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THE NEW YEAR.

At this season, when all the world have been wishing each other a Happy New Year, it is not unfitting for us to greet all our Branches and members with the same kind wish. Most heartily we do so; wishing them a New Year not of mere pleasure, but of deeply felt happiness. Moreover, we do so expectantly, for we have good reason to look for the realization of our wishes or the answer to our prayers—and should not all right wishes become prayers? For as there is great reward in keeping God's commands, so is there great happiness in spreading God's Word. Does not the husbandman, when sowing his grain, anticipate the harvest, and is it not the happiness of hope that nerves his hand to scatter widely and plentifully? Surely then we who are scattering the incorruptible seed, with God's promise that it shall not return unto Him void, must feel that ours is happy work. Therefore, it is with no doubtful mind that we look forward to a Happy New Year for all our sincere and loyal members.

May we not venture to take another lesson from the children of this world, who our Master has told us are wise in their generation. At the beginning of a new year they take stock. They look back at what they have done in the past, and make plans for the future. Although it is not the beginning of the Society's year, and, therefore not the time for reviewing its operations, should we not as individuals look back on the way we have been led, thank God for His numberless mercies, note wherein we have failed through unbelief, indolence, or other besetting sin, and resolve, with God's help, to be more

earnest in seizing all the many opportunities of good which He gives us. In thus looking back and forward as to all the relations of life in which we stand, let us not fail to ask the question : " What have I done as a member of the Bible Society ? Have I merely subscribed ! Was that done cheerfully or grudgingly ? Or have I been really interested in the dissemination of God's Word all over the world, and especially in my own neighbourhood ?

Our Dominion, and especially our own Province, is enjoying great prosperity in temporal things, and, what is still better, God has vouchsafed very marked special showers of blessing in several places. Are we truly thankful ? Are we shewing our thanks in our lives as well as with our lips ? Do we remember that God has caused His face to shine upon us not only because He delights in blessing us, but " that His way may be known upon earth ? " We have abundance of bread in our land ; but let us remember that " Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God." When there is famine in any part of the world, how readily it calls forth the sympathy of all feeling hearts ; yet there are multitudes starving for the Word of God, not only in foreign lands but at our own doors. It is true they are not crying out for it, because, alas, they do not know their need. We can do much as individuals to see whether our neighbours possess the precious book, and where we find they do not, to awaken a desire to have it. Many ministers adopt the plan of not carrying their own pocket Bibles with them when visiting, so that they can ask for one. This enables them to discover who have got them, and, alas, they find more than some would think without one, and where possessed, too often it is in some out of the way place because seldom used, and even sometimes, like Saul " among the stuff." When he was brought out he was seen to be head and shoulders higher than the people around him. If we can get our fellow-sinners to bring their Bibles out and use them, how immeasurably will they find them above all other books. It is certain that we can do much to influence them in this, and in no way can we more directly help them towards having happy years in this world and a happy eternity hereafter.

" Within this awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries ;
Happiest they of human race,
To whom their God has given grace
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
To lift the latch, to force the way ;
But better had they ne'er been born,
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn."

BIBLE STUDY.

We magnify Scriptural instructions. Israel did not live forty years on the passover supper, but had manna from heaven daily. Nor do Christian workers live on the lessons of truth that first gave them Christian hope. If they are not learning, going deeper into the Scriptures and into themselves, they become languid, or mechanical, or spasmodic, or quarrelsome, or useless.
—*Christian Weekly.*

Bible Society Recorder.

TORONTO, JANUARY 15TH, 1875.

THE QUARTERLY MEETING of the Board of Directors was held in the Board Room, on Tuesday, the 12th inst., the Hon. G. W. Allan, President, in the chair. The Rev. D. J. MacDonell, B.D. read a portion of Scripture and led in prayer. The minutes of the last meeting having been confirmed, the Depositary's statement of receipts and expenditure was read and the gratuities during the month of December were confirmed. Reports for December from the Revds. J. G. Manly, R. H. Warden, J. Bredin, and H. Cocks were submitted, and also the schedule of the colporteurs' labours.

A letter was read from Mr. Lowry, with reference to the appointment of a second collector for the city. After some conversation the following resolution was moved by John K. MacDonald, Esq., seconded by W. T. Mason, Esq., and unanimously adopted.

"That the Board having heard the letter of Mr. John Lowry, would express their entire confidence in him in the various labours he has undertaken in connection with the Society, and record their appreciation of the manner in which these duties have been discharged; and while they believe that no one will be found who will devote himself more thoroughly to the work of collecting than he has done, yet from a sense of the duty they owe to the Society, with the city so largely increased as it is, they are compelled to adhere to the decision come to at a previous meeting,

The Senior Honorary Secretary read a letter from the Rev. T. B. Bergne, Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, expressing regret at hearing of the retirement of the Revd. John Gemley and George Hague, Esq., from the Secretariat.

After hearing some extracts of a private letter to Dr. Hodgins, from that old and zealous friend of the Society, the Rev. Dr. Taylor, it was moved by the Hon. William McMaster, seconded by John McBean, Esq., and unanimously adopted "That the Rev. Lachlin Taylor, D.D., be appointed to represent this Society at the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society in May next, and at the meetings of any other kindred Societies in the mother country."

After disposing of some minor matters, the meeting was closed at 9.30 P.M., with prayer led by the Rev. J. M. Cameron.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEW BRUNSWICK AUXILIARY OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

The fifty-fifth annual meeting of the New Brunswick Auxiliary Bible Society, was held on the evening of January 8th, in the hall of the Mechanics' Institute, St. John, N.B., which, notwithstanding the inclement character of the weather, was completely filled, even the gallery being crowded. On the platform we observed, among others, Rev. Mr. Brigstocke, Rev. Mr. Overy, Rev. Mr. Stavely, Rev. Mr. Bennet, Rev. William B. Armstrong, Rev. Mr. Carey, Rev. Dr. Waters, Rev. Mr. Evans, Rev. Mr. Temple, Messrs. T. W. Daniel, R. Cruikshank, John Wishart, John Fisher, T. B. Barker, John Boyd, Dr. Waddell, M. Lindsay, and others.

The President of the Society, Dr. Botsford, occupied the chair.

After singing, the Rev. Mr. Evans, of Exmouth Street Church, then read the 46th Psalm, and offered up a brief, but fervent and impressive prayer.

Dr. Botsford, on rising, said he was always pleased at being present on this occasion above all others, and though the evening was not favourable, he was glad to see so many present, a fact which manifested that their interest had not diminished, and he hoped that they would continue to contribute and aid the work as long as the Bible was wanted. As there were other gentlemen to follow who would lay the subject of the evening clearly before them, he would not occupy their time any longer than was necessary. He held in his hand a volume of the first report of the Auxiliary, founded in 1819. In 1825 there was a resolution passed thanking Dr. Burns who founded the auxiliary here upon his retiring from office. He had been strengthened by one who had acted as secretary for a long term of years, and then became vice-president of the society.

The committee regretted the death of two members who had been called to pass through the valley, and they had every reason to hope they had entered into the Kingdom. The chairman then proceeded to read a number of notices from the first report of the society, drawn up by Mr. Patterson, showing in what estimation the work was held both at home and abroad. There were four volumes of these reports collected and bound by Dr. Patterson. The chairman then said the Ladies' Association in connection with the Auxiliary Society was founded in 1826, and that since its formation they had raised \$16,000. From the year 1819 the Auxiliary Society had raised over \$22,000, and the probability was, that in conjunction with the Ladies' Association they had raised \$40,000 exclusive of the other branches which had been formed. The committee of the Society, since its organization, had sent \$75,000 to the parent Society, though some of this was for books which had been imported. The Society might have gone on even had the labours of its founders, Burns and Patterson been withdrawn, but who could tell how much we owed to these men? God had said "Them that honor me I will honour." They were all called to be His ambassadors, and if they had not been honouring Him in the past, let them strive to do so in the future, and this sentiment ought to stimulate them in sending the gospel far and wide. After some further remarks the Chairman introduced the Secretary, Mr. Thomas Maclellan, who read the following report.

