish, so that the Word of God, like the water of life, may flow forth freely and abundantly, and irrigate all this thirsty land? Just here, waiting, ready, stand the agents of the three great Bible Societies of the Protestant world, prepared at once to take the manuscript from the hands of the translators, and without long delay to hand them back the printed Book in copies multiplied and still multiplying in abundance equal to every demand. As we witness the efforts of these twin Societies—the Missionary and the Bible—to place the Word of God in the hands of the peoples “that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide their feet into the way of peace,” we may well count it occasion of thankful gladness that this grace is given unto us to lend a helping hand. The good already accomplished is increasing motive to untiring zeal and liberality in the continuance of this work until the Law going forth out of Zion and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem, shall fill the whole earth with the knowledge of salvation, through “the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away; but the Word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.”

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## Bible Society Recorder.

TORONTO, 21st JULY, 1880.

### BOARD MEETINGS.

The regular monthly meeting of the Board was held on Tuesday, May 18th, the Hon. Wm. McMaster, Vice-President, in the chair. The Standing Committees for the year were appointed as follows:—

On Agency and Colportage:—The Rev'ds Dr. Reid, Dr. Potts, H. D. Powis, E. M. C. Botterill, W. S. Rainsford, J. C. Antliff, and Messrs McCord, Brown, Kennedy, Colonel Moffatt, Messrs Thompson, Page and the Secretaries.

On the Ketchum Bequests:—The Rev'ds Dr. Rose, D. J. Macdonnell, and A. H. Baldwin, Messrs McCord and Hoyles, Dr. Ogden and the Secretaries.

On the care of the premises :—Dr. Geikie, and Messrs Brown, Mortimer, Lugsdin, and Higgins.

On distribution of Scriptures on Railways :—Messrs Harvie, Rogers, Trees and Thomson.

A Special Committee was appointed to consider and report upon prices, the management of Branch Depositories, &c. :—The President, Treasurer, and Secretaries, the Rev'ds Dr. Rose, J. G. Manly, J. Smith and E. M. C. Botterill. Other business was attended to, and the meeting closed as usual with prayer.

The Directors met again last night, Hon. W. McMaster in the chair. After the reading of the Scriptures, and prayer led by the Rev. W. S. Rainsford, the minutes were read and approved. A report was presented from the Committee on Agency and Colportage recommending that this year, as in 1877-78, all the Branches be visited by Agents, and making some suggestions as to Colportage. The Report was adopted. Several applications from Muskoka were considered and grants voted, the ordinary business transacted, and the meeting closed with prayer led by the Rev. H. D. Powis.

We regret much to notice in the papers the announcement of the death of Thomas Dallas, Esq., Treasurer of the Orillia Branch. The Society has lost in him a very warm friend and a very active Branch officer.

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### SEVENTY-SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

On Wednesday, May 5th, the Annual Meeting of this Society was held at Exeter Hall.

The Right Hon. the EARL OF SHAFESBURY, K. G., President, in the chair.

The Rev. CHARLES E. B. REED opened the meeting by reading part of the 60th chapter of Isaiah, and engaged in prayer.

The Rev. WALTER J. EDMONDS read the abstract of the Seventy-sixth Annual Report.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CAN. BURY: My Lord, and my Christian friends, it is a great satisfaction to me, in this age of much indifferentism and of much compromise, to stand in the presence of an assembly which is united under your presidency for the maintenance of a great truth. The age is tired of negations, is tired of attempts to bring men together who have nothing in common. We, thank God, have in common our faith in the Book of Life. We are united here to-day to proclaim our allegiance to the God who has given us that Book. We believe that on the precepts and practice of that Book is built the civilization, not only of this Christian country, but of the world. We thank God that that Book is so freely circulated throughout the world, and we look for the most blessed results in the real civilization and elevation of the human race, through that best gift of God to man. My Lord, if I may venture to say so in your presence,—and unfortunately you are now growing old, and there is no danger of spoiling you by a few words

