

THE
FIRST REPORT
OF THE
BIBLE SOCIETY
OF
UPPER CANADA,
WITH
A LIST
OF
SUBSCRIBERS AND BENEFACTORS.



YORK:

PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY.

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1818.

DISTRICT SCHOOL-HOUSE,
York, 3d November, 1818.

AT A GENERAL MEETING

OF THE

Bible & Common Prayer Book Society

OF

UPPER CANADA,

HELD HERE THIS DAY,

HIS EXCELLENCY SIR PEREGRINE MAITLAND,

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF THIS PROVINCE, IN THE CHAIR,

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS,

*Proposed and seconded by different Gentlemen, (as more fully
appears in the detailed Report of the Proceedings,)
were unanimously passed:*

1. THAT His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor be requested to take the Chair, and to become the Patron of the Society.
2. That the Report be now read.
3. That the Report be adopted.

4. That the Committee of Direction consist of the five following gentlemen: The Hon. Chief Justice Powell, Hon. Chief Justice Scott, Hon. Justice Campbell, the Attorney General, and Dr. Macaulay, agreeable to the Constitution of this Society.

5. That the state of religious knowledge in this Province is extremely deficient; it is therefore the duty of all Christians to exert themselves to remedy this evil which may be done in a very considerable degree by disseminating the Holy Scriptures.

6. That it appears to be the wish of different Societies to associate themselves as Auxiliaries to the Upper Canada Society for distributing the Scriptures without note or comment; to meet which general wish, it is resolved, that this Society be separated into two distinct Societies, one for the distribution of the Bible only, the other for the distribution of the Prayer Book.

7. That this Society be henceforth denominated the Bible Society of Upper Canada.

8. That a small donation of Bibles be presented to the Kent Bible Society.

9. That a friendly communication be opened with the other Bible Societies within the Province.

10. That the Subscribers of one guinea be allowed to purchase Bibles at prime cost from the Depository of the Society, to the amount of five guineas, and in like proportion for every additional guinea that may be subscribed.

11. That the thanks of this Society be transmitted to the British and Foreign Bible Society, through the medium of the Right Hon. Lord Teignmouth, its President, for their munificent donation, and that His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor be requested to transmit the same.

12. That the thanks of the Society be presented to Mr. and Mrs. Gore for their liberal donation.

13. That the thanks of the Society be presented to Major Halton, for his prompt attention to their order for books.

14. That the Treasurer and Secretary be requested to continue in their several offices.

15. That the members of this Society will exert themselves, as far as their influence admits, in promoting similar institutions in different parts of the Province.

16. That the cordial thanks of this Meeting be given to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, for his important protection in presiding at this Meeting, and becoming the Patron of the Institution.

PROCEEDINGS.

On Thursday, the 3d day of November, the Annual Meeting of the Bible Society of Upper Canada, was held in the Hall of the District School House, at one o'clock.

The Meeting was opened with an appropriate prayer to Almighty God, by the Rev. Dr. Strachan, Rector of the Parish.

Chief Justice Scott then arose, and said:

“That he was convinced all present would join him most cordially in what he was going to propose,

“That His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor be requested to take the Chair, and to become the Patron of the Society.”

Before this motion could be seconded, it was received and adopted by the Meeting with the warmest zeal.

His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor having taken the chair,

Major Loring moved, “That the Report be now read.”

In presenting the Report, Dr Strachan had to regret its extreme barrenness, but hoped that by next year the distribution of the books would furnish materials for one most truly interesting. In the mean time, before reading the Report, he requested their indulgence in making a few remarks upon the exertions now making to extend the benefits of Christ's kingdom ; for he knew of no better way of exciting a kindred spirit in those present, than by mentioning what other Christians were doing to give to nations still in darkness the blessings which they enjoyed. Of the greatness of these blessings, no person could for a moment doubt, who contrasted the condition of mankind previous to the promulgation of the Gospel, with what it is now among those who have embraced it.

In reading ancient history, we are apt to be carried away by the false glory of a few distinguished men, and filled with admiration at their exploits, we forget the general state of society : but, when we descend to particulars, we discover that nine-tenths of the people were doomed to the most abject slavery ; that, if Athens numbered 20,000 citizens, possessed of some liberty, she likewise contained more than four hundred thousand slaves, who had no civil rights, no will of their own, and whose lives were entirely at the disposal of their cruel masters. In Rome, matters were still worse ; one person was frequently the possessor of twenty thousand of his fellow creatures, whom he put to death at pleasure, and at all times treated in the most harsh and capricious manner. It is unnecessary to advert to the gloomy superstitions of those times ; the human sacrifices that were offered on their impious altars, and the patterns of licentiousness,

cruelty, and deceit, which their gods exhibited—because any description of their corruptions must come far short of that given by St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans; nor is the situation of the nations in the present day, any more improved, where the Christian dispensation is still unknown. They are still found a prey to the sins mentioned by the Apostle; still offering up their sons and daughters to their offended deities; still confused in their moral distinction, by the sins attributed to their false god.