The Secretary, Mr. Maclellan, then read his report of the operations of the year.

The report stated that since last anniversary the Committee have met as often as necessary; that these meetings have been most harmonious, but that there is nothing very striking to report. Two of the friends of the Society, Dr. Patterson and Mr. John Smith, have passed away. Mr. Smith faithfully attended the meetings of the Committee, and strove to advance the interests of the Auxiliary Society. When in 1819 the New Brunswick Auxiliary was organized, Mr. James Patterson was appointed Secretary. When there was no agent in connexion with the Society, he corresponded with the office-bearers of the several branches, and until infirmities of years prevented him, he

never ceased to labour to aid the prosperity of the Society. Nine years ago he was relieved from the office of Secretary and appointed one of the Vice-Presidents.

The travelling agent of the Society, Mr. Russell, has visited the various branches in connection with the Auxiliary, as well as the parent Society's other auxiliaries in this Province, namely, Fredericton, Miramichi, and Restigouche. He travels over 4,000 miles and addresses 100 different meetings. The Committee trust he will continue to have tokens that his labour is not in vain.

BRANCHES.

The branches now number 64, two being added during the year.

ST. JOHN LADIES' ASSOCIATION.

The Treasurer received more from this branch than any other, and as its operations are confined to Portland and St. John, it deserves special reference, having since 1826 done good service, and hopes are expressed that its efficiency may be maintained.

FINANCES.

The Treasurer's account was published last April, he had only yet received, outside of the City, contributions and donations from four or five branches. It is expected the remittances of the others will come forward within the next few weeks. Particulars of the finances are, therefore, based on the Treasurer's accounts for last year, rather than the current. From these appear the following:—

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| St. John (including handsome collection of \$175.68 at last anniversary) | \$1,180 |
| From Branches | 2,840 |
| For Sales of Books at Depository | 650 |
| Legacy by the late Stephen Palmer, Sen., Hampstead | 100 |
| Making nearly \$5,000 in all received by the Treasurer. | |

£684 9s. sterling was forwarded as a free donation to the parent Society, a little over the average of the last few years. In acknowledging the last donation the Secretary of the parent Society thanks the friends in New Brunswick "for the munificent help they continue to afford." £250 were recently remitted in payment of an importation of books for the depository.

OTHER NEW BRUNSWICK AUXILIARIES.

In addition to the contribution from the St. John Auxiliary, the report of the parent Society acknowledges £90 from the other three New Brunswick Auxiliaries, viz. : £55 from Fredericton, £30 from the "Ladies Association" at Miramichi, and £5 from Restigouche, thus making New Brunswick's gift to the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1874, £775 sterling.

CONCLUSION.

The report concludes with congratulation at being enabled to help on the work. Popery, Infidelity and Science were all striving to undermine the authority of the Bible, and deny the existence of its Author, and never was there a time when it was more bitterly assailed, but the combined annual circulation of the world's Bible Societies is now between four or five millions of copies.

The first resolution was read by the Rev. Dr. Maclise. It is as follows:—

"That the report now read be received and printed under the direction of the Committee, and that the following gentlemen be the Committee for the present year: Messrs. J. Wishart, E. Sears, T. B. Barker, James Logan, W. Peters, John Boyd, G. W. White, Matthew Lindsay, Joseph Prichard,

Charles Patton, Robert Cruikshank, James McMillan, Henry Vaughan, William Welsh, S. D. Berton, Joshua Clawson : Portland, James Flewelling, H. A. Austin, M. PP."

The Rev. Dr. Maclise moved the first resolution, and in the course of his speech said : That 600 years ago it was a costly matter to scatter the Scriptures. In 1274 an abbot had made a present of a copy of the Scriptures, elaborately embellished, which cost 50 marks, or £33 6s. 8d., which, multiplied by 15—to give us the difference in the value of the money—cost some £500, while some years before two arches of London Bridge only cost £25.

The British and Foreign Bible Society, and the American Bible Society, now sell a copy of the Scriptures for 25 cents, and some even for 9d., which years ago cost £500. Thus was the Gospel spread broadcast, and he hoped that every family would possess the Scriptures, for the Bible was the most powerful book for the conversion of the infidel. He then related an anecdote of two lawyers, one of whom advised the other to read the Bible as the best commentary on itself, and the best evidence of its own truth, and came to the conclusion that it must be true from the perfectness of its moral law. Without the Bible men would degenerate into brute beasts, and he believed in the charity which sent the Bible to the heathen.

In conclusion, Dr. Maclise observed that the Bible was the most powerful instrument for saving souls, and he hoped this Auxiliary Society would continue their efforts, so that the knowledge of the Lord might be spread abroad and cover the earth as the waters covered the sea.

Mr. Russell, agent of the Society, seconded the resolution, and in doing so made what might, in some respects, be called the speech of the evening. It was full of facts, eloquent and plain. He gave a *resumé* of the operations of the Parent Society, from its origin down to the present time, furnishing statistics of circulation, and illustrating them in the most admirable manner. He described, in similar terms, the work of the Society in the heathen isles of the sea, and above all, the liberal responses in the shape of contributions, made by the converts in Aneiteune, the Sandwich Islands, Fiji, etc. The Parent Society gave them the Bible in their own tongue, and they made grateful returns. The missionaries of the different churches all needed versions of the Bible in the language of their converts, and the people supplied them. Mr. Russell described, in touching terms, how the Gaelic-speaking people of these Provinces were supplied with the Bible by the society, when only a few copies of the Bible were in the Provinces in the Gaelic tongue, and how liberally the people subscribed ever since. He also showed how well supplied are people generally with Bibles, and how home work was not neglected, while the foreign contributions to the great Parent Society were being made. Mr. Russell gave some very touching illustrations of the liberality of different persons towards the society.

The Rev. Mr. Carey moved the second resolution which was as follows :— "That the marked success which has attended the labours of the Parent Society, during its seventy years' existence, should stimulate to increased exertion. That in working and praying we may soon hope for the time when man shall be blessed in Him, and all nations call Him blessed."

He said it was a great day for England and for the world when John Wycliffe, the Rector of Lutterworth, began to translate the Bible, and to give the English people the Word of God in their own language. This grand event, the grandest event in Anglo-Saxon history, took place in the fourteenth century. A hundred years before that time the Barons had wrested Magna Charta from King John at the edge of the sword, but that event had made but little difference with the common people. Their hope lay in another direction, their desires were toward the heavenly Magna Charta, which makes all men equal as common sinners on a common platform before Almighty God. The effect of Wycliffe's Bible was very great. The first types used by Johannes Guttenburg were employed to print the Bible, and it was with

reverence I saw, in the British Museum, the Latin edition of Guttenberg's Bible, printed fifty years before a Bible was printed in England.

