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*Nec araneorum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se filigunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.*

Miramichi, Friday Morning, September 22, 1843.

## County of Gloucester Bible Society Report.

The annual Meeting of the Gloucester County Auxiliary to the British and Foreign Bible Society was held in the Court House, Bathurst, on the evening of Friday the 8th inst. The Chair was taken at seven o'clock by William Stevens, Esq., President of the Society. Prayer was offered by the Reverend Mr. Chesley. The Chairman then addressed a few appropriate remarks to the audience on the sacred Book, and the object of the association, to circulate and cause that Book to be read. The Report of the Society for the past year was read by the Secretary, after which it was moved, seconded, and unanimously agreed to. "That the Report now read be adopted, and published in the Gleaner Newspaper." A series of other Resolutions were proposed to the Meeting and unanimously carried. A number of eloquent and animated speeches were delivered by several of the Gentlemen present, and a pleasing interest in the grand subject connected with the Parent Society, and the numerous kindred associations to which it has given rise, was manifested by a very attentive assemblage of people. A collection in aid of the funds of the Society was taken up, and the business of the evening was concluded with praise and prayer.

### REPORT.

About three years have now elapsed since the formation of our Gloucester County Bible Society, as one of the auxiliaries of the British and Foreign Bible Society. That during its existence, its influence upon the moral and spiritual condition of the County, has been salutary, and its tendency good, we cannot doubt. Limited and short coming as have been our operations, we would humbly hope, that there will be yet manifested, as resulting from their instrumentality "fruit unto holiness; and the end, everlasting life." (Romans 6, 22.)

It is nearly two years since we received from the Parent Society ten Pica or Family Bibles, ten Pearl Bibles, one hundred Nonpareil or common Bibles, one hundred Brevier Testaments, and fifty French Testaments—of these there have been disposed of, up to the present time—six Family Bibles, one Pearl Bible, sixty common Bibles, one hundred Testaments, and thirty-one French Testaments. It is painful to have to state, that of this amount, but a small proportion has been issued during the past year. Our last annual report mentioned that five Family Bibles, one Pearl Bible, forty one common Bibles, eighty-eight Testaments, and twenty-four French Testaments had gone forth from our Depot. We thus see that from that time, we have only been enabled to circulate one Family Bible, nineteen common Bibles, twelve Testaments, and seven French Testaments. It is, however, pleasing to remark, that a large part of this number has been bestowed upon the poor and needy,—bestowed gratuitously upon those who would otherwise have remained destitute of "the word of life." Your Committee have also allowed four copies of the sacred scriptures as a donation for the use of those persons who may be incarcerated in the County Prison. Including these there have been given in the year now ended, "without money, and without price," eleven common Bibles, eight Testaments, and two French Testaments.

It is unnecessary to do more than refer in passing, to the continued depression which generally enervates the pecuniary capabilities and general ability of the people of this neighbourhood. It is well known that with us, to obtain the silver and the gold, is next to impossible. When it is remembered that all the sales effected by your Depositories have been for cash only, one great cause of the small number of these, will be seen. While the Committee are decidedly of opinion that it is always best to obtain a return from the party receiving, where that is possible, they are yet confident, that it will afford pure gratification to every pious and benevolent mind,—especially to those acquainted with the circumstances of our people, that our Society has been honored to do even a very little, in the spirit of that proclamation of Him, whose revealed will we seek to make known, "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isaiah 55, 1) The Book, the knowledge of which, we seek to diffuse abroad, may be called the cistern wherein is deposited, and whence issues that water of life, the Divine "Fountain of living waters," says, "whoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4, 14) The object at which we aim, in promoting the spread of the Book of God, is that the Saviour who is the Fountain opened and the Rock smitten. That the sinner may know the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent, is the object for which Revelation

has been given to man; our business is, so far as in us lies, to carry this object into effect. And with a view to this glorious object, we have formed and continue to carry on our County Bible Association, and would with fear and trembling urge upon every dweller within our bounds, and every immortal being whom we can in any way reach, "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls." (James 1, 21.)

That the interest and attachment felt in the community, in and towards the spread of the "knowledge of the truth,"—as contained in the inspired Word, have not diminished, but are growing, may be inferred from several considerations. We think that the state of the Treasurer's Account is favorable to this view. That Account shows a balance in his hands of nine pounds, sixteen shillings, and ninepence halfpenny. Though this sum falls far short of what ought to have been contributed, yet some of the items evince what is very pleasing to contemplate,—a considerable share of general sympathy with the aims of the society on the part of the people at large. For instance, the collection taken up at our last Anniversary Meeting, stands at one pound eight shillings and tenpence. Also, upon the occasion of public worship, and a sermon preached in the Methodist Chapel, in behalf of the society, besides a goodly attendance, and a very attentive congregation—the sum of one pound, eleven shillings was taken up at the close of the services. Had the number and subscriptions of members corresponded to the effect and liberality which these occurrences indicate, then had the statements of our funds manifested still greater prosperity. As it is, and especially taken in connexion with the perseverance, amidst trying and discouraging circumstances, which the Divine blessing has vouchsafed to the society, we have great reason to thank God, and to be of good courage.