If the situation of the heathen be so desperate, what can be done for them? Is it possible for them to be saved? Much has been said on this subject: some denying its possibility; others affirming it; and both carrying their opinions to an extremity not warranted by the Gospel. St. Peter places this subject upon its just foundation, where he says, that “he that feareth God in every nation, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.” And this agrees with the doctrine of St. Paul, who declares that those who had not the law were a law unto themselves; they were only reprehensible in the use that they made of the light which they possessed; obeying the voice of conscience, fearing God, and working righteousness, they became partakers of the atoning merits of our blessed Lord and Master, and found mercy; “for every man shall be accepted according to what he had, not to what he had not.” But it is difficult for us to suppose, that the love and tender regard for mankind, manifested in these precepts, can extend to those who trample on all the more amiable feelings of human nature—who sacrifice their children on the cruel altars of superstition—who throw themselves into the burning flames. It becomes our duty to endeavour to rescue them

from all danger, by introducing them to the lights of the Gospel. Without, therefore, presuming to decide upon a question so awfully momentous as the salvation of the heathen, we may readily perceive, that by imparting to them the rich inheritance of the Gospel which we enjoy, we shall confer upon them the most precious benefits, both of a temporal and spiritual kind; and to do this, is an imperious duty; a duty acknowledged by the first Christians, and performed with a zeal and fortitude not to be surpassed. Nor is this duty now forgotten; it appears to attract all the Christian world; for, as we become better acquainted with the lights of the Gospel, the more do we feel for those who are still in darkness.

Protestants had long been reproached by the Catholics, for their want of zeal, and indifference to the progress of Christianity. This was called one of the proofs of their heresy; for if they really professed the true faith, it was said that they would be anxious for its propagation. But it is easy to justify the Protestants on this head. They had not the necessary means to send out Missions among the heathen nations, till long after the Reformation. Harassed, opposed and persecuted by their more powerful and numerous opponents, they had no leisure to look beyond themselves. They had to contend for the faith at their own doors; they were still in jeopardy, still doubtful of the victory; but no sooner were they at rest, and their principles firmly established, than they began to turn their attention to their benighted brethren.

In 1699, a few individuals in England, of elevated station and eminent piety, both among the

clergy and laity, began to meet together, in voluntary society; and with union, zeal, and increasing numbers, exerted themselves to advance the knowledge of true religion, by such methods as appeared most conducive to that end. In 1701, a charter was granted to some of the members of the Society for the propagation of the Gospel, incorporating them, under the title of the Society for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts. This latter Society being confined to foreign parts, the voluntary Society for promoting Christian knowledge was not discontinued, but prosecuted their benevolent design at home, where it is still employed with redoubled diligence, to the vast benefit of the country. The incorporated Society extended its operations principally to North America, where it first spread by its Missionaries the light of the Gospel, and still continues its labours. Both Societies unite hand in hand, in extending the influence of religion; and the history of their proceedings demonstrates their faithfulness and success.

The next attempt to spread the Gospel was made by the Moravians, with a gentleness and tenderness that breathes the true spirit of the religion of Jesus. These obscure and despised people, have the most extensive Mission of any Christian body. By their last Report, 155 Missionaries are abroad among the heathens, carrying with them the blessings of all denominations of Christians, encountering every danger, and suffering the most severe privations, in diffusing the blessings of Christianity through the world.

But it was not before the year 1730, that a general awakening appeared to arise in England, among all denominations, to spread the Gospel.

Since that time, the Church Missionary Society; the Baptist Mission, whose labours in translating the Scriptures have been so useful; the Methodist Mission; and the General Mission, including all denominations, have been established, and are supported with an increasing zeal. But there appeared still to be wanting some Society, which, adopting a single principle in which all could concur, would be enabled to unite all denominations together, and to direct their combined efforts to the extension of the Gospel. Such a Society arose in 1804, for the sole purpose of disseminating the Scriptures, and has proceeded with unprecedented success. The period of its formation appears portentous; it was while the baneful terrors of war spread misery and dismay over Europe, that this Society commenced its labours of love. It softened the horrors of war; it sent out tidings of peace and good will among the contending nations—tidings which speak comfort to the afflicted soul. All the nations of the earth partake of its extensive benevolence—the Hindoo, the Tartar, the Mohawk, the Laplander, the inhabitants of Iceland, Greenland, and Siberia, of Labrador and China, have received the Revelations of God, in their several languages. It has infused new vigour into all the other religious institutions; dissipated the languor with which some of them began to be enveloped; and, showing them how much good might be done, it has called forth their emulation, and extorted from its enemies reluctant praise.

The fame of the British and Foreign Bible Society extends from the Nile to the Ganges—from the Niger to the Euphrates—from the Thames to the Mississippi;—all Christian nations have caught the holy flame, and the accomplishment

of the glorious prophecy seems nearly at hand, "when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, 'Allelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.'"

THE REPORT.

The Society not having been able to proceed to the actual distribution of the Scriptures, the present Report will not be found so interesting as those which may be reasonably anticipated in future, when the several details of the distribution of the Scriptures will furnish many particulars highly gratifying to the feeling heart.

Various delays in accomplishing the necessary arrangements, prevented a remittance being made to England for books, till it was too late to expect them in 1817; and the climate only admitting annual communication, it was not till very lately that the Bibles and Prayer Books arrived.

They now wait the regulations of this Meeting for the mode of distribution.