Before the foundation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in 1804, the Society for the diffusion of Christian Knowledge had distributed a few Bibles, but nothing in comparison to what was required. Ten thousand Bibles were sent to Wales, and when the question was put in the committee, "Shall we send the Bible to Wales?" the noble Joseph Hughes said, "To Wales, certainly, and if to Wales, why not to the rest of the world!" On the 11th March, 1804, a meeting was held at the London Coffee House and £700 subscribed to give the Bible to Wales, many liberal and noble Quakers contributing. During the seventy-one years since then, how much has been done! The boundless results will only be known when the light of eternity has been brought to bear on the subject. The first efforts of the society were small. In the first 25 years they only distributed a million copies, but year by year the number rose until in 1862, they struck two millions, and last year they distributed 2,400,000 copies of the Word of God. Since the formation of the Society they have distributed 71,000,000 Bibles directly, and 51,009,000 through other societies, numbering 122,000,000 in all. Does not this afford cause for rejoicing? Does it not show that we are engaged in no failing cause? Is it not a glorious success, and we are aiding in a triumph in contributing to a Society that has done so vast a work! The Society has translated the Bible into 210 languages, and counting reprints, have distributed it in 296 languages. Its income last year was £220,000 and the preparations for work this year are on even a more gigantic scale. Let us aid our brothers in England to give wings to the Word of God that it may fly over the earth and bless it. Look, too, at the noble donations on the books. One man in Ontario, gives £500, one in England, £5,000. The Queen gave £200, the Prince of Wales, £100, the Emperor of Germany, £190. The Marajah Duleep Sing gives £300 a year to the Society. The legacies last year amounted to £31,000, one was £5,000 from a lady in Warwickshire; a merchant gave £1,500, and another merchant, £2,220. Thus the little stream of Beulah has become a mighty river, carrying the merchandise of Zion on its bosom, and bearing the merchants of our God. Last year, 98,316 copies of the Bible had been distributed in France, 415,740 in Germany. In Germany and Switzerland, the very focus of rationalism, the distribution of the Bible has increased 15 fold in a few years. Thus in that land where it was upposed religion was wiped out, the Bible was going on conquering and to conquer. Last year the Bible was completed in the modern Russ, and a splendid copy of it presented to the Duchess of Edinburgh on her marriage. In Italy, by Trajan's column, there is a Bible stand. In China, 75,432 Bibles were distributed, and in Madras Presidency, 100,000, so that wherever you go, you find this Bible Society blessing every land, the nations waiting for it as for the dew. This Bible Society, like Moses when he was in his old age, its eye is not dim, nor is its strength abated. It is like the emblem of victory used by the sweet singer of Israel. "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree." It is the "little one" of Israel that "shall become "a thousand." It is like the grain of mustard seed of Christ's parable which groweth up and becometh greater than all herbs. For the Bible is like the river of life of the Revelations, flowing from the throne of God, and this Society is digging out channels for it. It is the tree of life giving out fruit every month, and we are called upon to do our utmost to aid in its distribution, and to promote its cause.

There were also interesting speeches from the Rev'ds. Messrs. Overy, Narraway, and Bennet, for some of which we regret much not having sufficient space left.—*St. John's Daily Telegraph.*

British and Foreign.

THE FIRST BIBLE SOCIETY :

WITH AN ANECDOTE ABOUT PUBLIC MEETINGS.

The Earl of Shaftesbury presided last summer at a meeting in Exeter Hall in support of the Irish Scripture Readers' Society. The attendance was not so large as the worthiness of the cause might have secured. In fact, one of the speakers referred to it as a "poor meeting." Lord Shaftesbury, in response to a hearty vote of thanks for his conduct in the chair, took up this phrase about a poor meeting, and in his own genial, cheery way, said, "I, for one, do not care one straw about this not being so large as some of the meetings, over which, from time to time, I preside. I have by this time become accustomed to very large meetings, and to very small meetings. Sometimes I have seen no good at all resulting from your large meetings; whereas from very small gatherings the results have been of the most blessed and encouraging character. I once saw a vast amount of good result from what would have been called no meeting at all. In strict phraseology there was no meeting, although it was advertised to be held in this hall and what did actually take place transpired in the hall where we are now assembled.

"There was a resolution to be moved and seconded; but beyond the two gentlemen who moved and seconded it—myself as chairman, and a gentleman of the press who had come as reporter—we had no audience. The reporter sat at that corner, and I sat in this chair. The two gentlemen moved and seconded the resolution, and I put it as chairman, and it was adopted with no dissentient voice.

"Well, the resolution of the meeting was reported in the newspapers, the money needed was soon forthcoming, and the person for whom the money was asked was sent to the University, where he studied for the Christian ministry, and he lived to become a black bishop of great usefulness and considerable distinction. So, whenever you are inclined to think slightly of a small meeting, or to feel discouraged by it, remember my little true story."

Lord Shaftesbury's personal recollection, which was received with much amusement, recalls to us a still more memorable example of a small meeting, followed by more wonderful results.

It is generally stated that the British and Foreign Bible Society, one of the mightiest agencies for good in the world, resulted from a desire to provide Bibles for the poor Welsh in their own tongue. A few friends belonging to the Religious Tract Society* met to talk the matter over, and one of them, the Rev. J. Charles, of Bala, said: "A Bible Society for Wales! Why not a Bible Society for the whole world?" The idea was at once taken up, and that year, 1804, witnessed the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

But, in point of fact, this was only the renewal and extension of a work which had commenced nearly a quarter of a century before. Not for the poor in Wales, but for the soldiers of the British army, was the first Bible Society

* It was the Rev. Joseph Hughes who uttered these words. Mr. Charles had gone to London to see what he could do to get a supply of Bibles for his countrymen, and while there the idea of a society for distributing the Bible alone, struck him. A few days afterwards he was introduced by Mr. Tarn to the Committee of the Tract Society, and represented with all the ardour of his character, the dearth of Bibles in his native principality, and the longing desire of the Welsh to have them. At the moment when this appeal was made for Bibles for the principality, the Rev. Joseph Hughes, who was one of the Secretaries of the Tract Society, and afterwards of the Bible Society, gave expression to those memorable words, "Surely a Society might be formed for the purpose; and if for Wales, why not also for the empire and the world?"

formed. In the year 1780 a number of troops were encamped in Hyde Park, at the time of the Lord George Gordon riots on the question of Popery. It came into the hearts of some pious persons in London to provide means for supplying each of the soldiers thus assembled with a copy of the Holy Scriptures. The Marquis of Cholmondeley, at the annual meeting of the Naval and Military Bible Society in 1860, thus briefly referred to the beginning of the Society: "It owed its origin to God, whose prerogative alone it is to bring forth good out of evil; and the occasion was those riots, well known as the Gordon riots, which brought to town a great number of troops, who were encamped in these parts. The immorality that prevailed among the troops at that period was such as to excite most painful feelings in the minds of many pious and philanthropic persons of the day, and they consorted together to consider in what way they might render themselves most useful to them. They determined upon the distribution of the Holy Scriptures; that distribution was afterwards extended to the other service; and thus originated the Naval and Military Bible Society."

It was called at first "The Bible Society" and continued for many years under that title; so that it may claim to be the true parent of the greater institution which now is such a blessing to the world.

But now comes in the strange story of the little meeting, which caps that told by Lord Shaftesbury, in Exeter Hall. We give the narrative as told by a former secretary of the Society, in a public lecture delivered in many places, and afterwards published under the title of "The Word and the Sword."

The circumstances connected with the formation of the Naval and Military Bible Society are both interesting and instructive; and if not corroborated by undeniable testimony would be almost incredible. Indeed, they present to the mind an illustration of that adage which asserts that truth is sometimes stranger than fiction.

It is now eighty years since one of those persons represented by the noble President, Lord Cholmondeley, as "pious and philanthropic," determined upon a course of action, and set about transferring from his brain to paper the *modus operandi* of his scheme, which presented to his enanooured view so promising an aspect, that he at once decided upon a second transfer. This latter took the form of a public advertisement, in which a detail of the plan was set forth, and a public meeting called in the largest assembly room to be had then in London, giving place, date, and time. This individual was of a most sanguine temperament of mind, and therefore concluded that the place of meeting could not contain half the people who would seek admittance on the appointed day. Independent of the excellence and clearness of his plans, as they appeared to him, he considered that interest in the army alone would be a sufficient inducement to call a large concourse of people together, in an age, too, when a public meeting was a very rare event. So at the appointed time he was found wending his way in high spirits, and without anticipating anything but complete success, to the place of meeting where in due course of time he arrived. He did not, however, as he expected, see a large crowd outside the door, and on ascending the staircase which led to the assembly room, he was not a little amazed to find an utterly deserted and empty place. He examined his watch and found the hour quite correct, and in a disappointed and downcast state of mind he approached the platform and sat down to ruminate.

While thus engaged he heard the echo of a solitary footfall on the lonely staircase, which, with sober and solemn pace, became gradually more distinct to, at that moment, his not very clear apprehension. Presently, however, all doubt was removed upon the appearance at the door of a stately and intelligent individual, who in a quiet manner and with clear voice thus addressed the occupier of the platform:

"I came here, sir, in answer to an advertisement convening a meeting for the purpose of considering certain plans and proposals of which I highly ap-

prove, and which I am anxious to promote; will you kindly inform me if I have mistaken the hour or the day, as I presume such must be the case?"