of praise,—if I may venture to say so, it is an additional satisfaction that we meet in this Hall for this great purpose, under the presidency of one who through a long life has made the Bible the guide of his political and public career. By his adherence to it, as the guide of his own heart, he has been able in all his public dealings to win the confidence of his fellow countrymen, even of those who at one time were most opposed to the efforts which he has made for the good of man. Now I believe that the work in which we are engaged, of circulating the Scriptures of Truth, is the best mode of preserving the human race from the degradation which since the fall has been pressing it down. Philosophers say they desire to elevate the human race, but we know a more excellent way than they of accomplishing this great object, and we turn to those Scriptures which we desire to circulate as the best mode of elevating and improving mankind. A great cry has gone up in this generation for the unity of Christendom. We hear a great deal about it on all sides of us, and we all pray for it, though there may be different views of how that unity is to be attained. This unity of Christendom which men yearn for is, I say, better to be attained by the circulation of the Scriptures than by any other means. How is an outward body to be given to those who are animated by one spirit? God only knows. In His own good time He will bring all good Christians together. But meanwhile the best practical step which is being taken throughout the world to make Christendom one is the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, which we are endeavouring to promote by coming here to-day. And then it is not enough we are told—and we gladly recognise that—it is not enough that there should be a mere circulation of the letter. We desire to have the spirit, but through the letter and through the blessing of God upon our prayerful efforts, we trust that the Spirit will descend. After all, it is in the circulation of this written Word of God and this statement of primitive truth which the written word of God contains, that we have the best hope of attaining the spirit of Christianity. That spirit will not be found merely in the dry bones of old institutions. No doubt the outward form of it, when blessed by the Spirit of God, has in all ages been found most useful for the preservation and the advancement of God's truth. But there is something better than the outward form. I dare say many of you here may have heard an anecdote of Merle d'Aubigné, the great historian of the Reformation. Within a few months of his death he told a friend of mine that he had been at Rome, and had had an interesting conversation with a priest, and that the priest had shown him the relics, in which they gloried, of St. Peter; D'Aubigné said to him, "Most interesting they are, but we, for our part, have also most interesting relics. We have relics of St. Paul." The priest was interested to hear that there were other relics besides the relics he had shown. "Our relics of St. Paul," said D'Aubigné, "are the relics of his writings, and in these writings of his we think that we have more of his spirit than if we had the relics of his dead body." Let us be thankful therefore, that we have these relics of St. Paul, and that we are trying to spread them throughout the habitable globe. They will do much for the unity of Christendom; more than that, they will do much for the unity of the human race. I was looking yesterday at the *Life of Henry Venn*, a man whose name in this hall and in all England will be ever venerated, who, from his office in Salisbury Square, controlled the missionary efforts of the Church of England throughout the whole world to their great advantage for so many years. In his life you will find a speech which he delivered before this Society in this hall, and you will find him testifying that the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society was the great pattern of the work of Missions throughout the world; that it is not right merely to regard the Bible Society as being the handmaid of the missionary societies, but that the dispersion of the Scriptures of truth throughout the world gives them a power for the conversion of the whole world to the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, such as could be attained by no other means. That God may prosper this work in His own time, bring us all together, and prepare

the world for His second coming, is the prayer in which, I am sure, we who are gathered together in this hall to-day will all join, and I am equally sure that you will not hesitate to accept the motion I have to propose—that the interesting Report just read be printed and circulated.

The Rev. A. E. MOULE, B.D., of the Church Mission, Hanchow, seconded the resolution in an excellent speech, in which he said, among other things, that if there is any society which deserves the name of an inland Mission in China, it is the British and Foreign Bible Society. He gave two very interesting cases of men in China brought to the light by the simple means of the Bible. He gave these to show that “perhaps the day of harvest is not yet; but, thank God, the early flowers of spring time and the blossoms, at all events, are to be seen, the prophecy and the promise of fruit-bearing summer.”

The Bishop-designate of LIVERPOOL (Canon Ryle), on rising to move the second resolution, was received with loud and prolonged cheering. He said: Lord Shaftesbury, and my dear Christian friends,—Called, as I am likely to be in a very short time, to fill a very important position in the North of England—and called most unexpectedly—I am not at all sorry to have an early opportunity of declaring publicly upon this platform my unwavering attachment to the British and Foreign Bible Society. Since I had the honour of being informed I was likely to fill that position, I have had, I suppose, like most people, a great deal of excellent advice. I have been recommended not to be extreme, and I have been recommended not to haul down the old colours, or to “show the white feather,” but I take all that advice, I hope, kindly, and I shall take leave to use my own discretion in following it. But there is one point, at all events, on which I halt not between two opinions. I have never had a second thought in my mind, since I was told I was likely to be Bishop of Liverpool, about supporting your excellent Society. I did think at one time, my lord, that my lot would be cast for the rest of my life in that diocese in which you live, and which you love so well, in the position—the very different one—of the quiet Dean of Salisbury Cathedral. I did believe and hope that I might there have been able to assist your lordship in Dorsetshire and Wiltshire in doing something for the Bible Society; and, at all events, I should have been a Bible Society dean if I had been nothing else. However, the providence of God has seen fit to call me very suddenly to a very different position. Whether you, my lord, and I shall ever meet in Lancashire I know not; but if God should prolong your life, and give you health and strength to come down to Lancashire, there is no part of England where you will be so heartily welcomed, or where your name is more honourably remembered as the Lord Ashley, who was so well known in connection with the ‘Ten Hours’ Bill. My dear friends, I am not at all ashamed of my connection with the Bible Society, for the very simple reason that I am not in the least ashamed of the English Reformation. There are those living, I believe, and there have been some who are now gone, who have not been ashamed to speak of the Reformation as the “Deformation,” and to call it a bone badly set, which ought never to have been set in the way it was. I have not the slightest sympathy with that view. I regard the Reformation of three hundred years ago as the grandest event in the history of this great empire—an event for which we, every one of us, ought to be thankful, and to which England owes her greatness and position at this moment among the nations of the world. We all know, and need not to be reminded, that the Reformation delivered our forefathers from ignorance of which we can form no conception, from superstition far exceeding anything referred to to-day about relics, and from a priestcraft exercising the most abominable tyranny over the bodies and souls of men. From all that, thank God, the Protestant Reformation delivered England. And what did it give? It gave us free access to the Father through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, neither Pope, nor cardinal, nor bishop, nor absolving priest interposing in the slightest degree. It gave free access to the Throne of Grace for every sinner who would go to