Major Halton, the Society's Agent, has been extremely attentive in procuring the books at the cheapest rate, and at the same time of excellent print and paper; and he begs to inform the Society, that it will give him the greatest pleasure, on all occasions, to attend to their orders, and to contribute, in any way that may be in his power, to the furtherance of the excellent objects of their institution.

In virtue of the 10th Resolution, the Rev. Dr. Strachan transmitted copies of the Constitution, with letters, of which the following is a copy, to several religious Societies :

“ TO THE SOCIETIES.

“ Upper Canada, 20th Nov. 1817.

‘ Rev. Sir,

“ Agreeable to the 10th Article of the Constitution of the Bible and Common Prayer Book Society of Upper Canada, I enclose you a copy of that instrument, to be laid before the Society. The address will best explain the motives and views of the members of this Association, which I hope will meet with the approbation of your venerable Society.

“ A donation of Bibles and Common Prayer Books, in aid of our scanty means, would be productive of much good, not only in disseminating religious knowledge, but likewise, in extending the influence of that Church to which we have the happiness to belong, and this in a way that can give no cause of umbrage to any sincere Christian.”

The following Letter was addressed directly to my Lord Teignmouth, President of the British and Foreign Bible Society :

“ Upper Canada, 20th Nov. 1817.

‘ My Lord,

“ Some years ago, I took the liberty of addressing your Lordship, on the subject of the Bible Society. The war with our neighbours coming on, nothing could be done towards establishing a similar Society in this country. Now that it has pleased God to restore tranquillity, we have thought it expedient to form an Association, which, though differing somewhat from that over which your Lordship presides with so much distinction, is, nevertheless, in our opinion, better calculated to supply the wants of this infant Colony.

“ I enclose to your Lordship our Constitution, and hope it will so far meet your approbation, as to induce you to recommend us to the benevolence of the Bible Society; for a donation of Bibles and New Testaments, to be distributed among the inhabitants of this Colony.

“ Your Lordship will rejoice to learn that a sense of religion begins to be felt through the Province, and that the people are getting anxious for religious instruction.

“ The address at the head of the Constitution will explain to your Lordship our intentions, and the reasons that induced us to accompany, when agreeable, the distribution of the Common Prayer Book with the Bible.

It is with much satisfaction that we have to communicate to this Association, the Christian spirit with which their letter and constitution were received by the British and Foreign Bible Society, as appears by the following letter from that Society :

“ Bible Society’s House, Earl-street, Black-
“ friars, London, March 7th, 1818.

“ Sir,

“ Your esteemed favour of the 20th November last, addressed to our noble President, having been laid before the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, together with the Constitution of the Bible and Common Prayer Book Society, instituted at York, they voted a grant of Bibles and Testaments to the amount of One Hundred Pounds, sterling, to your Society. This being the only Branch of your Institution which the simple object of the British and Foreign Bible Society will allow them to aid with its funds, the Committee trust it will be received as a testimony of friendship and good will.

“ Whenever your Committee may require more Bibles or Testaments, there is no doubt, that upon application, they will be allowed to purchase, at prime cost, from the Society’s Depository; and, should you have any surplus funds with which your Society may be desirous of promoting the distribu-

tion of the Scriptures in foreign parts, you will have an opportunity of doing so, by contributing to the funds of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

“It cannot but be gratifying to the Committee to see Bible Societies springing up in different parts of Canada, and upon its coasts. That formed in the Middle District of Upper Canada, has already remitted £ 55; that of Niagara, £ 100; and a small one in Prince Edward’s Island, £ 60.

“As you have not named any person to whom the Books may be consigned, they will be directed to the care of the Rev. Mr. Easton, of Montreal, who, having made several collections for the British and Foreign Bible Society, will, I have no doubt, take charge of them, a favour which we shall request of him. We expect they will be taken by a ship on loading.

“I remain, Sir,

“Your very obedient Servant,

“JOSEPH TARN,

“Assist. Sec’y.”

The Hon. and Rev. Dr. Strachan, York, Upper Canada.”

“P. S. The Society have a quantity of Mohawk Gospel of St. John, translated by Captain Norton, if your Committee could promote their circulation among the Mohawk Indians, they would be much at your service.”

Something beyond admiration must be felt by every member of this Institution, on learning that one hundred pounds sterling, of Bibles and New Testaments, voted to this Society, have been received. A munificent donation, worthy of that sublime Association, which has imparted such an impulse to the civilized world—an Association which appears since its first formation, highly favoured by the Providence of God; and which

seems from the union it has effected among all denominations of Christians, evidently intended to produce some great change in the moral condition of man.

Although there are very few persons in this country, so poor as not to be able to purchase a Bible, when so disposed; yet, such has been the unhappy situation of the Province, in regard to religious instruction, that thousands are not sufficiently aware of the vast comfort which the perusal of the Scriptures confers. This ignorance, it will be the business of the Society to remove; and by exciting a disposition to study the Scriptures, a desire will be likewise raised to know more of religion. In this way, the zeal to circulate, and the anxiety to receive the records of eternal life, will be found to increase in the same proportion.

Charitable donations, to a certain extent, may be necessary for some time; but since almost all are able to purchase Bibles, and there are few who cannot read, such donations will gradually become less necessary.