The individual thus addressed aroused himself at once from his momentary stupor, and replied, "Sir, you are by no means mistaken; this is the place, day, and hour appointed for the meeting to which you allude, and I am the gentleman who arranged and published what I fear I must now confess, for want of public interest, will be a failure."

"Not so fast, if you please, sir," said the first speaker. "I cordially approve of your plan, and think it will certainly succeed, and I have therefore come to give you my help."

Upon receiving this piece of encouragement, the promoter of the meeting stood up and asked the stranger what was to be done.

"Done! Why, we'll propose, second, and carry these resolutions of yours, and postpone the meeting for further deliberation."

"An excellent thought," replied the sanguine but disappointed individual, who, having gone from one extreme to the other, had seen nothing but failure; "but what can we say about the meeting?"

"Say!" responded the stranger—"we can say that we proposed, seconded, and carried unanimously these resolutions, at a meeting publicly convened, of which due and proper notice was given in the public press. It is true we cannot say that it was numerously, but we can with truth assert it was respectably attended, and that's more than the generality of public meetings can boast of. So come, sir, your plan is a good one; you propose, and I will second the resolutions."

This advice, doubtless given in a semi-humorous, semi-serious manner, was duly carried out, and strange to relate, the resolutions were proposed, seconded, and adopted by these gentlemen, whose names were respectively Mr. Black and Mr. White!

The meeting was adjourned to a not-far-distant day, when a crowded assembly was successfully convened, and the celebrated and well-known Christian philanthropist, John Thornton, came forward, and liberally assisted in forming the Naval and Military Bible Society.

Thus in the year 1780, this Society was regularly organized, assuming at first the designation of "The Bible Society," as at that time there existed no other institution for the express and sole purpose of distributing the Holy Scriptures.

With regard to the origin of the Society, the story of the meeting has rather a suspicious aspect; and we would not have quoted it but for its appearance in a published lecture, and the parallel instance attested by Lord Shaftesbury. The names of Black and White add to our incredulity, and we suspect this part of the story to be given as an allegory, illustrating the great influence of the press, and of printed reports of meetings, without which speakers would often lift their voice on platforms in vain. But the currency of the anecdote, and the reference to the humble origin of the Society in Lord Cholmondeley's speech, led the writer to make further inquiry, with most gratifying result.

Having obtained permission to examine the early records of the Society, which have been carefully preserved from the beginning, we are able to give an authentic statement, which must be deeply interesting to all friends of Bible circulation.

The first document of all is a letter from Mr. John Davis to Mr. George Cussons, dated 13th September, 1779:

"FRIEND CUSSONS.—At this time I have no small impression upon my mind as to the necessity of promoting the genuine fear of God among the soldiers, and as many of them, by the means of field-preaching and otherwise, have heard, and perhaps in some measure understood, the dispensation of the gospel, could wish (as thinking it the most probable way) to distribute some small pocket Bibles to a few private men in every company of Regulars and

Militia, as supposing, upon enquiry, some reasonable men might be found that would receive such a gift thankfully, and perhaps use it profitably.

"Each book might be accompanied with a small printed paper, showing the good-will and intention of the giver. I would by all means prefer the Bible to any other book for many reasons; but for brevity sake omit them, giving this only as a sketch of my thoughts for your consideration. To which would add, should such a thing be made known to that most benevolent gentleman, Mr. Thornton, and meet his approbation, extraordinary as it may appear, doubt not but through his interest it would be easily effected. If it should be by subscription in any part, am willing to contribute my mite according to ability.

"Cannot help observing, though with grief, how many decent servants I have seen without a Bible; no longer since than yesterday a Protestant servant girl, in a Papist's family. As such, see the distributing of books to be compassion, indeed.

"Am with all respect and good wishes, yours affectionately,
"J. DAVIS."

Who John Davis was we do not know; but he certainly planted the seed which has grown to such a mighty tree as the British and Foreign Bible Society. Friend Cussons seems to have communicated the letter to the celebrated philanthropist—John Thornton, from whom came the following characteristic letter:

"FRIEND GEORGE,—Friend Davis I know not; but I suppose you do, and his abode, which he does not mention; and I should join with him in contributing if he can get a subscription.

"The times are not such as to allow looking back; I therefore enclose twenty pounds to go forward.

"The Alleines are out of print; but perhaps a few Baxters and Bibles may be got. May the Lord strengthen you in your work and for your work; and remember me to Hannah, and believe me,

"Yours affectionately,
"J. THORNTON."

On the 8th of November, 1779, the proposal took definite shape, for we find that date on the front page of the first Minute Book of the Society, with a declaration of the object of the Society, "For purchasing Bibles to be distributed among the British Soldiers and Seamen of the Navy, in order (by the blessing of God, to spread abroad Christian knowledge and reformation of manners."

On another page headed "Bible Society, instituted November 1779," we find the following "Rules to be observed by persons who become members thereof."

"1. At present it is an open Committee, and any gentleman who is an annual subscriber may be admitted a member.

"2. It is now confined to the distribution of Bibles, and they only to the Navy and Army of Great Britain and Ireland.

"Love and unanimity being essentially necessary to carry on so good a work, it is unanimously agreed that any member of the said Committee who shall be litigious (*sic*), and thereby retard or hinder the business, shall be voted out of the said Committee at the weekly meeting."

It was not till the summer of 1781, however, that the meetings of the committee were regularly held, and minutes recorded.† The first entry in this

† The work has been going on in the interval, as appears from a note of Mr. Thornton, dated July 28, 1780, to Mr. Cussons: "Dear George—I have some Bibles for soldiers, and if you have any person to intrust a few with, I will send them where you direct when ready. I mean for St. James' or Hyde Park, or the neighbourhood. I have sent a large parcel to the Museum." Mr. Thornton continued to be a most liberal supporter of the Society, the Collecting Book showing that he gave £100 in 1781, £100 in 1782, through Mr. Romaine, and again £100 in 1790.

part of the Minute Book reads thus : "The Society having now formed themselves into a regular Committee, will in future enter a minute of the business done by them at the Weekly meeting every Tuesday evening."

The first meeting was on July 31, 1781. Spencer Wood in the chair. Present : John Griffiths, George Cussons, Thomas Dobson, Samuel Audinet. These names occur very regularly in the subsequent weekly minutes, with a gradually increasing number of members. At the second meeting (Aug. 7) Mr. John Davis was present.

The following handbill was distributed with the Bibles first sent out : "Sincerely and constantly endeavour, by reading, by meditation, and prayer, that your understanding may be enlightened, and that your temper and practice may be regulated by the sacred instructions of this book ; and it will prove, under the Divine blessing, the powerful means of your real happiness in this world, and your complete salvation in the next. But if, instead of this, you lay this heavenly treasure aside, and will not improve the blessing that is thus freely put into your ears, by those who wish well to your precious and immortal soul, if you neglect to read this Book of God, or to make a proper use of the most important advantages it affords, it will be a swift witness against you in that awful day, when you will be tried by its contents, and shall fall under that dreadful condemnation of the slothful and unprofitable servant, which you will find recorded, Matt. xxv. 26—30."

Among the clergy who were foremost to advocate the cause of this infant institution stands the venerable name of the Rev. Wm. Romaine, rector of St. Anne's, Blackfriars, who also became an early contributor to its support, and who for several years made a point of preaching in its behalf, collecting not less than £100 per annum from the churches in London. Several bishops, and many of the clergy, with persons of various denominations, soon joined, and cordially aided in promoting its objects.

The first sermon preached for the Society was from 1st Samuel iv. 7 ; "And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, God is come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us ! for there hath not been such a thing heretofore."

So popular did this first effort to advance religion in the navy and army become, that in a very short time the Society assumed a prominent position, and obtained a large accession to its patronage. His Royal Highness the late Duke of York had become Patron ; his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, President ; the First Lord of the Admiralty, several Cabinet Ministers, besides many noblemen, admirals, and generals, had accepted the office of Vice-Presidents ; thus affording official sanction to the substantial benefit the Society was diffusing far and wide.