the fountain head. It gave us a true idea of the Christian ministry—not sacrificing priests, but ministers of God. It gave us a true standard of real scriptural holiness, not going into monasteries or nunneries, or wearing peculiar dresses, or putting on peculiar faces, but doing our duty, each one of us, in the shop, in the Parliament, behind the counter, behind the plough, as men and women, in that particular station of life to which God pleases to call us. For all this I desire to thank God. What has been the grand instrument in bringing about this mighty change? I am bound to say it was the translation of the Holy Scriptures into the vulgar tongue and the placing of the Bible in every parish. Henry VIII., with all his faults, was the instrument, under God, who made use of him as Herod did of Sennacherib, in making the Bible known to the people of every parish in the land. This laid the foundation of the Reformation, enabling the people everywhere to see what the Bible contains about justification by faith, about the blood of Jesus Christ, about the work of the Holy Ghost, about the nature of true holiness, about the true character of the sacraments, and the real nature of the ministry. Men's minds were leavened by thinking on those matters which they found in the Bible. It was not merely the preaching of the best preachers, or the writing of men like Cranmer and Ridley, but the Word of God on one side, and the blood of the martyrs on the other, that won the Reformation, and I regard the British and Foreign Bible Society as a standing witness to all the world wherever its name is known, that there are thousands and tens of thousands in England who will always testify their firm belief in the supremacy and sufficiency of God's written Word as the only rule of faith and practice by which we in England mean to steer our course. Now, I need hardly say our lot is cast in times to which the Archbishop of Canterbury has called your attention—times of shaking, times of doubt, times of questioning, times of free thinking. Let me urge all the friends of the Bible Society not to let their hearts tremble for a single moment at what they hear said against the Word of God. The Bible itself is its own best answer to the objectors. This fact cannot be explained away, that a Book which came from a nation that has no literature besides—a Book that came from a few Jews in a remote corner of the world—has now, after 1,800 years, more beauty, more power, more life about it, and has done more good than all the folios of the Fathers, than all the works of the schoolmen, and all the books that ever were printed. There remains the great fact which can never be explained away, that wherever that Book has gone it is for the healing of the nations. You have but to turn to any map of the world and mark out the nations where the Word of God is known, and those where it is not known, and you will see a broad distinction between the state of those nations which any child in a Sunday-school cannot fail to understand. Wherever the Bible is known, the standard of knowledge, of civilization, and of fellowship between man and man is infinitely higher than in those countries where the Word of God is not known. I remember myself, many years ago, when preaching in Hyde Park was permitted, going forth on a Sunday afternoon to hear the preaching. I heard some that was good and some that was not. I heard one man speaking against the Word of God and against the ministers of all denominations—denouncing not only the Church, but the Dissenters. "Those long black things," said the man, "with white chokers round their necks, are not to be trusted, and the Bible is a great imposition." When he had done his talk, and was out of breath, a working man came forward and answered him. He challenged him to say whether, if he looked at the world, he would not find those countries to be the happiest and best governed where the Bible was known and read. He asked him further to look at our own happy land of England, and to go to those families in this very city where the people read the Bible morning and evening, where the children are sent to Sunday-schools, and where the Bible is the recognised rule of life, and to say whether among those families there would not also be found the most sobriety, good temper, and holy living. He