The soldiers still embodied, and many who are reduced and settled in different parts of the Colony, deserve the most early attention of this Society—for, being exposed to difficulties to which they have not been accustomed, and left in a great measure to themselves, they become an easy prey to sinful gratifications.

A Bible, bestowed upon such, might prove an invaluable present. It might draw their attention when the labours of the day are at an end, and

guard them by its influence from the temptations that assail them.

To the poor and destitute emigrants, the attention of this Association will be naturally directed. Many of them come to the Province with excellent Gospel impressions, which, unfortunately, the state of religious instruction is little calculated to cherish or promote. They are at first shocked at the want of Churches for the public worship of God, and they are scandalized at the little regard paid to the Christian Sabbath; but their zeal gradually wears away, and many of them in a few years become careless and indifferent.

To prevent such unhappy changes, within the sphere of their activity, will be the study of this Society; and this may be done, by informing such persons, that places for the celebration of public worship will be gradually supplied; presenting them in the mean time with Bibles, and exhorting them to preserve their religious principles, and to look forward to a great amelioration in the religious condition of the Province; and, that however indifferent many may appear to Christianity, that yet the more respectable part of the community are its warm friends and supporters.

Pains must be taken to discover when the donation of a Bible may do good; and as many respectable inhabitants have no such book in their houses, and from the want of reflection, never may, but for the exertions of the members of this Association, exciting in their minds a desire for perusing the Sacred Records, we should be solicitous to win them.

And when we look at the marvellous impulse given to the nations in every quarter of the globe, by the British and Foreign Bible Society, for disseminating and reading the Scriptures, we are encouraged with the hope, that through the blessing of God, the same success will attend us, in exciting a similar spirit in this extensive Province.

This hope is strengthened, and in one instance happily realized: through the active exertions of Mr. Dankie, a Bible Society has been formed in Kent, on the River Thames. The following is a copy of his letter, by which he solicits our fellowship and protection, which I persuade myself will be cordially given:

“ New Fairfield, River Thames, Oxford
 “ Township, 2d October, 1818.

“ My very respected Brother,

“ Through my feeble means a Society has been formed on this River, by the name of the Kent Auxiliary Society, of which my worthy friend Mr. John Dalson, was the first projector:

“ After an address and proposal to the inhabitants of the County of Kent had been circulated, and sufficient subscribers came in, we proposed a Meeting on the 17th of June, as a preparatory one; and certain Resolutions were formed, a Constitution brought to light, and a proposal made, that on the 1st day of September a general Meeting should be held in a central place of the Settlement.

“ This being noticed by advertisements, and preparations made, all the subscribers and many others assembled; and it was a glorious day in the sight of the Lord, before whom we appeared as one body, singing hymns to His praise.

“ The grand question, to which Bible Society we should

unite, was left to the deliberation of the majority of the chosen Committee, by the Society at large.

“ October 1st, the day appointed when the Board of Committee and officers were to meet, it was unanimously decided,

‘ To become Auxiliary, and join ourselves to the Bible Society of York.’

“ This Resolution, which meets the entire approbation of the Society at large, I have the honour and pleasure to mention to you; but I do it as introductory, because in future, the Secretary is to attend to the correspondence.

“ First of all, I trust we may be accepted as Auxiliary to the York Bible Society, and I have no reason to doubt, but it will be gloriously effected. Receive us poor Kent inhabitants, as such, having but few means, but willing hearts, and being anxious and ardent in the cause, to promulgate the word of God in the wilderness in which we live.

“ The general wish is for good, yet opposition has arisen. The officers of the Institution, as well as the worthy members of the Committee, are of opinion, that this may be the easiest way subdued, if we could get Bibles and Testaments as soon as possible, to the amount of our contribution.

“ Oh how thankful would we be, and how easy would you nurse the child that is just born—weak and tender, and cultivate that mustard seed, which will then become a large tree, so that the fowls of the air can rest under its branches.

“ We are treading new ground, and cultivating a rough piece, in a moral sense, an unbounded sphere of wilderness, and as I remarked to the Committee, perseverance is necessary.

“ You, my dear brother in the Gospel, do bring our cause forward; let us and our supplication be heard and granted; and let us immediately, or as soon as possible, know what the result is, and likewise to whom the Secretary has to address himself at York, for the future.

“ The collection made, is rising of 70 dollars. If we are accepted as an Auxiliary to your Society at York, please send us immediately, as soon as the navigation is open, Bibles and

Testaments for the same, and direct us to whom the Secretary shall pay the money here.

“ But our ignorant neighbours, the French, we wish to assist them, and the Board agreed, that with the rest of the books, to send this time, six French Bibles and six French Testaments. And as soon as the first importation comes, a general Meeting shall be held, and the Committee shall distribute the Bibles and Testaments. What a glorious day will that be for the neglected River! and how triumphantly will the officers of the Institution praise the Lord! for thereby all opposition will be quenched.

“ My dear brother, I wish you to feel as warm in the cause as I feebly feel. Great confidence is placed in you, and you are worthy of it. Do write me immediately, for I fear that unless we succeed speedily, Satan may raise opposition, and destroy the good and glorious cause.—Do not hesitate I pray.