There is a strange interest in looking over the early records of the Society, and observing the names of notable men in the history of England and of the Christian Church. Mr. Willerforce became a subscriber in 1794. Granville Sharp and William Clarkson also appear in the lists. John Newton, Sir Richard Hill, Rowland Hill, Colonel Burn, Horne, Bishop of Norwich, the Hon. W. Dundas, Lord Kenyon, the Earl of Dartmoor (Cowper's "one who wears a coronet and prays"), Lady Mary Fitzgerald, are amongst the notable names seen in turning over the lists. At a later period the Duke of Wellington was president of the Society."

It is gratifying to note, also, that collections and donations were received not only from churches and chapels, but from cities, boroughs and public corporations. Ely city and Cambridge Corporation, for instance, send handsome sums, and Cambridge University, in 1794.

In 1804 its designation was changed from "The Bible Society" to that of "The Naval and Military Bible Society, in consequence of the formation, in that year, of "The British and Foreign Bible Society."

Of the subsequent history and present condition and work of the Society, the reader may wish to know something ; but we have space for only a few words. For many years the Naval and Military Bible Society carried on its operations on a large scale, the chief supply of Bibles for the services being

received through its committee. The reports of the Society contain most gratifying records of the good work, and abundant testimonies of the usefulness of the efforts made for the welfare of our soldiers and sailors. As late as 1860 above 20,000 Bibles and 5,000 Testaments were granted to regiments, ships, barracks, hospitals, and in other ways. But about that time the supply of Bibles was transferred to Her Majesty's Stationery Office, where no special interest was taken in the work, and the application gradually diminished till nothing now is applied for from the Government. The Society still, however, continues its beneficent operations; and the latest report, that for 1873 (the ninety-fourth annual report,) is a very satisfactory and encouraging record. Free grants were largely given during that year; and among the special destinations we note, the "Chichester" and "Wellesley" training ships, the "Victor Emmanuel" and "Sarmatian" troop-ships for the Ashantee Expedition, the Sanatariums at Madeira and St. Helena, the Naval Hospital at Ascension, "Bible classes and Sunday schools" in the Guards, at Wellington Barracks and Windsor. Depôts are opened at many of the garrison towns and seaports for the sale of Bibles; and this forms an important and increasing department of the Society's operations. The sales in 1873 were one-fourth more than in the previous year. We conclude by echoing the closing remarks of Lord Caolmondeley, the chairman of the last annual meeting, who "trusted that, instead of diminishing its efforts, the Society would increase them, so that many more soldiers and sailors might be brought to the knowledge of Christ, and to the salvation of their souls."—*The Sunday at Home.*

SCRIPTURE-READERS' SOCIETY FOR IRELAND.

From a long and deeply-interesting report of a public meeting in connection with this Society in the *Belfast News Letter*, we learn that it is doing good service in the sister isle. A leading article in the same newspaper states that it has "done much good in Ireland; and its labours were never more needed than at present."

A speaker at the meeting above-mentioned said: "The people must, in the south and west, lapse into infidelity, or go over into Popery, if this Society did not supply the necessary assistance. It was known, too, that the Roman Catholics were open to receive the Word of God now to an extent they never were before; yet for lack of means the Society was unable to do as much as otherwise it might."

Another speaker thought the meeting had been held at "an auspicious time, when peoples' minds were moved by a wonderful and marvellous religious feeling; surely in this religious movement many young men would come forward to enlist themselves in the ranks of this useful Society."

With regard to Belfast, it was stated that if it depended on what the clergy alone could do, there would be a vast proportion of the people in the town living as ignorant of the gospel as if they were in the centre of Africa.

Rev. Dr. Hanna, of Belfast, writing to the *News Letter*, affirms, with respect to the Society, that "working quietly, unobtrusively, and without controversy, its agents have been the means of bringing the precious truths of God's Word to the homes of many of the poorest in the land." He also gave utterance to the following pregnant sentences at the public meeting:—

"He did not know anything Ireland required more at the present time than the Word of God freely circulated and read amongst its people. They were now in a transition state in this country. Those who took the trouble of studying the history that was now writing itself must observe a wonderful change taking place in the relation of the people towards the priesthood in Ireland. The people were breaking free from the priesthood; they had broken free politically years ago, and this was but the beginning of a still wider estrangement between them, and this the priests know. What was to take their place? If they cut the people off from their attachment to the priests, and let them drift into infidelity, as on the

Continent, it would be a black look-out for the country. But if they strengthened societies such as this, and gave the Bible to the people, who in their hearts and consciences were ready to receive it if offered to them, then they would be a means not only of helping them to emancipate themselves from priestly control, but also of bringing them to a knowledge of Christ, which would make them good citizens, instead of being, as they had been too long, an element of discord and trouble in the State."

We feel sure that Christian friends on this side of the Channel, who appreciate the inestimable blessing of a free and open Bible, will be ready to sympathize, by prayer and effort, with their brethren in Ireland, in order that God's word may have free course and be glorified through the length and breadth of their land.—*The Christian*.

PROGRESS OF THE WORK IN DUBLIN.

In the account of the revival in Dublin, which the Rev. J. S. Fletcher, of St. Barnabas Church, in that city, sends to the *Christian*, he says:—

"Mr. Moody is noble, brave, earnest, fearless in the statement of what he believes to be true, yet his heart is full of love and sympathy. His preaching is powerful, and has been wonderfully owned of God, because it is simple, earnest, and scriptural, and deals directly with the hearts and consciences of men. He deeply influences his hearers, because he is deeply influenced himself. Every one who beholds him must see that he is deeply conscious that he is dealing with tremendous realities when he reasons of Christ, the death, eternity, and judgment to come. One striking characteristic of his preaching is its THOROUGH SCRIPTURALNESS. When preparing his subjects, his leading idea would seem to be, "*What saith the Scripture!*" and when he comes forth to speak to the people, it is with all the authority of one who is conscious that he has discovered what is the mind of the Spirit in the passage under consideration—that he has a "*Thus saith the Lord,*" for everything he says.

* * * * *

THE BIBLE READINGS

have been deeply interesting and instructive. The first lecture for this week, given on Wednesday, in the Metropolitan Hall, was "God's Faithfulness to His promises," and Mr. Moody showed from a large number of instances, both from the Old and New Testaments, that God has ever fulfilled His own promise that "*the Scriptures cannot be broken.*" He strongly recommended Christians to study the Bible, with a view to seeing how God has fulfilled His promises in small things as well as in great. Nothing will tend more to the confirmation of their faith, for they will soon find, with Joshua of old, that "not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord their God spake concerning them."

Mr. Moody's subject for Thursday was "Daniel." He handled it, as might be expected, with much ability and graphic power, showing how Daniel dared to do what was right, and how God preserved and prospered him. This lecture was so highly appreciated by the audience, that he was requested to give it again for the benefit of young men, which he has kindly promised to do at eight o'clock on Sunday morning.

On Friday, the reading was more of a miscellaneous kind, for the purpose of showing the young converts how to read the Bible with most profit, and to draw forth the rich treasures of knowledge and comfort which it contains.

THE BIBLE IN SPAIN.

Extracts from a letter from the Rev. J. Jameson, Madrid, dated Nov. 8, to the Hon. Sec. Madrid Evangelical Aid Society, 118 Pall Mall, S.W.:—
Our new church at Leganitos, No. 4. was opened on November 1. We

had large bills all over the town, with the heading, "The Bible is the only Rule in Religion," and announcing that Padre Tornos would begin a series of discourses in it. Our large chapel was crammed full, and many could not get admittance. What pleased me most was to see the great proportion of young men.

Then to-day again we have had a capital audience at the morning service. I would desire to rejoice with trembling, as the most of it is very likely curiosity to see the once famous preacher; but we may hope that some may be arrested by God's Spirit. One thing is certain; the existence of Protestantism in Madrid has been made known in a way that it never was before.

