

## Poetry.

### THE WIDOWED MOTHER.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

Beside her babe, who sweetly slept,  
A widow'd mother sat and wept  
O'er years of love gone by;  
And as the sobb'd thick gathering came,  
She murmur'd her dead husband's name  
Mid that sad lullaby  
Well might that lullaby be said,  
For not one single friend she had  
On this cold-hearted earth:  
The sea will not give back its prey,  
And they were wrapp'd in foreign clay,  
Who gave the orphan birth.  
Stealthfully as a star doth look  
Upon a little murmuring brook,  
She gazed upon the bosom  
And fair brow of her sleeping one:  
"Oh merciful Heaven! when I'm gone,  
Thine is this earthly blossom."  
While thus she spoke, a sunbeam broke  
Into the room—the babe awoke,  
Ah me! what kindling smiles met there!  
I know not whether was most fair,  
The mother or the child!  
With joy fresh spring from short alarms,  
The smiler stretch'd his rosy arms,  
And to her bosom leapt—  
All tears at once were swept away,  
And she hid a face as bright as day—  
Forgive me! that I wept!  
Sufferings there are from nature sprung,  
Ear hath not heard, nor tongue  
May venture to declare:  
But this, as holy writ is sure,  
The griefs she hid us here endure,  
She can herself repair.

## SPEECHES

Delivered at the Anniversary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, held in London, 2d May, 1838.

**BISHOP OF NORWICH.**—My Lords, Ladies, and Gentlemen, I will not say that I did not intend to be here to day, for I did intend it; yet I will say this, that I could ill spare the time; for I have many important occupations, and another Public Meeting shortly to attend. But, My Lord, I could not refuse myself the gratification and the pleasure of wishing the Bible Society "God speed;" and also of seeing the mode in which it was received by such an assemblage as this.

My Lord, it is a grievous thing to contemplate the state of the moral atmosphere, at this time, throughout the Christian world, or rather that part of it confined to our own country. We see it, as it were, too often, like a dingy fog spreading over us: we see among ourselves, divisions, parties, prejudice—every thing that ought not to exist. It is melancholy, it is lamentable, to see that so much difference prevails among those with whom no difference ought to prevail—I mean, among Christians, and in Religion. Lamentable, indeed, it is; but it is too notorious not to be confessed.

Why, My Lord, but this very week I sat here to direct an assemblage of the Members of the Temperance Society. Who would have thought that differences could have been introduced there? Why are we at open war with each other? There are the Teetotallers and the Temperance Members, quite at war. It was my object, and my wish—and I hope that I succeeded, by dropping in a few lumps of the sugar of conciliation—to make them friends. But much more lamentable is it to think, that in this simple distribution of the word of God there should be division and difference amongst us. Surely here we ought to meet hand in hand, and heart to heart: we ought all to fight under the same banner: we ought not to consider in what, or how much, we differ from each other, but how far we may agree with each other, in distributing the word of God. We are multiplying evils amongst ourselves: we are magnifying differences, where, if we looked without prejudice, and calmly, we should find, perhaps, that differences did not exist: we are, in fact, making mole-hills into mountains; we are too often looking, with a microscope eye, to discover differences of opinion; whereas it would be better for us, if, instead of using the microscope to detect them, we looked forward, through the telescope of Time, and there saw how much we shall hereafter be one.—The Bible Society—this blessed institution, is perhaps one of the strongest institutions of what I have been now touching upon. I am old enough to remember the birth of the Bible Society; and a blessed day it was for England, and for the world, when that natal day commenced! I can remember, also, that the Bible Society was opposed: but it was an infant Hercules, not easily to be strangled in its birth: and the Bible Society has survived and surmounted all opposition, increasing in wisdom and stature, increasing assuredly in favour with God; and I need not ask this assembly whether it is increasing in favour with man. I will candidly confess, that in those early days I was led, by the persons with whom I lived, by the companions with whom I associated, to look with some little degree of prejudice upon the Bible Society. I was told, and I thought, that it might be a dangerous instrument; that it would upset the Church; that it would derange the order of things: in fact, I did not exactly know what I thought—which, I believe, is the case with a great many. But I am indebted to the Bible Society, perhaps, for what I conceive to be the most valuable principle, which I hold: I am indebted to it for this principle, that of laying aside prejudice, and looking at a case on both sides. I was told that the Bible Society was dangerous; that it would do this, that, and the other; that it would overthrow the Church; that it would excite infidelity, and I cannot tell what: but at the same time there was, in the violence and the acrimony of the charges brought against it, something which induced me to see if nothing could be said for it. I did so; and I hope and trust, that to the end of my life, as in earlier days, I shall adopt nothing in haste, from ignorance, or from prejudice, but calmly and carefully look on both sides of every question. I may be wrong—some people may think me so; but that which is called the fundamental principle of the Bible Society, and which I once thought, and some still think, extremely dangerous, I now believe to be a most valuable principle; and that is, that on this platform, and in this room, people of all persuasions and sects meet