“ With respect to myself and my flock, I have reason to thank the Lord for his goodness. I see them spiritually and morally increase; and am as busy as my time allows, to translate the word of God in their language, and get it printed.

“ Your fellow brother in the Gospel,

“ And humble Servant,

(Signed,)

“ CHRISTIAN F. DANKIE.”

“ To the Rev. and Hon. John Strachan, D.D. York.

The following is the reply :

“ York, 26th Oct. 1818.

“ My dear Brother,

“ I read your letter with great interest, and blessed God for stirring up in you the first conception of so good a work.

“ I have communicated on the subject with His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, whose zeal in the cause of pure and

undefiled religion cannot be sufficiently praised, and he kindly promises you his protection. His arrival in the Province may be justly hailed by all religious men, as a singular providence of God; for his exertions, as well as example, furnish the most reasonable anticipations of the spread of Gospel principles.

“ Our Society meets in a few days, when I shall inform them of your wishes, and have no doubt, but that the right hand of fellowship will be gladly extended to you, and that we shall be able to give you assistance.

“ I shall be happy to be of service to you in this or any other work of a like nature, and remain,

“ Your affectionate Brother,

(Signed,)

“ JOHN STRACHAN.”

It must afford the highest gratification to the friends of religion to observe, that the great object of distributing the Scriptures, now meets with the approbation and support of the most intelligent and respectable characters in every civilized country.

In fine, there cannot be an employment more appropriate, than the dissemination of the Sacred Scriptures, nor is any other calculated to raise more sublime conceptions in the mind.

As the parent, by teaching his children the truths of religion, feels his own principles invigorated and confirmed—daily perceives new beauties in the Gospel, and new sources of comfort and enjoyment; so the distribution of the Scriptures may be attended with similar effects upon us.

While diffusing the light of the Gospel among our friends and neighbours, we may be induced

to examine them more correctly ourselves ; and, as the tender and affectionate parent is anxious to gain the singleness of heart—the simplicity and innocence of the child whom he is instructing to pray to its Creator, so may we reap the blessing of having unfolded to us the exhaustless treasures which they contain, while engaged in bestowing them on those who require them.

The very exertion naturally directs our attention oftener to the Sacred Volume, and who knows but the grace of God may apply the saving truths which it contains with new power to our hearts.

We conclude with a fervent prayer to Almighty God, that the success of this Institution may correspond with the benevolent views of its promoters, and that it may become the effectual instrument of disseminating the light of the Gospel through the whole of this prosperous Colony.

The Report having been read, Jonas Jones, Esq. moved, that it be adopted. In making this motion, he remarked that he fully accorded with the sentiments which it contained; and although he did not come with any intention of addressing this respectable assembly, yet the great importance of the object which the Society had in view, that of disseminating the Holy Scriptures through the Province, could not fail, if properly supported, of producing the greatest benefits. It was well observed in the Report, that the soldiers, whether embodied, or discharged from the service, deserved the particular attention of the Society.— They are commonly of frank and open dispositions, given to thoughtlessness and dissipation, frequently more from habit than taste, from which kindness and attention might win them. These very dispositions, which without care will lead them to ruin, may be enlisted on the side of religion; and, assisted by reading the Scriptures, they may become industrious and upright members of society. To the emigrants likewise, much good may accrue from the labours of this Society: they may be preserved in their good principles, and, without becoming careless or indifferent to religion, they may be reconciled to the state in which it yet appears in this Province, from the hope that things will mend when they see so many respectable characters the friends and supporters of the Gospel.

Dr. Strachan observed, that in moving that the Committee of Direction consist of the Hon. Chief Justice Powell, Chief Justice Scott, the Hon. Justice Campbell, the Attorney General, and Dr. Macaulay, he anticipated the concurrence of all the supporters of this Institution. The clergy of every denomination would at all times meet with the greatest attention from the Committee, and their suggestions be received with particular regard.—Unanimously adopted.

The Rev. Mr. Cook then rose, and spoke as follows :

“ I beg leave to move, that it is the opinion of this meeting ‘ That the state of religious knowledge in this Province is extremely deficient ;—it is therefore the duty of all Christians to exert themselves to remedy this evil, which may be done in a very considerable way, by disseminating the Holy Scriptures.’

“ To sit down, Sir, in silence, after making this motion, would be criminal—permit me therefore to say, that the Bible is the sacred roll of divine truth ;—the medium of divine knowledge ; the connecting link between heaven and earth—time and eternity—God and man ;—the sun that illumines the Christian hemisphere, and that by which the Great Jehovah sympathizes with his creatures in all their distresses—supports them under all their weaknesses—directs them in all their difficulties—protects them from all their spiritual enemies—heals all the maladies of their minds, and ‘ enriches them with all the fullness of God.’