We have published a fly-leaf, calling upon the people to read the Bible. We took advantage of the crowds visiting the cemeteries last Sunday (All Saints' Day), and had men at the principal entrances to the town from the cemeteries, which are without the walls, and distributed some 8000 or 10,000 copies; and again on Monday (All Souls' Day), when immense crowds fill the churches at the solemn morning mass for the dead, we had men near the doors of all the principal churches distributing the manifesto. It must have struck sharply home; for on Wednesday evening *La Espana Catolica*, the leading Ultramontane journal, had a paragraph about the "papelucho" (miserable bit of paper) "which some foreigners, and three or four apostate priests, had scattered broadcast;" and then, on Thursday evening, it dedicated no less than two columns and a half of a leader to an analysis of it; as you may imagine, refuting no single one of our positions, but filling its lines with the coarsest abuse.

I am deeply thankful that we have been able to break through the crust of indifference which impeded our action, and that now there will be formed a public opinion with regard to Protestantism.

Pray much for us, that the Master may give us much of the Spirit, and direct all our actions, and, above all, bless richly the word of our friend Padre Tornos, who is the principal figure in our movement. He preaches very well, but needs much teaching of the Holy Spirit. I would even ask that, at your noon prayer-meetings, special prayer might be made for this new work.—*The Christian*.

"From an occasional Paper of the Monthly Tract Society, we cull the following:—"From Spain, the news is that the work is steadily progressing. A correspondent writes: 'I met with an incident the other day, which showed that our tracts are finding their way. One of the colporteurs of the Scotch Bible Society was passing through one of the large villages near Madrid, and offered his books to a group of respectably dressed persons at a shop door. Each of them took up a book and examined it. 'Why, it is a Bible!' cried one. Another said, 'A few days ago I got a tract about those who say they do not understand the Bible.' The colporteur found he had an opportunity which he could use to a great purpose, and he at once set himself to expound a portion of the Book. The result was that each person bought a part, and some the whole of the Bible.'

From other parts of the Continent equally interesting details continue from time to time to reach the Committee."—*The Christian*.

AUSTRIA—THE TYROL.

INNSBRUCK, TYROL, October 17, 1874.

DEAR SIR:—As you seem to appreciate items of interest relating to the circulation of the Bible in these parts, I will add a few more facts of recent occurrence. There are at present three Bible colporteurs at work in the Tyrol and Vorarlberg—one acting for the British and Foreign Bible Society (head-quarters at Vienna), and two for the American Board of Commissioners for

Foreign Missions, under our direction. Each of these working independently, having met with some measure of success in selling Bibles, has been thought worthy of special notice in the Roman Catholic organs within a few weeks. It is necessary to premise that these colporteurs carry a large stock of Roman Catholic Bibles (the Van Ess translation), and that the tracts and books which our two agents have are of a decidedly Christian, but not distinctively Protestant character, and are never controversial. On October 5th appeared the following communication in the *Tiroler Stimme*, the most widely circulated and influential Roman Catholic paper in Tyrol. It is written from a village in the Lower Inn valley:

"From bedbugs, gadflies, and fleas we are now tolerably free. But in their place is pricking us an insect of larger size and more poisonous species. For some time past, a Bible peddler has been buzzing around in our neighbourhood, and stinging, at every convenient opportunity, our sensitive flesh. There are some people who have not often the privilege of seeing this bearded Bible seller and tract distributor, and may be overcome by his persistence. The priests are especially among these favoured ones. The Bibles—Old and New Testaments in one volume—are from Leander Van Ess, and naturally without recognition. [The ignorant priests don't seem to know that the Van Ess Bible is Catholic.] The tracts which he generally distributes, gives away—in fact, sows broadcast—are often of a poisonous character. [For instance, the tract of 'The Duty of General Bible Reading,' by the same Catholic Van Ess.] Whoever would guard himself against the flattering phrases of this urgent little man must show him the door *somewhat significantly* at the outset, otherwise he may be under the necessity of doing it several times."

At about the same time Mr. Stierti, our other colporteur in Vorarlberg, received the following notice in the Roman Catholic paper of that district.

"We are informed that a colporteur is going about the country with Bibles and Protestant pietistic tracts. The former are sold at a merely nominal price, and the latter the same as given away. We call the attention of Catholics to the fact. It will be most advisable to show the same the door. He is said to be very importunate, and in possession of a permission from the government of Tyrol. This does not oblige any one, however, to purchase Bibles which have *not been approved*."

On October 7th, again the *Tiroler Stimme* thus alluded to Mr. Rauch, the colporteur of the Bible Society, apparently confounding him with one of ours before alluded to:

"Give attention! I have often read about it in the *Stimme*, that colporteurs were armed with Protestant tracts, but did not suppose that they would stray into our region. But, in fact such a tempter [devil] was on the 21st at St. Vigil, in Ennburg, and disposed of many Italian and German copies of these forbidden wares. There was a pretended Gospel of Matthew, and the New Testament with Psalms, in connection with other [Protestant] tracts. The people had to be warned against it in the church, and were required without delay to bring those forbidden and destructive books to us, or to destroy them. Several have been already produced. We shall use them as waste paper on behalf of the Boys' Seminary in Brixem."

In connection with these facts, I will state that our colporteur in Bregenz (Vorarlberg) has just been brought before the court and fined 25 florins (\$12 50) for selling Bibles. His permission from the government only allows him to take subscriptions, and afterward to deliver the books. It seems, in his haste to dispose of Bibles, he did not use the ordinary subscription blank with which we supplied him.

In Prag, within two weeks, a young man, employed by our brethren there, got permission from the janitor to visit the hospital, talk with the patients, and distribute religious reading. He met a priest in the hospital who forbade his doing it, and he at once desisted. He was, however, complained of—although he gave away nothing but Gospel portions—and cited before the chief of police to answer. He was treated with great roughness, threatened

with imprisonment, etc. His case is still unsettled, it being left to the court to say what shall be done with him.

One of our colporteurs sold a Bible by subscription to a gentleman, but on taking the book to him it was declined. The wife threatened to leave the husband if he took the book. She did even start to leave the house, never to return, when her husband promised that if she would come back he would do without a Bible.

Here in Innsbruck, poor students frequently come to us soliciting aid. One such connected with the normal school, in the second year, called on me. He is a young man, eighteen years of age, was born in Tyrol, and belongs to a family of nine children. I asked him to come to me once a week to speak German, and I would give him something for it. In conversation with him I learned that he had never seen a Bible, and he was greatly interested in a copy which I showed him, and which afterward I loaned to him. It was one of the copies which came from America. With high respects, E. D. Bissell.
— *American Bible Record*.

Miscellaneous.

WHY I BELIEVE THAT THE BIBLE IS INSPIRED.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—When I received your letter asking me to refer you to some compact treatise which would give you in a popular form, the reasons for the belief of the church in the inspiration of the Bible, I supposed I should be able to refer you easily to half a dozen. But on looking over my theological library, which is not a small one, I am surprised to find so large a relative space devoted to a discussion of the different theological theories of inspiration, and so small a relative space devoted to a statement of the reasons on which faith in the fact of inspiration is based. This may be, perhaps because, in Christian circles, the inspiration of the Bible has rarely been absolutely denied, while the nature and extent of the inspiration have been a question of some moment and of great uncertainty. In this letter, instead of referring you to any treatise, I shall try to state briefly some of the grounds on which my own faith in the Bible as the inspired word of God rests. In another letter I may attempt to answer your question.—In what sense do I believe the Bible to be inspired, and how do I reconcile its inspiration with apparent errors in chronology and apparent variations and discrepancies in its historical narratives?

In the first place it is a fundamental article of Christian faith, that our God is an Immanuel, that is a God *with us*. God abides with all who accept his inspiration. He dwells with us and in us. We are the temple of God. In our sorrows he comforts us; in our perplexities he guides us. And our belief in this truth rests, not on a declaration that it shall be so, which we find in a printed book, but in the actual fact that we have found it so in our own personal experience. God does not inspire us to write infallible books, or preach infallible sermons, but he does inspire us to live holy lives.*

* We have inserted this letter for we think it simple and forcible; but the writer here apparently fails to recognise a distinction that has been so well drawn by one of his own countrymen. Dr. Hodge, of Princeton, says: "Inspiration is not to be confounded with spiritual illumination. They differ first as to their subjects. The subjects of inspiration are a few selected persons; the subjects of spiritual illumination are all true believers. And secondly they differ as to their design. The design of the former is to render certain men infallible as teachers; the design of the latter is to render men holy, and of course they differ as to their effects. Inspiration in itself has no sanctifying influence. Balaam was inspired. Saul was among the prophets. Caiaphas uttered a prediction which 'he spake not of himself,' &c., &c."