There is much that is well fitted to animate us to renewed and multiplied exertions in the success that has attended the Parent Society. In the last annual Report, it is stated that from the commencement of the Society, Thirty-nine years previously, the issues of the Scriptures by it, had amounted to 15,020,994 copies; and that 982,060 copies had been issued in the course of the year ending in May last, being nearly one fifteenth part of the whole number which the Society has been privileged to circulate. So that in a year which certainly was not without much to damp and to discourage;—much to impede, though not to impair Bible truth, "this truly Protestant Society has done more than it ever did in one single year. There is surely a token for good in this. Let it stimulate us to ascribe praise and glory to the author of all good. Let the goodness of God lead us to repentance. And let our repentance be seen in its proper results, in growing ardour and most entire devotedness, in the prosecution of the work to which we are called.

The experience of every section of the Church of Christ in her Missionary efforts, shows that whenever "the Gospel of the grace of God," is heralded, and received in the love of it, there, as a natural and necessary consequence, will be a cry and an energetic solicitation for copies of "the whole counsel of God." The Rev. A. Tidman, Secretary of the London Missionary Society, in his speech at the last anniversary of the Bible Society, speaking of the Island of Tahiti, where the Missionaries of the Society which he represented, had been eminently successful, in their faithful preaching of "Christ crucified," says, when addressing the noble Chairman of the Society, "It was to Tahiti that you sent the stores of your generous bounty: the Bible, translated by our Missionaries into that language, was printed with your funds. And do you not know—has not the Report told us—that that Bible was received with rapture by the Islanders? Ah, my Lord! the only contention among them was, not what the terms should be, but who at any terms should win the prize. They sought it with importunity—but not as a gift; they were ready to pay a price three times the amount which many of our reluctant countrymen are willing to pay; and in less than a year, for only a part of the first edition of the Christian scriptures, more than 5000 have been paid by these very Islanders."

The Lord Bishop of Winchester, on the same occasion thus bears testimony to the christian ability of the Bible society. "The Report is full of marrow. But how happens it that we are privileged to rejoice in this fact? Why, when 40,000 families of Finland received their copy of the Holy scripture, it was from this society they obtained the word of God. When the Greeks require a large circulation of the word of God in that country it is to the stores of the Bible Society that they have recourse; and one of our Cambridge Professors sits down to aid in the work of revision; and that which shall enlighten the Greeks is sent out from the stores of the Bible society. Take

• The Right Hon. Lord Bexley.

another case:—that respected individual who has lately been sent to the shores of New Zealand, the first Bishop of that island when he was appointed to his high destination, his first object was, to acquaint himself with the native language. Whence was he furnished with the means of acquiring that which was in future time to be his vernacular tongue, so to speak? When he sat down with the little band around him, at his cabin table, with that Book before him which was at once his Primer, his Dictionary, his Lesson Book, and his word of Life—what Society was it that furnished him with the means, on landing at that island, of greeting them in their own language? It was this society which furnished him with the copy.

My Lord, I cannot but rejoice in every opportunity of professing my desire still to remain in communion with those who are engaged in sending the Bible throughout the world at large. I say, in sending out the Bible. When I send out the Bible, I know what I send; when I send out the Holy Scriptures, I know what I do not send. I know that in sending out the Holy Scriptures, I know that I am not sending out the Gospel of man, but the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. I know that, in sending out this holy book, I am not sending out any admixture of error, but I am sending out the pure word of God. I know that, when I send out this book, I am not sending out a Gospel of tradition; I am not sending out a Gospel of superstition; I am not sending out a Gospel of corruption; I am not sending out the interpretation of men; but I am sending out the word of God, "the sincere milk of the word," pure and unadulterated, as it came from the hand of God himself.

The observations made by the Rev. F. Close, of Cheltenham, at the same meeting of the Society, are worthy of special notice. He says—"There is one view of the Bible Society very convincing to my mind. I have ever looked on this Society as the great Commissariat of the Christian Church; that which supplies weapons of warfare for all faithful Christians in all parts of the world. We might have our Missionaries—thank God we have them, in the north and in the south, and from east to west—but if we had not the Bible society to furnish them with the scriptures, of what avail would they be? And, take up the Report of what missionary society you may, you will find that the Bible society bestows its favors upon all alike; you never send any of us empty away. My Lord, in reflecting upon the reasons for my being a member of this goodly institution, one that has always pressed upon my mind very strongly is this—that nothing short of so great a combination could produce adequate results—that it is not within the power of any church in christendom to do the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society—that none ever has done it, or ever will do it—and that the honour was reserved for that combination of talents and learning and diversified gifts, which are the property of the whole church of God, and must not be monopolized by any part of it. Had this society not existed, my Lord, I would ask how many of those hundred and forty languages, which the Bible now speaks throughout the world, would it in that case have spoken? If we had waited on the margin of this river, and, because we could not entirely agree among ourselves, refused to cast the arch of mercy over it—would the work have been done? It would not have been done to this day. To suppose that a single church ever so honored, could put forth the Bible in so many languages, is a manifest absurdity; it could not be done."