“ What the sun, the glorious parent of day, is in the centre of the planetary worlds, that, Sir, is

the sacred volume of divine inspiration—the Bible, Sir, in the moral, the intellectual, the spiritual, the religious world.—Without the animating and illuminating rays of the former, the world would be buried in the darkness of obscurity; the earth would be doomed to barren sterility; the labour of the husbandman—the skill of the artist—the industry of commerce—the science of the navigator—the wisdom of the philosopher, and the dignity of the statesman, would be all paralyzed in their operation—anarchy and confusion, and chaos would universally abound and prevail.—Such, Sir, is the state of the moral, the intellectual, the spiritual, the religious world, without the Bible. The world by *its* wisdom knows not God:—unaided by the influence of this sacred book, the *heart of man* is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.—Witness the amazing superstition and ignorance of Papal Europe; the blindness and delusion of the sons of Mahomet; the folly and absurdity of heathen idolatry; and the habitations of darkness and cruelty, from the frozen climes of icy Lapland, to the burning regions of Afric's sable zone.

“By sending the Bible, Sir, to the house of the mechanic, the cottage of the peasant, the habitation of ignorance and insensibility, you are sending a prophet to teach them; a friend to solace them; a guide to direct them; and a sun to illuminate their footsteps to the heavenly world.—Then, Sir, will the unthinking indolent become industrious; the wasting prodigal, saving; the iron hearted, affectionate; the intoxicated drunkard, sober; the unjust, conscientious; and the blasphemous profaner will learn to hallow the sacred name of the Saviour, and to sanctify the consecrated hours of the Christian Sabbath.—Then,

Sir, the parent will become kind—the husband, affectionate—the wife, dutiful—the child, teachable—the neighbour, friendly—the tradesman, honest, and the subject obedient.

“The Bible, Sir, is on its triumphal march to universal empire—the empire of the heart.—Then, Sir, shall the ignorant be universally taught; the poor universally enriched; and the miserable be made universally happy.—Sin shall then be universally destroyed, and the principalities and the powers of darkness universally subdued.—Then shall the wilderness and the solitary place be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; then shall the sceptre of the Saviour—a sceptre of peace—a sceptre of truth—a sceptre of righteousness—a sceptre of holiness—be an universal sceptre.—Then shall the ‘knowledge of the Lord cover the earth, as the waters cover the channels of the sea;’—then will the Great Jehovah say to the north, ‘give up;’ and to the south, ‘keep not back, bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth.’—Then, Sir, will the nine hundred millions of the families of the earth unite with the unnumbered millions of the heavenly world, in one universal exclamation of universal joy, ‘The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth,’—‘the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever.’

“I wish I could say something to you, the people of York, to induce you to exert yourselves in this great cause; and particularly to you, the members of the House of Assembly, that you might exercise your utmost endeavours on your return home, to establish in your several districts, Auxiliary Societies, to circulate this sacred book

among your people, and to awaken a spirit of inquiry in their minds after religious knowledge and everlasting happiness.”

Rev. Dr. Strachan—“ In seconding the motion, I will not mar the very able appeal for the Bible, which you have just heard, by any further observation; for I should be afraid of blunting rather than heightening the impression which it must have made upon your minds. I shall therefore confine myself to some matters which the motion suggests, but which came not in the way of the eloquent mover.

“ To a stranger, this Province exhibits, in a religious view, a very melancholy picture; and he is led to blame the inhabitants for their coldness and indifference to the first of duties. But a reference to their unhappy situation, when they first came into the country, and the many difficulties they had to struggle against, will lessen their guilt, if it do not altogether excuse them.

“ At the close of the American war, this Province was appointed the asylum of suffering loyalty. Those who had endeavoured to maintain the unity of the Empire, found themselves driven from their homes, and obliged to find a safe retreat in the pathless wilderness. The parent State, grateful for their services, extended to them all the comforts of a temporal nature which their situation admitted; but those of a spiritual were not so easily supplied. Having been soldiers during the war and separated from their families, and many having acquired habits unfavourable to sober industry, it was not to be wondered, though their attachment to religion was somewhat obscured. Besides, scattered over a large surface, sepa-

rated from one another, there was very much difficulty in assembling them together, and the distance afforded excuses to the indifferent to justify their absence.

‘ The population was too thin to encourage Clergymen ; and the narrow circumstances, and indeed poverty of these exiles, rendered it beyond their power to support common Teachers to educate their children. Hence, the rising generation, instead of improving, were in many places more ignorant than their parents, and had less regard for religion—to the exterior forms of which, they had never been accustomed.

“ To the peculiar situation of the Province, and the adverse circumstances under which it was settled—and not to the disposition of the people, must be ascribed the small apparent progress of Religion. But now these difficulties are rapidly giving way, and a desire for the regular establishment of Clergymen, is becoming very general through the Province. This is manifest from the eagerness with which they come forward on all opportunities afforded them, to hear the preaching of the Divine Word.

“ It is only a few days ago, that I went to Markham to preach among the German settlers. A very considerable assembly waited my arrival. Divine service began at 2 o’clock and continued till nearly five. Next morning the congregation was still more numerous. The children were first catechised ; prayers were next read, and an appropriate sermon delivered, preparatory to the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. Twenty-three persons communicated : and the solemnity concluded in a way highly affecting. We have therefore every en-

couragement for exertion. The people are certainly willing, but the labourers are few."

The Rev. Mr. Cook's motion was then put and unanimously adopted.