In short, we are not orphans ; we are children ; and our God is not the great unknown ; he is the dear Father.

If then the world stands in need of a divine revelation from God, if it needs a divine book of instruction and spiritual impulse, we may reasonably look for such a book. And that there is such a need is testified to by the universal craving of the human race, and by its universal ignorance.

I am not able to find a great deal of fault with Herbert Spencer's philosophy, if only his premises are granted. Without the Bible we know very little of God, we know even less of the future life, we have no absolute standard of duty, we have no true ideal of character. It is true that something may be judged concerning God from a study of his works. But they do not really bring us into communication with the heart of God, any more than the painting brings us into sympathetic friendship with the artist, or the church with the architect, or the machine with the machinist. Natural theology, when interpreted by the Bible, confirms its declaration that God is love ; but natural theology, uninterpreted, has never brought any nation or any priesthood even, to the recognition of that simple but sublime truth. It is true that our aspirations, if not our intuitions point to an immortality beyond the grave. But its nature, and the prospects it affords of possible growth and spiritual development, are not indicated by either aspiration or intuition. For that we must look to some clearer disclosure, or remain in ignorance. Conscience affords a kind of standard of duty. But that unlightened conscience affords a poor standard of duty, is sufficiently demonstrated by the history of heathen communities.

To me then it seems no extraordinary or unreasonable thing that there should be an inspired Bible. On the contrary it seems to me that it would be very strange if there were not. God is our Father. The whole human race is comparatively ignorant of him. It has a vague idea that there must be a Supreme Being, but who or what he is knows not, yet longs to know. It has a vague dream of future immortality ; but what it is or how to prepare for it, it can only guess. It has a vague sense of sin and and sorrowful separation from its Maker and its Judge ; but how to secure his pardon and peace within itself it knows not, and accepts almost any burden the priest chooses to lay upon it. Under such circumstances seems it to you strange that the Heavenly Father should make some disclosure of himself to his children, some revelation of their future to their yearning hope, some assurance of pardon and clear disclosure of way to peace ? Know you any earthly father who would leave his child in ignorance of himself, in ignorance of duty ? We give our children bread ; does he leave his children to perish with hunger ?

In my own thoughts, then, I start with the assumption that there is likely to be a revelation in clear, plain explicit language from God to his children. Starting out with this expectation, I find no difficulty in the conviction that the revelation I seek is afforded by the Christian's Bible.

For this Bible supplies exactly and perfectly the need. It gives a full disclosure of a paternal God, whose love satisfies the filial craving of the soul for a Heavenly Father. It reveals a future life, which satisfies both the requirements of justice and the aspirations after a disclosed immortality. It not only affords explicit assurance of pardon on the conditions of repentance and acceptance, but it shows how our sins have borne their punishment in another's suffering, and so does actually afford that peace of mind which no other religion has ever been able to afford. It promises help, divine help, in the endeavour to live a new and holy life, and the help actually afforded, and the wonderful changes wrought through the Bible, in individuals, and entire communities, is the very best evidence that its promises are sanctioned by Him in whose name they are made. And in its perfect law of love, and in the sinless life and character of Jesus Christ, it affords such a standard of excellence as the world needs, as heathen poets

have restlessly sought in vain, and as gives perfect rest to those that accept and follow it as their ideal.

Supporting these general considerations are a number of minor arguments.

The supreme excellence of the precepts and principles of the Bible negative the hypothesis that they were the uninspired product of the men who transcribed them. It is far easier to believe that the Ten Commandments came from God, than to believe that they came from a man whose sole training was received from a Hebrew slave mother, a heathen Egyptian Court, and a life in the wilderness as a Midianitish shepherd. The Bible is sixty-six different books, written by forty or fifty different authors, living centuries apart, speaking different languages, subjects of different Governments, brought up under different civilizations, writing in different forms of literature—law, history, biography, poetry, oratory, and philosophy. Yet this library is one book not only because it is comprised in one volume, but because it all teaches the same great system of truth. This moral and spiritual unity of the Bible demonstrates that all its writers were supervised in their work by one Master mind, as the unity of design in the finished cathedral, the construction of many different minds, demonstrates the supervising skill of the architect who planned and directed its construction, as the harmony from an orchestra of a hundred instruments demonstrates the skill of the composer whose music they interpret. Finally, the testimony of the writers themselves, who assert on almost every page that their writing is "The Word of the Lord," "the power of God," "the glorious gospel of the blessed God," "the commandments of the Lord," "the word of Christ," spoken "in demonstration of the Spirit," and "in words which the Holy Spirit teacheth," leaves no alternative but to believe that they were imposters, pretending to an inspiration which they did not possess, or just what they assumed to be, "holy men, speaking the truth as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Yours, truly,

LYMAN ABBOTT.—*Christian Weekly.*

A BAKED BIBLE.

There is a Bible in Lucas county, Ohio, which was once baked in a loaf of bread. It now belongs to Mr. Schelbolt, a worthy member of the United Brethren Church, who resides near Maumee city. Mr. Schelbolt is a native of Bohemia, and the baked Bible was originally the property of his grandfather, who was a faithful Protestant Christian in the times which tried men's souls. During one of the cruel persecutions which have been so common in Bohemia, an edict was passed that every Bible in the hands of the peasants should be delivered up to the authorities and destroyed. Various expedients were resorted to by the Bible-loving Protestants to preserve the precious Word of Life. Mrs. Schelbolt, grandmother of the present owner, placed hers in the centre of a batch of dough, which was ready for the oven, and baked it. The house was carefully searched, but no Bible was found, and when the tools of priestly tyranny had departed, and the danger was passed, the Bible was taken uninjured from the loaf. It was printed a hundred and fifty years ago.—*American Religious Telegraph.*

ABYSSINIA.

Several important and interesting letters have been received at the B. & F. Bible Hall from the Rev. Dr. Krapf, respecting the present state of Abyssinia and the prospects of future Bible operations in that country. It is believed that there is a wide and promising field of action, both amongst the Falashas and the natives generally, if the Government could be induced to adopt the wise and righteous policy of allowing to Christian Missionaries liberty of residence and labour.—*B. S. Reporter.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

How wonderfully the Bible condenses ! Witness the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer—the one the embodied moral law of God, the other the daily utterance of praise, intercession, supplication, and confession.

Prayer is the expression of *desire* ; hence, there is no prayer which the offerer does not try to turn into practical action. Now, see how the devotions "daily" offered to God in compliance with the Lord's Prayer will control the life. How affectionate, reverential, spiritual, obedient, industrious, forgiving, watchful, must its offerer be. No doubt the Lord's Prayer is often employed as a mere form, by those who do not understand it or think of its meaning ; and even as if it had a magic power, because it is the words of Christ ; but no man ever *prayed* it who was not a Christian, and no Christian ever prayed it in vain.—*Christian Observer*.

THE BOUNDARY STONE OF GEZER.

We referred in our paper of November 2, to the fact that M. Ganneau, of the Palestine Exploration Fund, has made a most interesting and important discovery in identifying the site of the ancient Levitical City of Gezer, in the territory of the tribe of Ephraim. He has discovered, cut in the rock, two inscriptions, one Greek, the other Hebrew. The Hebrew inscription is translated, "The limit of Gezer," the word for "limit" being that used in the Talmud in speaking of a Sabbath-day's journey. One of these inscriptions lies east of Abu-Shusheh, the name of the modern village, and the other lies northwest of the former ; and as a third inscription has been found since, to the southwest of the first, it seems to be evident that we have here one of the angles of the square with sides of two thousand cubits, which, as we learn from Numbers xxxv : 5, formed the boundaries of the suburbs of the Levitical cities.

The importance of the discovery lies in the fact that it will help in the determination of the form and extent of the territory of Ephraim, and also in the settlement of the vexed question of the length of the Jewish cubit.

