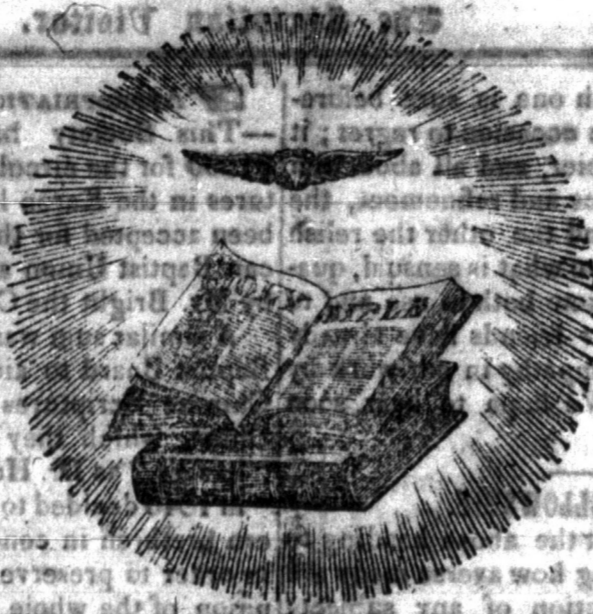


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REV. E. D. VERY,

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BE USEFUL.

What is man without design?
 What is life, if idly spent?
 What is light that doth not shine?
 What is knowledge closely pent?
 Who has pleasure doing nought,
 When so much remains undone,
 Philanthropic works unwrought,
 Reformation but begun?

When so many evils swarm,
 Social, moral—fierce and wide,
 Need there is that every arm
 Should be lent to Virtue's side.
 Nature's dykes are leaking fast,
 Vilest waters still expand:
 Help, O God! the effort vast,
 To reclaim the drowing land.

Man, to be despised ere long,
 Need but gaily spend his days:
 Heedless look on what is wrong;
 Wolves of error never chase;
 Evil habits patronize;
 Pleas for liberty disdain;
 Help not when the fall'n would rise,
 List not when the poor complain.

See aloft the gaudy yacht
 Launched for pleasure, not for trade;
 Labor's works of use may not
 In its cedar hold be laid laid;
 Tempests meet the freightless sail;
 Who its safe return awaits?
 Straining, if its timbers fail;
 Who are mourners o'er its fate?

Hearts that would be pleasure-filled—
 Minds that would be bathed in light—
 Hopes that would securely build—
 Souls that love a noble fight—
 Active good at once begin,
 Sowing truth and weeding lies;
 Holy efforts yet shall win;
 Lab'ring hope to rapture rise.

Sweet is Virtue's earn'd repose;
 Philanthropic hearts are blessed'd;
 None whose life is aimless, knows
 What is heartfelt, real rest.
 Cheerful is the purposed mind—
 Wise and noble—free and great;
 Such alone exalt mankind
 To the height of MAN'S estate.

[From the Puritan Recorder.]

LONDON RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

The London Religious Tract Society, founded in 1799, completed its first half century in May, 1849. It has recently published in a large volume, its history of this period; during which its receipts from legacies, donations and sales was about \$6,000,000, and has circulated five hundred millions of copies of tracts and books in one hundred and ten languages and dialects.

From this volume we gather the following facts respecting the origin of the

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

Among the indirect benefits which have resulted from this Society none are more interesting and important than the formation through means of it, of the British and Foreign Bible Society. In its minute book are recorded the first suggestion, and all the subsequent steps, in which that noble institution originated. The officers and committee of the Religious Tract Society, were the privileged agents employed in the attainment of this holy object, and several of them were among the first officers and committee of the new society, and continued until the close of their earthly course to be its devoted friends and supporters. In this case, as in many others, a small spring has been the source of a mighty

river which has borne its fertilizing influences through a large portion of the earth.

In the year 1802, the Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala, in Wales, was walking in one of the streets in that town, when he met a child who attended his ministry. He inquired if she could repeat the text from which he had preached on the preceding Sunday. Instead of giving a prompt reply, as she had been accustomed to do, she remained silent.

