

R. G. Procter

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## RELIGIOUS.

NEW-YORK, MAY 19.

### AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

The second Anniversary of THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY, was celebrated in this city yesterday. The meeting was held at the assembly room in the City Hotel, which was very liberally offered for the occasion by Mr. JENNINGS. The doors were opened at 4 o'clock, and the President the Hon. ELIAS BOUDINOT, L. D. took the chair precisely at 11. The meeting was opened by the Rev. Dr. MASON, one of the Secretaries of the Society, reading the 49th chapter of Isaiah. A very interesting and impressive address was then delivered by the venerable President. Letters of apology of non-attendance at the meeting were read from several of the Vice-presidents, who were detained by unavoidable necessity, viz. the Hon. John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State of the United States, the Hon. Smith Thompson, Chief Justice of the state of N. York, the Hon. M. T. Pughman, Chief Justice of Penn. the Hon. Andrew Kirkpatrick, Chief Justice of N. Jersey, Joseph Nourse, Esq. of the city of Washington, and Francis S. Key, Esq. of Georgetown, S. Col. A letter was read from the Rev. Dr. Romeyn of the city of N. York, Secretary of the Society, for domestic correspondence, apologizing for his absence by reason of indisposition.

The Annual Report of the Board of Managers was read by the Rev. Dr. Batchford, of Lansingburgh; after which the following resolutions were unanimously passed.

On motion of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Miller, of Princeton, N. Jersey, seconded by John Murray, jun. Esq.—

Resolved, That the Report of the Board of Managers, now read, be accepted, as highly satisfactory and encouraging; and that it be published under the direction of the Board.

On motion of the Rev. James Milnor, rector of St. George's chapel in this city, seconded by the Rev. Mr. Mathews, of the Dutch Church in Garden-street, in this city—

Resolved, That the thanks of the Society be presented to the President, for his continued and watchful attention to its interests, and for his munificent liberality towards its funds.

On motion of the Rev. John Chester, of Albany, seconded by Gen. Stephen Van Rensselaer—

Resolved, That the thanks of the Society be rendered to the several Vice-Presidents, for the distinguished patronage which they have afforded to the institution.

On motion of Samuel Bayard, Esq. of New-Jersey, seconded by the Rev. Mr. Maclay, of the Baptist Church in this city—

Resolved, That the thanks of the Society be presented to the Treasurers, the Secretaries, and the Board of Managers, for their services during the present year.

On motion of Joshua M. Wallace, Esq. of New-Jersey, seconded by —

Resolved, That the thanks of the Society be given to the several Congregations, Auxiliary Societies, and individuals, who in any way may have contributed to its resources and usefulness.

We have rarely witnessed a more interesting and impressive scene than that exhibited on this occasion. The company assembled was numerous and respectable, and it was a highly gratifying circumstance to see collected so large a number of ladies as were present. To the pious liberality of the sex is the Society indebted for a large proportion of its funds, be it allowed for the benevolent purpose of introducing as members for life a respectable body of clergymen, in various parts of the country—a mode testifying, at one and the same time, their regard for the great objects of the former, and their high respect for the character and virtues of the latter. The proceedings of the Society were, throughout, gratifying to the audience. The various addresses were creditable to the talents, the eloquence, and the piety of the speakers. One thing was in peculiar manner consoling to the feelings of all the friends of Christian charity and communion.—We allude to the predominance of genuine Catholicism. The distinctions of sect and denomination were practically laid aside and were remembered only for the purpose of giving vent to the feelings of congratulation to which their extinction gave spontaneous birth—each one felt delight at the exhibition of such living proof, that they could all lay aside their names of distinction, and unite on the sure ground of the HOLY SCRIPTURES.