The Rev. Mr. Sampson, rising, addressed the meeting in these words :

GENTLEMEN,

"I rise to address you with no small satisfaction, being duly sensible of the importance of the object for which we are this day assembled ; and I am indeed proud in lending even my feeble aid in furtherance of so noble an action, as that of extending throughout the whole world a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures—a knowledge, without which, we can never expect to see those happy times therein predicted. Those individuals, whose benevolent exertions first instituted the Society, entitled, the "Bible and Common Prayer Book Society," are deserving of our highest praise and gratitude : their efforts have led to great benefits, and the foundation of that Society, has caused a superstructure to be raised which will immortalize their fame. But, while on points of religion such a diversity of opinion prevails in all parts of this Province, the hand of benevolence is not unfrequently checked from lending its aid to that Institution, under the false and misguided opinion, that it was thereby secretly fostering and as it were (contrary to the tenets of the donor) approving the Liturgy of the Church of England. To obviate this objection, and to open a wider and more liberal field wherein our exertions may be displayed, I shall propose a resolution, to which I am confident no opposition will be made, previous to which,

I cannot omit repeating a wish, of our venerable and beloved Monarch, which very frequently occurs to me, "That it would please God to grant him life sufficiently long, to see every subject of his wide extended Empire, not only able to *read*, but *possess* a Bible;" well knowing, that religion is the foundation of all our happiness here below, the surest supporter of his Crown, and the only means whereby we can hope to reach the mansions of everlasting glory. But it has pleased the Almighty disposer of all human events to ordain it otherwise. Should, therefore, the resolution which I am about to make, be approved by this assembly, I am confident that all denominations of Christians will not only lend their aid, but add their mite to extend the light of revelation to all those who now sit in darkness and the shadow of death, confident that the Holy Volume is the source of never fading joy to the human breast, to disseminate which, such mighty efforts have been made and such wonderful effects have been produced.—I therefore move

"That it appears to be the wish of different Societies to associate themselves as Auxiliaries to the Upper-Canada Society for distributing the Scriptures without note or comment; to meet which general wish, it is resolved, that this Society be separated into two distinct Societies, one for the distribution of the Bible only, the other for the distribution of the Prayer Book."

In agreeing to this motion, Dr. Strachan said, that he was actuated by numerous applications made from different parts of the Province, to become subscribers to that part of the Bible and Common Prayer Book Society which distributed the Scriptures only. From the care with which

they marked the distinction, these applicants, as well as many others, had erroneously conceived that attempts would be made to distribute the Common Prayer Book even in preference to the Bible. In drawing up the constitution of the Society, great care was taken to guard against such suspicions, and to prove them, if raised, to be unfounded. Nevertheless, as they appeared still to exist, he had consented to separate the Societies; each of which would have a simple object in view. And on farther reflection, he conceived this to be the most natural course; for we are taught to have respect for the weakness of a brother; his scruples, should we think them wrong, must be respected, because they indicate the force of conscience. In this country, where all the various denominations of Christians meet together, far from their native homes, and the lively and interesting scenes of childhood, there is generally a disposition to unite and be kindly affectionate one towards another. This spirit should be cherished, and no society can promote this more than that one for disseminating the Sacred Scriptures.

Should this motion be adopted, we shall immediately be joined by the Niagara and Kent Societies, established for the distribution of the Bible only.

The division, so far from impeding the spread of the Common Prayer Book, would, in his opinion, advance it essentially; while those who felt no interest in spreading it, could give their full energy to the dissemination of the Scriptures.

The Rev. Mr. Sampson's resolution was then unanimously adopted.

In proposing that a small donation of Bibles be presented to the Kent Bible Society, Dr. Strachan

said, that the people were in general poor, and that a kind notice from this Society, would give them much comfort and encourage them to perseverance. He therefore moved, "That 15 Bibles and 15 New Testaments be granted to the Kent Bible Society."—Which was carried.

Mr. Horne moved "That his Society be henceforth denominated 'The Bible Society of Upper-Canada.'"

Mr. Ketchum proposed "That a friendly communication be opened with the other Bible Societies within this Province," which was unanimously carried.

The Rev. Mr. Sampson next proposed the adoption of a Rule which appears among the regulations of almost all Societies of this kind—viz: "That the subscribers of one guinea be allowed to purchase Bibles at prime cost, from the depository of the Society, to the amount of five guineas; and in like proportion for every additional guinea that may be subscribed." Care, however, he remarked, must be taken that the books so delivered, be sold at prime cost.—Adopted.

The Rev. Mr. Addison moved "That the thanks of this Society be transmitted to the British and Foreign Bible Society, through the medium of the Right Honorable Lord Teignmouth, its President, for their munificent donation, and that his Excellency the Lieutenant Governor be requested to transmit the same." Which he introduced as follows :