"Can you not tell me the text, my little girl?" repeated Mr. Charles. The child wept, but was still silent. At length she said: "The weather, sir, has been so bad, that I could not get to read the Bible." "Could not get to read the Bible! how is that?" said Mr. C. The reason was soon ascertained: there was no copy to which she could gain access, either at her own home, or among her friends; and she was accustomed to travel every week seven miles over the hills to a place where she could obtain a Welsh Bible, to read the chapter from which the minister took his text. But during that week the cold and stormy weather had prevented her usual journey.

This incident made a deep impression on the benevolent mind of Mr. Charles. In December, 1802, he took a journey to London, intending to lay certain plans for the distribution of the Scriptures among the Welsh, before several charitable friends, particularly the committee of the Religious Tract Society, of which he was a member. The subject was much on his mind; and while awake in bed, the idea of having a Bible Society established in London, on a similar basis to the Religious Tract Society, occurred to him. He was so cheered by the thought that he instantly arose, and went out to consult some friends on the subject. The first person he met was Mr. Tarn, who was then on the committee of the Tract Society. They discussed the subject together, for a considerable time. At the next meeting of the Society, held on Tuesday, the 7th Dec., 1802, Mr. Charles was introduced. On this occasion, the Rev. M. Wilks presided, and fifteen members of the committee were present. Mr. Tarn, after the regular business of the committee was finished, mentioned the particulars of his conversation with Mr. Charles, when the latter fully unfolded his plans, and urged assistance in the attainment of his object. At the moment Mr. Charles was pleading for the Bible for Wales, it occurred to Rev. Mr. Hughes, one of the committee,—"Surely a society might be formed for the purpose, and if for Wales, why not also for the empire and the world?" He arose, when Mr. Charles had finished and said that it appeared to him desirable to extend the plan already suggested by Mr. C., so as to facilitate a general circulation of the Scriptures. In these views all present united and instructed Mr. Hughes to make the following entry in the minute-book of the Tract Society:—

"Mr. Charles, of Bala, having introduced the subject of dispersing Bibles in Wales, the committee resolved that it would be highly desirable to stir up the public mind to the dispersion of the Bible generally, and that a paper in a magazine to this effect may be singularly useful." The circulation of the Bible throughout the world was deemed sufficiently connected with the object of the Society thus generally to appear on these minutes; and the secretary, who suggested it, was accordingly desired to enter it.

Mr. Hughes was requested at this conference to prepare a circular letter, inviting Christians of every name to unite in a society to send the word of God without note or comment all over the world. On Tuesday, December 21, 1802, the Tract Committee, again met, when Mr. Thomas Pellatt presided. The following entry on the minutes is in his hand

Mr. Secretary read a paper on the importance of forming a society for the distribution of Bibles in various languages.

Resolved, That a special meeting be holden next Tuesday, at eight o'clock, as preparatory to a general meeting to promote that end."

At the appointed time the committee met. Mr. Charles was in attendance. The following minute was the result.

"The object of the intended society was maturely considered, and determined unanimously to be: To promote the circulation of the Holy Scriptures in foreign countries, and in those parts of the British dominions for which adequate provision is not yet made: it being understood that no English translation of the Scriptures will be gratuitously circulated in Great Britain."

The address by Mr. Hughes, explanatory of the object of the intended society, was adopted after careful revision. On February 1, 1803, the rules of the Society were finally settled. On the 8th of the same month, an important minute is recorded.

"That the translation of the Scriptures, established by public authority, be the only one in the English language to be adopted by the Society."

At the fourth general meeting of the Tract Society on the 12th of May, 1803, the contemplated Bible Society was the great subject of the morning. During the remainder of this year, various difficulties impeded the formation of the Society, but a wise and prudent course on the part of its friends gradually removed them. In January, 1804, a special meeting was held, "for the purpose of promoting the Bible Society," when it was resolved, That the title of the Society should be, "The British and Foreign Bible Society," agreeably to the suggestion of the Secretary, and that he be requested to prepare a circular letter on the subject.

At length the preliminary and anxious labors of the Tract Committee were happily and successfully terminated. On the 7th of March 1804, the British and Foreign Bible Society was fully established. On this occasion several members of the Tract Committee, explained the nature and design of the projected society, demonstrated its necessity, and in a strain of good sense, temperate zeal, and perspicuous information, urged the importance of its immediate establishment.