One other circumstance gave a most lively interest to this anniversary. We allude to the presence of the venerable President of the Institution. It is well known, that it was in a great measure owing to his long and persevering exertions, and his influence, that this society was formed; and it is equally well known, that its funds were, immediately upon

its organization; enriched by his magnificent donation of 10,000 dollars—a sum which has rarely if ever been equalled, even by princely liberality towards similar institutions, in any part of the world. On the first anniversary of the society, he was prevented by sickness, from attending. On the present occasion, after having been unable for two years, to leave his room until within a few days past, and after having entered upon his 79th year, this venerable Christian, to the surprise as well as the gratification of his friends and the society, was able to meet them and unite in their exercises, and preside over their deliberations. Such was the high sense which the meeting entertained for his worth, and the respect they bore for his virtue and piety, that upon his entering the room, they unanimously rose from their seats, and continued standing until he was seated in the chair—a mark of respect that was repeated, when he made his address to the society.

Of the various addresses which were made, we propose, in our next paper, to give a very summary sketch, which was taken as they were delivered by one of our friends who was present. These sketches will give a very imperfect idea of their several merits. They were appropriate, impressive, and eloquent, and were received, as far as we are able to judge, with universal satisfaction.

The Report states the principles which the Managers have adopted for the regulation of their conduct in the disposition of their Stereotype plates for the more economical printing of bibles, the views which the board entertain with regard to the translation of the Scriptures into the languages of, and the circulation of them among, the Indian tribes in this country, mentions the donations they made, particularly to the Rev. Frederick Lee, a protestant clergyman in Paris, of five hundred dollars, to assist him in circulating the New Testament in that city—and to Bible Societies in this country.—The number of Bibles issued during the last year is stated to be 17,504, and since the formation of the Society, 21,004. The number of Auxiliary Societies that are known, is 153. During the past year, 173 clergymen have been made members for life, in a great proportion of the cases, by the contributions of their female parishioners. The Report concludes with an interesting reference to the Russian, and British and Foreign Bible Societies.

The Rev. Dr. Miller—

Mr. President, I have listened with great attention to the report just read. It occurred to me in the course of the reading, that some persons might expect to hear that more had been done; but I confess this was not my expectation. The Managers have had thus far to lay a foundation, rather than to build. When I reflect that it has been formed but two years, and on what it has done, I thrill with delight; and I observe with pleasure that this society, in success and exertions, has been abundantly useful. If I should say less than this, I should do injustice to my feelings and to those with whom I have had the honor to meet. We have met with opponents; but I do trust, Sir, that those who have been opposed to the society, will join with us and acknowledge their error. My own hopes are raised more high every day that I contemplate it. It appears to me, that what distinguishes this period from what our fathers have seen, is this, not that exertions were not made by them, but that the blessings of the Holy One are given to our exertions. This proves to me, that the Almighty Jesus has gone forth to the combat; and I trust, Sir, he will go on conquering and to conquer, until the whole world shall confess that HE is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. I trust, Sir, that no one will be inclined to say that we have done enough. Sir, while there are four hundred millions of human beings, now lying in darkness, while so great a part of what is called the Christian world is ignorant of the spirit of the gospel, I hope we shall think of nothing but going forward. I have somewhere read, sir, of an old general, who thought nothing was done, while any thing remained to be done. When, Mr. President, there is not a family to be found on the globe, without a bible, we may think of checking our progress. I cannot conclude, Sir, without noticing one circumstance, that of your being present in this chamber. Heretofore you have only been able to hear of the success of this society in your chamber. Now I would join with the society, in acknowledging the goodness of God for such preservation! God grant, that you may see many glorious examples of the good that you have done. God grant that your departure, like the setting sun, may be serene and full of glory.

Mr. J. Murray, Jun.

Mr. President,

I rise, to offer a sentiment very important to the subject for which we are at this time assembled. I assure you, my friends, that my mind has been in a degree solemnized in considering the subject in which we are engaged. In seconding this motion, I had a two fold object in view—to express the feelings of the members, and the high sense I have, of the object of the society, viz. incalculable good to the human family. It is in a peculiar manner obligatory on the members to be careful, to direct their views and conduct to what is contained in that book. I rejoice in the hope that the exertions of Bible Societies will be blessed in an eminent degree not only in our country, but in countries more remote.—That they may break down party distinctions. I belong to a sect; but I am no bigot.