said the Bible could not be such a very bad book to produce those results ; and, after all, although people tell us the Bible is worn out, and has done its work, there are many testimonies at this present day standing before the eyes of mankind that the old Book is the same as it ever was—the word of God unto salvation to all who read it in faith and prayer. The Book alone can do great works. I remember Archbishop Sumner speaking on that very point. I remember his wise and simple manner. No man was ever more underrated than he was. I heard him say : “ Some people think the Book can do no good unless a man goes with it to explain it ; but,” said he, “ if I must choose between the Book without the man and the man without the Book, give me the Book rather than the man, for I know the Book can make no mistakes, and I am sure the man may make a great many.” I would now ask your attention to one broad fact which your recent Reports have not drawn attention to—viz., the broad fact that in Mexico at the present moment there is a vast work of reformation going on. How did that work begin ? It began by the Bible being introduced by your Society. Nearly 100,000 copies of the Bible and parts of Scripture from your Society went through Mexico and set the people thinking ; and this was the means, under God, of laying the foundation of the Protestant work there, which is likely to bear such good fruit. I remember a lady coming to my own house from Mexico with another lady from New York. I was thankful to receive them ; they were admirable specimens of honourable Christian women. The Mexican lady told me that years and years ago a copy of Spanish Scriptures fell into her hands. She read it with faith and prayer, with nobody to instruct her, for eleven years, and the reading of the Bible alone, which came, I believe, from your Society, had been blessed by God to her conversion. I believe there is now work going on in Mexico demanding the sympathies of all Christian people, and I trust the people of England will never let that work languish for want of support. I may be allowed to say, before I sit down, that there is one other reason that weighs with me why I cheerfully embrace the opportunity of standing on the Bible Society platform this day. It gives me an opportunity of declaring how glad I am to meet my Nonconformist brethren whenever I have the chance. Of course, you are all perfectly well aware it is a blessed thing when people are entirely at unity among themselves. If we were all one Church in England, if there were no people called Dissenters, if we all worshipped in the same way, perhaps it might be better for us and perhaps not. I have been told sometimes that if in Parliament—I wish to speak with all respect and am not going to talk politics—men were all of one party, and if there was no Opposition, things would not go on so well as they do ; and I am not prepared to say that the stimulus of Nonconformity around us is not a very good thing for some of us clergy, and helps to keep us awake. But I am glad to meet my Nonconformist brethren on a platform on which I hope we are all of one mind. However much we may differ about other things, we agree in desiring to circulate the Word of God. Men call us idolaters of the Word. Let them call us what they please ; but we Protestants—Nonconformists and Episcopalians—plant the Bible before us as our rule of faith and practice ; we desire to preach by it, to live by it, and to steer all our conduct by its teaching. I am happy to say that I believe the Bible is drawing us nearer and nearer together. I take great interest in the revision of the Scriptures. You are aware that Committees have been sitting for some years—carefully chosen and wisely appointed—for the revision of the English version of the Holy Scriptures. One Committee sits for the revision of the Old Testament, and another for the revision of the New Testament. I am thankful to say that they keep up a correspondence with our American brethren across the Atlantic, and interchange thoughts with them. Upon the Commission for the revision of Scriptures there are not many bishops, deans, and professors, but some Nonconformist brethren who sit there to help the bishops, deans, and professors ; and if we can meet our Nonconformist brethren to revise the Holy Scriptures, it is very hard if

we cannot also help side by side to circulate those Scriptures. I am not certain that all the members of the revision Commission do support the Bible Society; but I feel strongly that sitting side by side at the same table to revise the same book, and doing what they can to make that book more perfect, I think they might. I have no fear of the result. Some people think the Bible will come out worse than before. I believe nothing of the kind. I believe it will be a far better book than ever, and be the means of drawing us nearer to one another. The closer we get to the Word of God the more likely we are to cease our miserable divisions and to work with one heart and mind for the circulation of the Bible throughout the world. In conclusion Canon Ryle moved:—

“That this meeting desires to acknowledge with deep thankfulness the goodness of Almighty God in providing the Society with means to prosecute its labours at home and abroad, and, having regard to the enlarged opportunities before it for extending the knowledge of God’s Word, appeals to all who love the Bible for sustained and increased support.”