THE BIBLE AND ITS FOES.

If collected from the earliest times to the present day, infidel books would occupy far more than a thousand times the space of the one volume against which they are directed ; and would certainly be much more numerous than all the works that all other "sacred" books ever had the honour of provoking either for or against them. If all these books were placed in one library, and this single one set on a table in the middle of it, and a stranger were told that this book—affirmed to be, for the most part, the work of a number of unlearned and obscure men belonging to a despised nation called the Jews—had drawn upon itself, for its exposure, confutation, and destruction, this multitude of volumes, I imagine he would be inclined to say : "Then, I presume this little book was annihilated long ago ; though how it could be needful to write a thousandth part so much, for any such purpose, I cannot comprehend. For if the book be what these authors say, surely it should not be very difficult to show it to be so ; and if so, what wonderful madness to write all these volumes." How surprised would he then be to learn that they were felt not to be enough ; that similar works were being multiplied every day, and never more actively than at the present time ; and still to no purpose in disabusing mankind of this same frenzy ! He would learn, indeed, that so far from accomplishing the object, the new volumes are little more than necessary to replace those of this fruitful, yet fruitless, literature, which are continually sinking into oblivion.

But the volume itself survives both friends and foes. Without being able

to speak one word on its own behalf, but what it has already said ; without any power of explanation or rejoinder, in depreciation of the attacks made upon it, or to assist those who defend it, it passes along the ages in majestic silence. Impassive amidst all this tumult of controversy, in which it takes no part, it might be likened to some great ship floating down a mighty river like the Amazon or Orinoco, the shores of which are inhabited by various savage tribes. From every little creek or inlet, from every petty port or bay, sally flotillas of canoes, some seemingly friendly and some seemingly hostile, filled with warriors in all the terrors of war paint, and their artillery of bows and arrows. They are hostile tribes ; and soon turning their weapons against one another, assail each other with great fury and mutual loss. Meantime the noble vessel silently moves on through the scene of confusion, without deigning to alter its course or to fire a shot : perhaps here and there a seaman casts a compassionate glance from the lofty bulwarks, and wonders at the hardihood of those who come to assail his leviathan.

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Remittances.

RECEIPTS AT THE BIBLE SOCIETY HOUSE, TORONTO, FROM
AUXILIARY AND BRANCH SOCIETTES, FROM 1ST NOVEMBER
TO 31ST DECEMBER, 1874.

| — | On Purchase Account. | Free to U.C.B.S. | Free to B. & F. B. S. | Free to Sundries. |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>November.</i> | \$ cts. | \$ cts. | \$ cts. | \$ cts. |
| Hawkesville Branch | | 8 59 | 8 58 | |
| Brucefield " | | 12 50 | 12 50 | |
| Kippen " | 10 00 | 7 50 | 7 50 | |
| Keene " | | 40 85 | 40 86 | |
| Uxbridge " | 47 13 | | | |
| Drummondville " | 20 15 | 100 00 | | a3 65 |
| Seaforth " | 19 10 | | | |
| Chippawa " | | 35 17 | | |
| Rosemont " | 18 23 | 11 57 | | |
| Relessey " | | 3 51 | | |
| Lacknow " | | 11 00 | 11 00 | |
| Port Hope " | 70 00 | | | |
| London Auxiliary..... | 49 06 | | | |
| Port Dalhousie Branch | | 45 00 | | |
| Hastings " | 15 88 | 25 00 | | |
| <i>December.</i> | | | | |
| Welland Branch..... | 28 31 | 9 56 | | |
| Port Robinson " | | 2 00 | | |
| Goderich " | 4 96 | | | |
| Brantford " | 124 48 | | | |
| Keswick and Medina " | | 21 43 | 4 00 | |
| Shelburne " | | 3 00 | | |
| Cookstown " | 14 31 | 17 13 | 8 56 | |
| Ivy " | | 1 59 | | |
| Cheltenham " | 15 60 | | | |
| North Etobicoke " | 15 44 | 17 00 | 32 00 | |
| Stratford " | 4 20 | | | |
| Bowmanville " | 34 28 | 35 00 | 40 00 | |
| Queenston " | | 14 50 | | |
| Port Hope " | | 191 99 | | |
| Shakspeare " | | 3 00 | | |
| Downie " | | 7 25 | | |
| Mitchell " | 17 00 | 29 41 | 27 66 | |
| Sebringville " | 31 85 | 48 64 | | |
| Fullarton " | | 6 35 | | |
| Hibbert " | | 16 16 | 15 00 | |
| Millbank " | 4 26 | 2 34 | | |
| Palmerston " | 15 48 | | | |
| Molesworth " | | 3 00 | | |
| Listowel " | 40 39 | 2 20 | | |
| Trowbridge " | 9 74 | 9 06 | | |
| Milverton " | 35 49 | 11 58 | 10 50 | |
| Angus " | | 9 22 | | |
| Vasey " | | 2 26 | | |
| Medonte " | | 3 43 | | |
| Newtonville " | 3 00 | 30 00 | 20 00 | |
| Hope " | 4 85 | 25 15 | | |
| Bethany " | a1 50 | 27 00 | 27 00 | |
| Orono " | 1 50 | 83 00 | | |

a On Recorder account.

Upper Canada Bible Society Communications.

1. All Communications relating to the *Bible Society Recorder* to be addressed to "Robert Baldwin, Esq., Permanent Secretary, Bible Society House, Toronto."

2. All Reports, Letters and other communications, from Branches, Agents, Colporteurs and other parties, relating to the Bible Society work, and designed for the Board of Directors, or for the Secretaries, to be addressed to "The Secretaries of the Upper Canada Bible Society," Toronto.

3. All orders for Bibles and Testaments, and for *Recorders*, etc., and all remittances to be sent (the latter in registered letters, or by other safe conveyance) to "Mr. JOHN YOUNG, Bible Society Depository, 102 Yonge Street, Toronto."

* * Parties desirous of communicating with the Bible Society, Toronto, on any of the matters indicated above, will greatly oblige the Secretaries by adhering to the foregoing regulations. Separate communications relating to any of three subjects named, can, when necessary, be enclosed in one envelope, but it will be a great convenience to the Secretaries not to have the matters clasified above mixed together in one communication.

SPECIAL NOTICE TO TREASURERS OF BRANCHES.

As the Bible Society year closes on the 31st March, and as the moneys received require to be deposited in the Bank, it is desirable that all remittances should reach Toronto not later than 30th of March.

Stated Meetings of the Board of Directors.—Representation of Auxiliaries and Branches.

Quarterly and other Meetings of the Board.—The Board of Directors shall meet for the transaction of business once in each quarter, and at any other time when called together by the Secretaries, or by any three of the Directors.

Quarterly Meetings of the Board will be held on the second Tuesday of January, April, July, and October, of each year, at 7.30 o'clock P.M. Monthly Meetings are held on the second Tuesday in each month, at the same hour.

Appointment of Agents.—No Travelling Agent of the Society shall be appointed by the Board, except at one of these Quarterly Meetings.

Representation of Local Branches at the Board.—The President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Agents of each Auxiliary and Branch in connection with the Upper Canada Bible Society shall be *ex-officio* Members of the Board of Directors, at Toronto; and, as such, shall have the right to attend all the Meetings of the Board.

GRANTS TO SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

That in all applications for grants of Bibles to Sunday Schools, the applicant be requested to furnish the Secretaries with an account of the state of the School; the number of Scholars and Teachers; the amount of funds at the disposal of the Managers; who are its officers; and why it is necessary to make such application; all which should in every case be certified by a Minister of the Gospel, or some other person of known respectability. And further, this Board recommends that the Secretaries make grants in future only to destitute settlements; reporting the same to the next Meeting of the Board of Directors.

PRICE OF THE "RECORDER."

From ten copies upwards of the *Bible Society Recorder* are furnished gratuitously to each of the Branches. Extra numbers are furnished at the following rates per annum:—Single copies, 20 cents; ten copies to one address, \$1.50; over ten and under 50 copies, \$13 per 100; any quantity over 50 copies, \$12 per 100; in each case including postage.