Among the elected committee of the Bible Society, were ten members of the Tract Society Committee. The Rev. Mr. Hughes was chosen one of its Secretaries.

The auspicious commencement of the Society was immediately communicated to Mr. Charles by Mr. Tarn. He wrote:—

"The meeting consisted of about three hundred persons from different denominations of Christians, and there was nothing but harmony throughout. A subscription was opened and about \$165 obtained on the spot. We cannot, my dear brother, but rejoice together when we consider that this work had its beginning in a conversation we had one morning, which will never be forgotten. Hence I was induced at the next meeting of the Tract Society, to mention the scarcity of Bibles in Wales, and then it was the flame was kindled which now breaks out, and which I hope will burn brighter and brighter till that day of universal knowledge comes, when we shall no more teach our brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' but all shall know him from the least to the greatest. To the Lord be all the glory."

How wonderful are the ways of divine Providence in bringing forward from small events, the great agencies for blessing the world.—Before Rev. Mr. Charles had asked the little peasant girl to repeat the text, from which he had preached, God had brought into being the Tract Society and connected him with it, and

to which he could look for aid to carry out the noble plan for furnishing the poor with the Bible which the answer of the little girl suggested to his mind. In that Society he found the men whom God had prepared to sympathize with him and to cherish the plan till at length it was consummated in the organization of the noblest institution that has blessed the world.

Biblical History.

Mr. Layard continues his interesting discoveries at Nimroud, all throwing fresh light on matters of biblical history. A foreign paper, giving an account of his excavations, says he has "summoned the kings and people of Nineveh through three thousand years to give their testimony against the sceptics of our age, in support of the divine revelation." Among the pieces of sculpture recently sent to England are a winged human-headed lion, and a winged human-headed bull. The London News thus refers to these curiosities:

This animal would seem to bear some analogy to the Egyptian sphynx, which represents the head of the king upon the body of the lion, and is held by some to be typical of the union of intellectual power with physical strength. The sphynx of the Egyptians, however is invariably sitting, whereas the Nimroud figure is always represented standing.—The apparent resemblance being so great, it is at least worthy of consideration whether the head on the winged animals of the Ninevites may not be that of the king, and the intention identical with that of the sphynx; though we think it more probable that there is no such connection, and that the intention of the Ninevites was to typify their God under the common emblems of intelligence, strength and swiftness, as signified by the additional attributes of the bird.

In Lower Chaldea, important discoveries have been made by Mr. Loftus, the geologist, to fix the bounds between Turkey and Persia. He has visited many cities never before reached by Europeans, and at one place (Senkerah) has come on a pavement, extending from half an acre to an acre, entirely covered with writing, which was engraved upon baked tiles, &c. The following is so interesting, though as yet somewhat indefinite, that we give it all.

At Wurka (or Ur of the Chaldees,) whence Abraham came out, he had found innumerable inscriptions; they were of no great extent, but they were exceedingly interesting, giving many royal names previously unknown. Wurka (Ur of Orchoe,) seemed to be a holy city, for the whole country, for miles upon miles, was nothing but a huge necropolis. In none of the excavations of Assyria had coffins ever been found but in this city of Chaldea, there were thousands upon thousands. The story of Abraham's birth at Wurka did not originate with the Arabs, as had sometimes been conjectured, but with the Jews; and the Orientals had numberless fables about Abraham and Nimrod.

Mr. Layard in excavating beneath the great pyramid at Nimroud, had penetrated a mass of masonry, in which he had discovered the tomb and statue of SARDANAPALUS, accompanied by full annals of the monarch's reign engraved on the walls! He had also found tablets of all sorts, all of them being historical; but the crowning discovery he had yet to describe. The palace at Nineveh, or Koyunpili, had evidently been destroyed by fire, but one portion of the building seemed to have escaped its influence; and Mr. Layard, in excavating in this part of the palace, had found a large room filled with what appeared to be the archives of the empire, ranged in successive tablets of terra cotta, the writings being as perfect as when the tablets were first stamped.