The Rev. W. G. LAWES, F.R.G.S., of the London Mission, New Guinea, in seconding the resolution, said: I am here to speak for one department of the British and Foreign Bible Society’s work, to which only a passing reference has been made this morning. I represent the barbarous races who possess no written language, but who are perishing for lack of knowledge. The resolution which I have the honour to second speaks with thankfulness of the work accomplished through the grace of God by this Society at home and abroad. One of the most remarkable illustrations of its foreign work is to be found in that most interesting pamphlet which contains specimens of the 215 languages into which portions of the Word of God have been rendered by this Society. But another, if it could be published as a companion volume, would be even more full of sad and painful interest—if we could have printed in every language into which the Word of God has not yet been translated, some such verse as this, “Where there is no vision the people perish,” it would make a great volume, and we should be amazed at the amount of work yet to be done before the whole world has the Word of Life. I have recently returned from mission work on the largest island in the world but one, in which no portion of the Word of God is yet possessed by the people. Only six years ago the first Christian teachers landed on the south-east coast of New Guinea. Separated from our great Australian possessions only by Torres Straits, we have there some 300,000 square miles, over the whole of which the cloud of heathenism rests, and where the Word of Life is unknown. Enriched with many of the choicest gifts of God, this great fair land with the golden name is inhabited by an immense number of men belonging to different races, speaking many and divers languages, but all degraded by gross ignorance and by cruel superstition. In going among a people like these we have to pick up the language from their own lips. In this way a knowledge has been obtained of two of the languages spoken, and books have been printed in them, besides two languages spoken in the islands of Torres Straits connected with New Guinea. These books contain an epitome of Old and New Testament history in simple language. They are the foundations of a literature. The next step will be the translation of one of the Gospels, and I hope that, before long, some of the languages spoken in New Guinea will be included in the list of those published by the British and Foreign Bible Society. But can the Word of God be faithfully rendered into these barbarous and uncouth tongues, and can the natives of lands like these appreciate and understand the sublime truths of Revelation? May I briefly answer these two questions by referring to my own experience on a small, lone island in the South Pacific? In every field of inquiry and research we are accustomed to try, on a small scale, experiments for results which are to be of universal application. Savage Island is a small island in the South Pacific, on which lived one of the wildest specimens of savage men the world has ever seen. A weird wild set of leaping, yelling savages repulsed the great Captain Cook,

and caused him to give the island the name of notoriety which it still bears. John Williams followed him sixty years later, and justified the testimony of his great predecessor. In 1849 a Christian man and his wife from Samoa were left on the island as the first missionaries. They soon found that the people by whom they were surrounded were, indeed, savage islanders. They tore their dresses to see what their skin was like beneath: they laid rough and thievish hands on their goods, and killed their pigs and fowls; but they were terribly puzzled by the Book which they carried, and which the natives thought talked to them. The pioneers of Savage Island were exposed to terrible dangers. Two noted warriors were sent to kill the strangers. They came to the village where the man of God dwelt; they went to his house; they saw him sitting quietly reading his Book; they waited awhile; he still sat peacefully reading, and a great fear and trembling came upon them, and they were powerless; they waited again, and by-and-by they spoke to him, and then returned to their homes, restrained by the unseen hand of Him who said "Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm." The man of the Book prevailed. The Word of God grew and multiplied. The first teachers were men from Samoa, coloured men, who had only emerged into Christianity twenty-five years before. They prepared the first reading book in the language of the people, and then attempted a translation of the Gospel. A great day dawned on Savage Island, when in August, 1861, the first portion of the Sacred Scriptures reached the island in my charge as their first English missionary. The new Book, the Gospel according to Mark, was greatly sought and highly prized. Our schools were filled at seven o'clock in the morning with an eager throng, anxious to learn to read. Old men and women were there, painfully learning their letters, while younger ones spelt out the words, rejoicing in the great achievement. It was no easy task. Books were few, teachers fewer. The teacher sat with his book before him, and his class all around: some held their books cornerwise, others held them upside down. But they learned to read. This eagerness to learn was the greatest possible stimulus to their missionary to give them as soon as possible the Word of God, for which they were hungering. I was accompanied by a veteran translator, whose name should be well known in the annals of this Society—the Rev. George Pratt, from Samoa. To his scholarly ability one of the best versions of the Sacred Scriptures extant owes much of its accuracy and beauty. During his short residence he prepared the Gospels and Acts, and through the liberality of this Society they were soon in the hands of the people. During my residence I was able to complete that work, so that in 1869 Savage Island received the whole of the New Testament, and on my return to this country in 1872 the British and Foreign Bible Society printed for Savage Island a revised edition of the New Testament, with the books of Genesis, Exodus, and Psalms. This was sent out—a grand library all bound in calf, with gilt edges; and for luxuries like this of course the people were only too glad to pay. I have the satisfaction and pleasure of announcing that the whole of that edition has been paid for, and at least £774 sent to the Bible Society from Savage Island. I have also the pleasure of announcing that the whole of that edition is sold out, and my brother, who succeeded me there, and who is now on his way home, hopes to carry through the press a new edition, together with some other portions of the Old Testament. My lord, this is the seventeenth language of the South Sea Islands which has been reduced to a written form, and in all of which the first books printed were portions of the Word of God. All translators of the Sacred Scriptures know the difficulty of this work. It must always be a patient, prayerful, plodding, persevering work; but I have found in the prosecution of it no insuperable difficulty in rendering into idiomatic native the sense and words of the original. All translators, too, engaged in work like this, and only they, know how great a debt of obligation they owe to such men as my Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, the Bishop of Durham, and the late lamented Dean Alford, for the invaluable help which their works