Of a truth, I perceive, "that God is no respecter of persons." There is no doctrine more clearly expressed in the New Testament, than that "God is love, and they that dwell in him, dwell in love. By this shall ye know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." The apostle describes this in a most clear point of view. Let us, my friends, make our conduct evince that we are the followers of Jesus Christ. My heart glows with love towards all my fellow-Christians; I can give the right hand of fellowship to all. Let us bear in mind, that the scriptures are the word of God, "able to make us wise unto salvation," profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work. Indeed, when we consider their excellence, we must say, they are the best of all writings on earth. When we consider that they were written by the Holy Prophets and Apostles, that they speak of the example of Christ and our duty, of Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, they are preferable to all the books in the world; for they are the statutes of the Lord, and the Magna Charta of his Church. To render the study of the Bible profitable, we stand in need of a portion of the grace of God. When I reflect on the solemnity of the occasion, so respectable, so great in number, all of whom I hope are friendly to this Society, I hope we shall unite in the work, so important to the good of mankind. I would not trespass on your time; but would end in the words of Henry Cooke, who, in his address to a Bible Society in England, expressed himself thus, "I feel more than I can express at seeing such a respectable assembly, and in seeing all seats lay aside the feelings of sects." Are we not like the separate tribes of Israel? We profess to be governed by the same Lord. When we consider by how many laws of God we are bound together, there is great cause to lament the depravity of our country, and I fear, in a particular manner of my native city; I feel rejoiced to see the exertions made by some to relieve the temporal and spiritual wants of their fellow men. If it should be my happy lot to gain admission into that city whose walls are salvation and whose gates are praise, I hope there to meet many of those who are now here. Though I differ in points of Christian doctrine or more properly of Christian practice, I hope I shall meet with thousands of all nations and kindred and tongues, and people having palms in their hands, and ascribe all to God.

Rev. Mr. Milnor, on moving the 2d resolution.

In consenting to day to take the place of a clerical brother, I cannot expect to add to the interest which is to be directed to this society, but I cannot deny myself the pleasure of mingling my joys with my brethren on this occasion. I agree with my brother who first addressed you, that while any thing remains to be done, (and O how much remains!) we should consider our work as but begun. But we may spend a little time in remarking how much the blessing of God has attended us. If Heaven has followed us, it is a constant pledge of your father, more extended and very useful labors.

It is pleasing to hear how much has been done. In looking forward, it is not discouraging to see how much remains. Though there may be a difference of sentiment, yet this generally respects the mode, & not the main object. The society truly presents a most opposing front. It ranks among its most valiant warriors, men distinguished by the civic honors of the country, and by deeds which God will hereafter crown with a rich reward. It embraces a multitude to whom God has given but little; but who will cheerfully give up that little to promote the objects of the society. It has given rise to charitable actions, in places where they were least expected; it has given an opportunity to the fervor of female piety; it has kept alive public charity to the most interesting object, to which it was ever directed; it has tended to amalgamate or bring nearer the different sects; it has given ministers of the gospel an opportunity to become acquainted with each other; it has brought the balm of consolation to many a sick soul; it has illuminated many a cheerless mansion, with the rays of that sun of righteousness, who never shines without healing in his wings; it has peculiarly aided the ministers of the cross, to carry home the truths of the cross to the consciences of their hearers; this it has done, and many more important objects it may do, as a liberal public shall supply the means.

Sir, you have heard the report of the managers. If we cannot rival the British and Foreign Bible Society, we can, at a distance, imitate their example. We can penetrate into a wilderness which even her unbounded philanthropy has not been able to enter.

Mr. President, how enchanting are our prospects down the vista of futurity. When your ashes shall be laid in the tomb of your fathers; when the cold turf shall cover the youngest head in this society, your labor of love shall be rewarded with a crown of glory. The widow's mite, and the little product of infantine kindness, shall bless many a miserable soul. The exertions to promote the kingdom of God, have been the product of this heavenly influence; and shall not pass away, until the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess, that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Sir, I beg leave to concur in this motion, and follow it with another. Mr. Vice President, I address it to you; and if I should regret that

the President is in the chair, it would be that I might have an opportunity to express my feelings to you.