"I make this motion with no common degree of satisfaction.—No Christian can view unmov-

ed the efforts of this grand Society to enlighten the world, for whose kindness to this distant Province a return of thanks has been moved.—Every good and loyal subject feels a glow of gratitude to the great disposer of events, that he so signally went forth with our hosts, when the convulsions and conflicts of the civilized world were ended by the last great victory—every real Christian feels a still warmer sentiment of praise, when he observes that the same Almighty power, has raised up men in our parent country, who unite to diffuse the light of truth through every part of the world.—It is not from any apprehension that this proper expression of our gratitude would be opposed, that I beg leave to say a few words ; but it is just to mention to you, the astonishing extent of this labour of love undertaken by this great association, whose auxiliary we have now become.—They are engaged in translating the Sacred Scriptures into all languages, where men can be found to read them.—They have well informed and exemplary men, educated and suited to the purpose, (with something like apostolic simplicity) employed in every part of the world, to forward the sublime intention of spreading the light of revelation, and the knowledge of the Lord through the earth.—They send with princely munificence their aid to every quarter of the Globe, when any prospect opens of doing good, and this assistance which we now acknowledge, is not the only instance of their kindness to this Province.—They annually expend even more than a Ducal income in this effort of benevolence, and what is truly wonderful, they are supported by the voluntary subscriptions of Christian minded men.—I have mentioned these circumstances, to show how wide a field of usefulness is opened to our view by thus associating, beyond the help we may afford to the wandering and ignorant poor

in our immediate neighbourhood.—It has been observed by some when pressed to subscribe, that every industrious man can purchase his Bible.—I am happy to think so, but still many are without the Book of Life : and when we observe the great influx of indigent and destitute emigrants, we shall find that much good may be done even here.—By thus associating, we join in this great work of love the most important part of the human race.—The whole Christian world seems alive ; and Emperors and Kings and Princes not only countenance, but attend such meetings as we hold to-day.—It appears that the revenue of a kingdom is laid out in furthering this great work of Charity, by the various societies throughout the Christian world.—The Jews, that most ancient people, of old the people of God, begin to be moved by observing this Christian zeal, and it would appear to a serious and reflecting mind as the dawn of that *Æra*, when the prophecies shall be fulfilled, which foretell the restoration of Israel, when there shall be one fold under one shepherd, and Christ's kingdom of peace and of love shall become universal. Our contributions will thus tend to promote the best interests of our fellow-men throughout the inhabited earth. It is aiding the work of God, and we are told “ he that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord ; and that which he hath given, will he pay him again.”

The Hon. Thomas Scott (late Chief Justice) assured himself that there would be no dissenting voice to what he was going to move. The liberality of Mr. Gore, and his readiness to patronize all institutions tending to the public good, was known to all present, as well as the amiable manners and sincere piety of Mrs. Gore. He therefore moved, “ That the thanks of the Society be

presented to Mr. and Mrs. Gore for their liberal donations." Dr. Strachan seconded the motion, which was immediately carried.

It was then moved by Dr. Strachan, "That the thanks of the Society be presented to Major Halton for his prompt attention to their order for books, and his kind offers of service in promoting the objects of the Society."—Which was carried.

Dr. Powell moved, "That the Treasurer and Secretary be requested to continue in their respective offices," which was carried.

The Revd. Mr. Johnston, from Cornwall, arose, and after making a few appropriate observations, of which we regret that he left no copy, moved

"That the members of this Society will exert themselves as far as their influence admits in promoting similar institutions in different parts of the Province."

The Lieutenant Governor, Sir Peregrine Maitland, then left the Chair, and withdrew. The Honble. Thomas Scott being called to the Chair, George Boulton, Esqr. moved

"That the cordial thanks of this meeting be given to His Excellency The Lieut. Governor for his important protection in presiding at this meeting and becoming the Patron of the Institution."

Dr. Strachan rose, not for the purpose of seconding a motion to which every heart most cordially assented, but to notice the great benefits which must be reaped by the Province, in having placed at the head of the government so great a friend to

pure religion. The warm interest which his Excellency takes in the proceedings of this day, and in the success of this society, begets kindred feelings in others, and infuses into their breasts something of that genial desire for the propagation of the Gospel which animates his own. Public assemblies of Christians, for a purpose like that which has convened us to-day, give dignity to religion and her friends are increased, when on such occasions the higher ranks take the lead. One of the principal beauties of Christianity is then exhibited ; for melting down all human distinctions, it recognizes in its friends the children of the same Heavenly Father—the disciples of the same Lord and Master—the heirs of the same promises. Before its promulgation, there was no system of worship common to both kings and subjects—to rulers of nations and those whom they governed.—The dispenser of the Law, generally supposed himself above the Law ; and was therefore ready to punish in others those crimes which he ceased not himself to commit. But Christianity speaks to Princes as well as to subjects ; for it proceeds from an author equally exalted above them both. Recognizing all men equal in the sight of God, it is no respecter of persons ; and values its professors, not according to their temporal rank, but to their spiritual progress. Hence the poorest man appears in the House of God with an humble but holy confidence, and gives his mite to support and extend that religion which confers so much comfort on his soul, with alacrity, knowing that God weighs the motives, and not the greatness of the gift.

It is only Christian principles that can make good men and good members of society : it is not enough to obey the laws of the land ; a man may

a very bad character, and do that ; for those
ws cannot reach many of the basest moral crimes.
ne Gospel presents a purer standard—instructs
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re unnecessary. It purifies the hearts of its
ends—enables them to conquer intemperance—
reject infidelity—to adhere to truth—to do just-
and to love mercy. It becomes the charm of
mestic life ; ennobles, if innocent, the most hum-
e employments ; and encourages its friends in
eir journey through life, with the hopes of eter-
l felicity.

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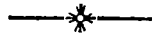
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