render to all who are trying to translate the Scriptures. And what has the Word of God done for Savage Island? It has brought life and immortality to light. The people that walked in darkness have seen great light. Out of 5,000 people on that island there are now 1,670 communicants, members of Christ's Church, men and women who have a clear perception of the great central truths of Christianity. The reality of their faith is seen in their changed lives, and one of the greatest characteristics of this is their love of Sacred Scripture. It has given a light in the hour of death. An old man who had grey hairs upon him before he heard the name of Christ, and who had patiently learned to read in our schools, was, a few years ago, brought suddenly near to death. He failed to recognise his dearest, nearest relatives. His wife he knew not. Soon after he was asked if he knew Christ: "Know Jesus?" he said; "Oh, yes, I know Him. I learnt of Him years ago, and all my hope and trust is in Jesus now;" and soon after he passed away, as we believe, into the presence of that Lord whom he had learned to love, and whose name had come to occupy so dear a place in his affections. "And at eventide there shall be light." The Word of God has laid the foundation of social order; law and government have been established, and in their native Parliaments the Word of God is always the Book of their appeal. Recently Her Majesty's High Commissioner for Polynesia, Sir Arthur Gordon, visited the island, and strengthened in the hand of the native legislators by entering into a sort of treaty with them that their law against the introduction of spirits should not be repealed without consulting Her Majesty's representative. The Word of God is the source and foundation of education. "The entrance of Thy Word giveth light." The foundations of their literature were laid in the Word of God, and on Savage Island to-day there is perhaps a larger proportion of those who can read and write in relation to the whole population than in any other part of the civilized world. The Word of God established commercial relations with the big outside world. No sooner does Christianity come in than new wants are created, and that leads to the development of industry and of character. While formerly Savage Island was dreaded by the navigator, now many vessels visit its shores, regularly carrying away the native produce, and giving in return the trade of the civilized world. Homes of comfort are now to be found on this barren rock; peace and plenty have taken the place of war and famine, and all this blessed change the people attribute to the Word of God. So great has been the change that a gentleman who visited it in 1864, and spent some hours on the island, returned to England and informed the British public, in a two-guinea book, that the Savage Islanders were always a gentle and mild race, and that the great navigator had made a mistake in the name he gave them. Nearly twenty years' experience as a missionary leads me to believe very strongly that in the Word of God we have the only true civilizer of men; that every so-called civilization which springs from any other source is but a base and spurious one. But wherever the Word of God takes root it must, like the banyan tree, extend its blessed shade, every new branch taking root and giving out others. No sooner had Savage Island become Christianized than an auxiliary missionary society was formed, and £5,000 has been subscribed during the last seventeen years, testifying the people's appreciation of the Word of God and their desire that others should share with them in its blessing. And, my lord, some from Savage Island are nobly working for Christ in that great island of New Guinea, while the noble army of martyrs has been increased by some from that lone island. Only last year six fell in New Guinea, victims to the cruelty of the natives. They died in their effort to save others. Thirty years ago a stranger landing on their island would certainly have been killed. In work like this the Missionary Society and the Bible Society, like twin sisters, go hand-in-hand. You cannot give people the Word of God until men have picked it up word by word from native lips, and the missionary knows that the only true basis of the people's faith and their religious life is the in Word of God; and he knows, too, that the Bible

Society is always ready to crown his work by printing all that he can translate. And now, my lord, with enlightened Savage Island on the one hand, and benighted New Guinea on the other; with behind us that noble track marked out by this Society, in the increase of the blessings of peace, and life, and joy; with the great trackless desert before us, unfertilized by the streams of the water of life, can we rest upon the finished work, and forget what has yet to be done?

Can we to men benighted  
The Lamp of Life deny?

The resolution was unanimously agreed to.