together: here we meet, not as Churchmen, not as Dissenters; but, if I may be permitted to use a homely phrase, we pocket our differences, and meet as christians. Our object is one and the same; we are to go forth, all in the name of the Lord: we fight under the same banner; that banner is THE CROSS OF CHRIST; and we may let our motto be—*In hoc signo vinces!*

May I, My Lord, be allowed to touch on one or two of the great objections to the Bible Society? The first—and a mighty one it is; for I have heard it argued with a degree of eloquence and power, that seemed likely to annihilate the Bible Society—the first objection is, You are wasting your money. Now this, certainly, is a very favourite argument with many; but it is one that goes home to some of their worst feelings. "Save your money—look at the number of Bibles there are! You are throwing pearls before swine! You are sowing the word of God on stony ground, where it may be choked! You ought not to labour thus: keep your money for a better purpose."

Now, not long ago I was at the house of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge: I saw there, if I may so speak, a mountain of Bibles; the shelves seemed actually groaning beneath their weight: but I bethought me, When that groaning weight is lifted from those shelves, they will be dispersed over the world; and the weight will become that which will lighten the heart and ease the burden of many a human being. But let us for an instant consider as true this asserted waste: let us suppose it is a waste: let us suppose that the argument is of some weight—that we are throwing away our money, or a great proportion of it: let us suppose that out of 100,000 Bibles that we are distributing, nine-tenths should be lost. Suppose (surely I am not expecting too much!) that five per cent. of these Bibles fall into good hands; or, since you have heard in the Report, that the numbers have increased—I may add one, and say, six per cent. Surely, is not that of great advantage! Take, for instance, 500 families who have the Bible placed in their hands—it may be lost, and useless, to a great part of them. Suppose that even among 450 it produces no benefit whatever; still, is not the result great and incalculable, if the fifty remaining families receive the word of God as they ought, accept it, obey its precepts, and become wise unto salvation? Why, you may meet these pounds, shillings, and pence people upon their own ground: you may ask them, whether—if fifty families out of 500 receive the Bible as they ought, and conduct themselves according to the precepts there laid down—whether, by being better citizens and better members of Society, by dispersing their prospects and example around them, right and left, they are not adding ten, nay, rather fifty per cent. to the marketable commodity of the great moral worth of our country.

Again: there is another objection which I would slightly touch upon; and that is, that we are issuing the Bible without note or comment: that, I remember, in my earlier days, was put before me as one of the strongest objections to the Bible Society. The Bible, they said and still say, cannot stand by itself. The Right Rev. Prelate, my friend—and I may call him my Brother now—has told you a story leading to a different conclusion; and I say, Amen, to all he asserted: it is one which he believes, which I believe, and every person here believes, I am convinced.—No, my friends; he who reads the Bible with a truly Christian spirit and heart will, I trust, so understand it, that he shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven; and what would you want further?

But one word more.—We are assured, also, of sending out the Bible in fractional parts. In many cases, it is impossible, from the state of the funds, and from various circumstances, to do more; it is impossible to send more than a single Gospel for instance. But is that nothing? Will any body tell me that a fractional part of the Bible is not better than nothing at all?—I think I can relate a fact in support of this course, and arguing immediately for it. The Gospel of St. Luke was published in one of the Eastern languages: a friend of mine, a Missionary travelling in India, saw one of the Priests belonging to the country sitting on a mountain, with a crowd surrounding him: attracted by curiosity, my friend went up—and what did he find? why, he found him commenting on the Gospel of St. Luke, which the Bible Society had been the means of placing in his hands!

The Bible Society reminds me of that anecdote of ancient times—of the Books of the Sybil, that were brought to the King for a certain price. It was a large price that was asked. He to whom they were brought, refused to give the sum. The man came again with only a portion of them, and made a larger demand, which was still refused. He then returned with a minor portion, still asking a larger sum, and was again refused; but, at length, he who looked at them saw how valuable they were, and gave the whole of the larger sum for only the fractional part. And I will appeal to the Christian World, whether, if the Bible were melted away into portions, and we had even but one Gospel left, we would not give all the worth of England, all her gold and silver, for the precious valuable portion, which announces to men the Great Being who created them—and leads them to that Blessed Saviour who has redeemed them, and shown them the way to glory.