Surely we ought to feel it to be an honor and a privilege to co-operate, even according to our very limited ability, in this grand cause. And for our rejoicing, it is written in the holy word, "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." If our love has hitherto been cold, and our zeal feeble, let us strive the more earnestly in the time that may yet remain to us, to abound in this "work and labour of love," and to be "zealously affected always in a good thing," such as that at which we profess to aim. That much remains to be done, even within the defined bounds of our own particular sphere will be very apparent from comparing one of our recorded Rules with what has been accomplished, and the condition of the inhabitants. The Rule referred to is this—"The society shall consider it to be a special duty to use diligent means for bringing at least one copy of the entire Bible into every family over all the extent of population the Society embraces, and shall endeavor to keep up this supply from year to year, as the population may change or be increased; and further the society shall urge upon all, the duty and advantages of every person in each family who can read, being in possession of a Bible for individual use." That some progress, however small, has been made towards accomplishing this end, will be admitted, when we say, that the sacred volume may be obtained at such a reduced rate from our stock, that it is within the reach even of the very poor, and that in a variety of forms; while the poorest and those who have nothing to pay, are welcome to have it for nothing. We are also waiting with expectation for the

long looked-for arrival in Bathurst of a large additional supply, which has now only to be brought from Miramichi.

It is cause for gratitude that our auxiliary has not hitherto had to encounter any active or avowed hostility.

Perhaps this should lead us to fear that our quiet may have arisen from the feebleness of our exertions, and the little disturbance which we have given the enemy. It may be that were we acting with all the affection, fidelity, and resolution which ought to characterize us, we would be taught experimentally to understand the force of our Lord's words. "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division." (Luke 12, 51.) We know upon unerring authority that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinth. 2, 14) The enmity of the carnal mind will operate, wherever it is stirred. We discover it in the conduct of King Jehoiakim, the monarch of Judah, when he burned the inspired scriptures—"the word of the Lord," which Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah upon this roll of a book. We discover it also in the deadly hostility of the Queen of Madagascar, who will not tolerate within her dominions either the Christian Missionary or the Book of God: we can mark the same malignity of spirit in these of the "lowest of the people," who would destroy from the earth the revelation from heaven, and in the unbelieving Jews of Thessalonica, unto whom "Paul, as his manner was, went in, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures." . . . .

But they, "moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city in an uproar, and assailed the house of Jason." It is well for us to be familiar with these occurrences, as having taken place, and to be prepared for any trial that in Divine Providence may await us. For "as in water, face answereth face, so the heart of man to man." It is then that we are best filled with holy and humble diligence, together with burning charity towards every human being, as Bible-taught christians to labour for the spread of the holy oracles, in order that the heaven provided specific for man's moral malady which they unfold, may be brought home to each of the children of men. Then shall we also "follow the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."

What an amount of instruction is suggested by the Apostles words, "the holy scriptures, which are able to make the wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3 15.) They proclaim the Almighty Saviour to the perishing sinner. "It is the spirit that quickeneth" but He works by means of the word. It is by it that he regenerates the soul. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." [James 1 18] "Being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." [1 Peter 1 23] It is by the same instrumentality that the holiness of the renewed and saved sinner is carried on. The Redeemer prayed for his followers, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." (John 17 17) "Christ also loved the Church and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." [Ephesians 5 26] Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the work in pieces? [Jer. 23 29] Yes. The written word is that all-powerful instrument employed by the omnipotent Agent in breaking the rock of man's natural heart and so subduing it as to prepare it for being acted upon by the fire of redeeming love. It is that hammer and that fire by which the proud is made lowly, the vain is emptied, the vicious is rendered moral, the selfish, becomes benevolent, the cruel tender-hearted, the dishonest, upright, the unchaste, pure, profaned, prayerful, the ungodly, devoted to God; the babe in Christ attains to the measure of the nature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus, while those who are already sanctified in Him, require a growing meekness, for the inheritance of the saints in light.

Let us then be roused to activity and self-sacrificing devotion, in sending forth the word of life. It is a startling, yet ascertained fact, that "the amount spent in Great Britain and Ireland in support of every institution for the spread of the Gospel, is on an average, but 3d. for each individual per annum, while the amount spent in the drunkard's drink, amounts in the same space of time to £1 10s. each. Were the inhabitants of Great Britain to abstain from these drinks, and to devote the amount to the Bible society, for only five months, every family on earth might be furnished with a 5s. Bible." [Canada Temperance Advocate, July 15] How much more might we ourselves do, if the peace and the pounds expended for unnecessary if not pernicious indulgences, were set apart to the service of "the Father of lights," from whom cometh down "every good gift and every perfect gift." Could we not apply to