The Rev. Dr. MANNING, of the Religious Tract Society, proposed a vote of thanks to the various officers, branches, &c., &c., and the election of officers for the ensuing year. After recounting in detail how he had visited many places in Europe, Africa, Asia, and America, he went on to say: I have thus visited all the entries of Christian activity, from San Francisco to Damascus, with a special purpose and special qualification. I have gone with a resolve to believe nothing that I am told, and to look at everything which I am not wanted to see. I have gone out on behalf of the Religious Tract Society as its chief business officer, for the special purpose of investigating the condition of things, and seeing how far they came short of the representations which had reached us. And then I have no bias or interest at least in favour of this Society. In one sense you and we are one in the end and aim we have set before us; but our agencies are perfectly distinct, and, remembering the imperfection of our poor, fallen humanity, it has been impossible but that there should be occasionally rivalry and competition among our respective agents in different parts of the mission field. I, therefore, claim to speak to-day with the knowledge of an expert, and with the impartiality of an unbiased and disinterested witness. If I were to say to you that I have found your operations faultless and flawless; if I were to say that they had attained a standard of ideal perfection; if I were to say that they were as perfect as my imagination could have constructed them; if I had angels for my agents, and perfect saints for my object, you would not believe me. I can scarcely say that, my lord, for the operations of the Religious Tract Society; but this I can say with implicit confidence and absolute sincerity, that your work, Divine and noble as it is in its conception, is wisely administered, is well and vigorously conducted; that you have all over the world, as far as I have been able to visit them, a staff of men of whom any society might be proud, if the petty feeling of pride were not swallowed up in the deeper sense of gratitude to Almighty God, who has given you such servants and agents. Just one or two sentences more suggested by what has fallen upon our ears to-day out of the Report. Mention has been made in this Report, and in many reports submitted this year and last year, of the danger of a deficit and the want of funds adequately to carry on the work we have set before us. It seems as though the normal expenditure was in excess of the normal income; that in our endeavours after enlargement we have transgressed the bounds and limits of prudence. There has been preached to us on all sides—sometimes by our committees and sometimes by our contributors—the necessity of retrenchment and curtailment. My lord, I asked these gentlemen, where will you begin? Will you begin at home in your domestic operations, in this happy England of ours which owes all its prosperity and its civil and religious liberties to the Bible? Are we so unworthy of our heroic and patriotic ancestors, the giants who feared God and did not fight against Him; who suffered and died that they might transmit to us this free and happy England whose constitution is based upon the Bible, and may God ever keep it so! Is it for us now to pause and restrict our agency? Is it for us now, just at this time, when we see all around us the rising flood of infidelity and Romanism, two tendencies not so unlike in essence and origin as they seem, springing as they do both of them from inability or unwillingness to believe in an invisible

God and an unseen Saviour; when these twin evils are rising higher and higher around our embankments, and the waves and billows are dashing against our walls, and we can see and almost feel, the wave as it feels its way, seeking out some weak and unguarded point through which it may pour its destructive wasting flood and bury all—is it at such a time as this that we shall relax our energies and retrench our domestic efforts! God forbid. Shall we cross the Channel and begin at France? France, so thickly sown with the seed of the Church which is the blood of the martyrs, with its memories of the Edict of Nantes and of St. Bartholomew; where other men have laboured, and we are invited to enter into their labours; where the fields are white unto the harvest, and only wait the reaper's hand! I say it not from vague report; I say it from personal investigation of the facts. I do not believe that in the world since the days of the Reformation there has been such a movement, such a revival, such an awakening, as seems now to be commencing in France. Shall we, then, recreants to our cause and King, turn aside and begin our retrenchment when what is needed is not simply sowing the seed so much as reaping the harvest! Italy, upon which we entered but the other day with such notes of triumph and assurance of victory—that Eternal City which, by bitter irony and sarcasm, called itself the mother of the Churches and the capital of Christendom, from which the one book that was excluded, was God's holy Book and Christ's pure Gospel. God threw wide the door hitherto closed against us, and we have gone in: shall we now turn back and say that the policy of retrenchment is forced upon us? Spain, just rising from a paralysis of centuries, and looking with some dim hope to the possibilities of rising yet once again to the height from which she has fallen! The Turkish Empire, where I seem to see the long, dark night with its dense, black clouds lifting, and the rising sun hurling its golden arrows into the clouds, that they shall vanish and disappear, leaving brightness and beauty beneath—there, where the Christian races are stretching out their hands to God and to us—shall we return and retire from that field? Oh! my lord, I care not to discuss the question on the ground of theory. I simply ask your Committee and ours, and all Christian workers, where will you begin? Tell me the point at which you will commence, and then we will discuss the theory. But is it necessary? Have we risen to that standard of Christ's requirement and of our possibility? Let us stand before His cross; let us look up into that pale, wan face, bathed with tears, and sweat, and blood; let us remember the depth of deep damnation from which He lifted us; the height of glory and blessing to which He has raised us; the great price wherewith He redeemed us, and our own utter guilt and unworthiness, and then answer the question, How much owest thou thy Lord? Has the debt we have incurred been paid?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That where a present far too small.