**MR. ASSAAD YACOB KAYAT**, a Greek Christian from Syria.—My Lord, Ladies and Gentlemen—My costume already intimates that I am not a master of the English tongue. I introduce myself to this honorable and most noble assembly with the words of the Apostle, where he said, "There is no Greek, neither a Jew, neither bond nor free, barbarian nor Scythian, among you, but you are all one in the Lord." Perhaps my dress may seem to show that I am come from China, or from Persia. Christians from China, or Persia, or India, or any part of the world, are brethren in the Lord. Yet I think I may have a little spirit to tell you that I am come from that country where the Lord has been, where the Lord first appeared, and from that city where the honourable name of Christian was formed from my own beloved country Antioch. Many of you, I believe (as I have observed in this

country in my first and second visit) are fond of history, and you have more books than we have. You know very well what was the state of our country, before our Lord's era and after it; but the country has sunk into a dreadful state since the second and third caliphs of Mahomud. We were the first country, however, in the world, before we were conquered; and Damascus one of the most ancient cities on the face of the globe, was, if not the first, the second city in the world: but those people who came from the east, or from the desert, came to our country, and I believe, also, that they found their way into other parts of the world; and it is only the Providence of God that has kept some countries free from them, and protected them against them, and enabled them to form such a Religious Society as this and the one I had the honor to be at yesterday—the Church Missionary Society—that His noble doctrines might be spread among the 800,000,000 of the world. I am exceedingly indebted myself, first, to the Missionaries who came from the United States of America to our country; and, secondly, to the noble British and Foreign Bible Society, who enabled those Missionaries to bring the Bible in our own language there. My father taught me to think first of my money. He thought the state of the country was not so good to look at; and he was able to procure for me a teacher or tutor to give me some little education, that I might become a Monk in one of our convents. But when the Missionaries came to our country—Mr. Fisk, Mr. Bird, and Mr. Goodall, and other Missionaries from this country, and a Missionary from Rome—I thought, after I had received my education in Arabic and Greek, it would be a pity to go to a convent; so I went to the Missionaries, and they assisted me, and received me, and gave me such education as I was able to receive, and enabled me to speak a little among them, and to address you this day. I now see that the Providence of God sent those Missionaries into my country. I began to read and to study the Bible with deep interest, and to feel pleasure in being a native of that country to which the Gospel first came, where first the twelve Apostles met, where very many fathers of my beloved church had spent their lives, and written their Homilies and Sermons on Christianity. But the state of this country for so many hundred years has sunk our Church: the Church became dark: and, I dare say, theologians in this country will find many things have been introduced into our Church which were not in it hundreds of years ago, by reason of the ignorance of the country, and the changes of time. I do not like the changes which have been made; but I never condemn the solid principles of the Church. The little education which I had received, enabled me to a certain extent, to gain reputation in the country. I possessed some influence there, and began to read Oriental Literature; for instance, Arabic and Persian—and, of course I was obliged to read the Koran. I went to Damascus, and formed acquaintance with some of the noblest Mahometans in that country, who are very polite people, and they received me well. Some of them, in secret, began to teach me the Koran, and I had an opportunity of reading many of their books; but, in the meantime I had that beloved, that most noble fountain of truth about me—the Bible, I mean, and the New Testament. I wanted to compare them with the doctrines of that man who came from the desert, from Arabia, and to see why thousands of people should embrace his doctrines—I mean Mahomet. I wanted, now that I had the means, to read and to examine all these things. Well, my Mahometan teachers, through influence, friendship, and all that, began to flatter me, that I, of course, was not a Christian in heart, but a Mahometan, from some predestination of God; and that the time would come, when I should declare it. I told them it was not the case (I had not the feelings of the real Christian then; but was a member of the Church, from the honour which Christianity brought me.) I said to them, "I do not see or find anything solid in your principles. You pay me all sorts of compliments, and give me every sort of encouragement in your political and friendly and worldly business; but I do not see anything solid."—I ought not to detain this noble assembly very long; but I shall proceed a few minutes longer. When I was in my office in Damascus I always felt obligation and gratitude to the Missionaries, and I corresponded with them. I had much to do in my political office of worldly business; and perhaps I did it too much for honour's sake. I used to write to the Missionaries, to ask what I could do for them; and in the mean time some persons from the East came to Damascus to see the Pasha; and I had the honor to act as interpreter: and I then formed acquaintances with several noblemen and gentlemen from your country, who visited ours, through the little English I possessed. Some of them I introduced to the Pasha. The Pasha said, "England is very fine, very good, and so forth; but the English are in debt £800,000,000." The Pasha said that to the noblemen and gentlemen. One of them said, "What of that? twenty-nine persons in my country, and my father, the thirtieth, will at any time raise such a sum, when it is necessary." The Pasha was astonished, and so was I also; and I began to think of the means of coming to this country, to see its riches. Some persons from the East, royal personages, were coming over, and I had the honour to accompany them as interpreter: and we did nothing all the way but talk of religion. They said, "We should be very happy if we were all of one religion." "Of course," I said.—"Then," said they, "Why do you not become so?" "Because I am not convinced: I do not see: I cannot do so without some reason." We began to talk, and I felt more seriously obliged to examine the Bible, in order to meet their proofs, and also to read more of the Koran. Well, we were five months in this country, and were almost all that time visiting different places, and seeing what was to be seen of the metropolis: of course the noble princes could not fail to be struck with the light of your country; that is to say, the light of Christianity, which they could not see where they came from. We afterwards returned to Constantinople, and proceeded on

our journey, but all the time talking, talking, talking about religion: and, at last, the Noble Princes said, "If you come to Bagdad, we shall make one of the great Mullahs there convince you, and give you all the proofs." I went home: and after going home, I gave up everything; thinking it was my duty, as a member of the Greek Church, to labour for the good of my country, and first to labour for education—education on Christian principles; and more especially for female education like that which I had seen in this country. Many of my countrymen said, "This is wrong, it should not be done;" and some said I was mad. However, I would not listen to them, but proceeded with my work. Some of them said I had come from the moon. I gave up my office in the Consulate there, and said I could not accept it any longer; because I felt I could do something for my country; especially for this most important part—female education upon Christian principles, in order to introduce Christianity among the Mahometans: for the ladies have influence there as well as everywhere. I began to travel about the country; and every man was glad to see me, because I gave them accounts of different parts of Europe, of England, and of their own country, of which they were ignorant. They asked me the reason why England was so much higher than they were. I thought it a difficult question to answer; but I could give them my own opinion, from examining the History of England, that this country did not begin to flourish till religion and Christianity began to influence her institutions, through the Bible: it was then this country began to flourish. This, I told them, enabled you to have such Universities as Oxford and Cambridge, and such philosophers: and though your language was not so rich as ours originally, yet the members of those Universities added and added, and made it at last, almost the largest language of the world. They were astonished to hear all this, and could hardly believe it to be the case. But I said it was, and that it was that which made you so happy; and that as long as these Institutions were supported and increased, so long would this country be happy, and the more this country would flourish.

I will now proceed, if you will allow me, to say how the Bible can be introduced among the Mahometans, which I can speak of from a journey of many months among the people of Syria. I told the Christian Ladies there, that they ought to feel ashamed of themselves: they are handsome and polite, and clean, and every thing; but they should use their influence among my poor countrymen: for, as I said before, ladies naturally have influence everywhere. A party of seven of us, travelling homeward in the desert, were robbed by the Bedouins—a Bedouin lady was amongst them: I said to her, "We are strangers; why do you do us injury, and harm us, who never did you any harm to you?" And she began to speak in our favor, and she had influence, and saved us. The ladies in our country, are by far the most civilized in the East, but still they are very short of instruction. It is not their own fault, but ours; because we foolishly thought, that, by giving them instruction in writing and reading, we should spoil them. But I began to tell my countrymen how the apostles assembled with women in prayer, and that women had the same honour in prophesying, and carrying on the word of God, and by serving the Apostles, and meeting with them, and attending them; and I told them moreover, that as far as I could judge, nothing could sustain any person from vice more than Christianity, and more than education; I told them that an instructed person would, from shame and for his honour's sake, make no violation of good, or act any bad things; but a low person, who was not educated, would not mind acting all sorts of vice. However, they said, "Well, never mind, we do not want it." So I left them, and went to Bagdad, to see the noble Princes, and to hear what the great Mullah (who was going to make me a Mahometan!) would say, and to hear his great proofs. [The Speaker proceeded to describe, at some length, his discussions with the Mahometans—which for want of space, are here omitted.]

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