All we have, all we are, belongs to Him. No more talk of retrenchment and curtailment. "Speak thou unto the armies of the living God that they go forth."

The Rev. E. E. JENKINS (Secretary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society): My Lord Shaftesbury, I have been called upon suddenly to second the resolution which has been so ably and eloquently moved by the Secretary of the Tract Society. I represent the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and I beg to tender on behalf of its committee and of our missionary brethren, unfeigned thanks for the munificent help of the Bible Society. I am an old Indian missionary, an old member of Bible committees, and a Bible distributor; and have had the happiness frequently of introducing the first Bible into a heathen village. It has not been my privilege to work on mission lands for some years past, but I am in direct communication with missionaries labouring in all parts of the world. And, my lord, let me say here that I have taken

heart to-day as I have heard the noble sentiments which have fallen from the speakers who, I venture to say, have made this meeting memorable. I have learned two things since I have been here—that there is an anti-Christian scepticism, and a growing belief in Jesus. These two facts appear from the Report and the speeches to-day to be equally conspicuous, and they ought to be mutually self-destructive, but they are not so at present: they will be by-and-by. As for the first, I think we are in danger of exaggerating the power of scepticism. The fact is, that the ungodliness of the present day happens to wear a sceptical guise. It will wear some other guise twenty years hence. It borrows the language of scepticism, it catches the intellectual manner of the moment, but it does not represent the judgment of the masses. As for the other point, my heart warms as I think of it, that there is a growing belief in Jesus, not so much fostered by the publication of books called “The Life of Christ,” as by the dissemination of the words themselves of Jesus. In the blessed Scriptures, recording His sayings, depicting His acts, and unfolding in gradual disclosure, according to the diligent sincerity of the student, His infinite character, Jesus, in the many-tongued Bible, is walking through the nations of the earth, as it were, upon the wings of the wind. Multitudes outside churches, of whom you and I know nothing, are reading the Gospels. They cannot read churches, and do not at present desire to; they cannot decipher ecclesiastical acts; I am afraid they despise the nomenclature of convocations and conferences and creeds; but the Bible is no mere church book, no mere party book. If Christianity be anything, as a learner’s prelate said this morning, that which it is, is found within the records of the Book which this Society is circulating. Here is Christianity; I do not say it is nowhere else, but I say that the authority of Christianity is here: and men are drawing near to this source as travellers in a desert, coming from different directions and drawn by the signs of water, meet at a desert well. It may be that they have nothing to draw with, when they come at present: but they have thirst, and thirst is not only an importunate appetite, but an ingenious one. Thirst will cling to a rock and say, “I will not let thee go unless thou bless me.” If there be a spring of water anywhere, you may leave thirst to find it out. I rejoice in the prevalence of this thirst for the Word of God, and in the fact that He who sat by the Samaritan well is sitting by many wells to-day—not now localised within bodily conditions and national peculiarities, but diffused everywhere, and as intimately in contact with the consciences of men as the air they breathe. I remember with great consolation that incident referred to in the Acts of the Apostles. He who led the eunuch to pause upon the passage of Scripture which contained all he wanted, if he could have the grace to draw it out, did not send that man back to Jerusalem to join himself to the Church, but sent the Church out to him, sent the Evangelist to him; and as the numbers of the readers of the Word of God are increasing, from whatever cause, it is the vocation of churches to plant themselves upon the highways of thought and of life, and to look out for travellers who are thirsty and exhausted, and let them hear the voice of the Holy Ghost—not in harshness, for the Holy Ghost never speaks harshly; but in the loving cadences of His own tender love; “Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.” At this time of the meeting I will not further detain you; but I have very much pleasure in thus bearing my testimony to the priceless worth of the work this Society is doing, and may God more abundantly prosper it!

The names of the proposed Committee were then read by the Rev. C. E. B. REE, after which the resolution was unanimously agreed to.

Short addresses were given by the ex-secretary, the Rev. C. Jackson, Mr. Braithwaite, and the Earl of Shaftesbury, who expressed much regret at the absence of the Rev. Mr. Berne, whom he called the very prince of Secretaries. The proceedings were then closed with the benediction, pronounced by the Rev. Mr. JACKSON.

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