Rev. Mr. Matthews—  
Mr. President,

I rise to give my assent to the motion, and to express the peculiar feelings which I experience towards this Society. I shall not dwell upon commendations, and will only offer one thought on the subject. It is said, that if, from the day of Pentecost, every man had done as much for the good of mankind as the author of the "Star in the East," there would not, at the present time, have been a family in the world, destitute of a Bible. May we not, with equal justice, make the same assertion concerning the author of the "Star in the West"? I would take up the benediction with which the President concluded, and pronounce it upon himself—"Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." And if he should never be present on another similar occasion, may he go to his father, and be presented spotless before him. I do not think I am too solemn; for if we can ever look for the fulfilment of that promise of our Saviour, that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he will be in the midst of them, it is when we meet as a Bible Society. I cannot look around me without thinking that an institution of this sort, is that which is best calculated to do good to our fallen family. I think, sincerely, that never since the Apostolic ages, has the moral machinery been so extensive as at the present time. Bible Societies will reach not only to places where the sound of the Gospel has hitherto scarcely come, but to every spot, however remote, or unknown, where a human being exists. I would wish you to look at what is doing now. Many of the children of the present generation have grown up like Ishmaelites, their hand against every man, and every man's hand against them.

New Sunday Schools take up the young vagrants, and make them good members of Society. The deaf and dumb, whom you would have once called the prisoners of despair, feel the same blessed influence. We now find that there is a language which the deaf can hear, and the dumb can speak. But this is of small importance compared with more extensive plans of benevolence which have been carried into effect. If there is any object more important in society than another, it is that the spirit of the Bible should influence all the human race. Now it is no common thing for the apprentice boy to steal an hour, not from his master, but from his sleep, to put money into your treasury. The sailor who used to scatter his earnings to the four winds, now deposits them in your hands. A spirit of emulation has arisen, not in contentions of animosity, but all are together, under the same banner and under the same Lord. Have we not seen the beginning of great and glorious things? The Bible is going to the ends of the earth, like the angel flying through the midst of heaven, bearing the everlasting Gospel. Champions have been raised up—I need not mention their names. There is a new race of Hercules, with hearts that excel the Argonauts and the Crusaders. They encounter dangers, because they endure to see him who is invisible. Many of them have now gone to their Father; but others have arisen in their places.

Less than this I could not say, when speaking of men who lay thus distinguished themselves. You know, Sir, how the infidels planted their societies of illumination in every dark corner; and it was in those places that these schemes of revolution were formed, which afterwards overturned every part of Europe. Christ has wrested out of the hands of Satan that weapon, and given it into the hands of his followers, to be used against its original possessor. Sir, we have seen what societies will do when united for the Gospel. From that day when a Bible Society was set up, the powers of darkness seemed to be lessening many of their strong holds; and you will find those who were united against God, lying in their ruins, and temples placed, where Christians are planning good for the human race. Think of what is doing in every part of the world! Do not forget, that even in the walls of Paris, there is rising a Bible Society, which I hope will continue to spread its light. Every thing which God is pleased to accomplish by us, is a new call of gratitude from us. Next to the honor of being recorded in the Lamb's book of Life, and as a Minister of the Gospel, I should wish to be recorded as a member of a Bible Society.

Opposition must be expected, Sir; the object is too good, and we have been too successful, not to expect it; but our enemies are growing weaker. An honest confession of an opposer was, to oppose would be like an attempt to stop the progress of a stream of lava from an Atna or Vesuvius.

The Rev. Mr. Chesters.

After what has been said, I would only offer this motion, that the thanks of this society be presented to the Vice Presidents. That list contains the names of the men who have been distinguished in our country, as her great and ardent friends—some have been distinguished in the revolution, some have wielded the sword in defence of our liberties; they now wield the sword of the spirit. What has brought them together? It is this interesting occasion. Though in distant parts of the country—though opposed by other obstacles, their zeal has brought them to this assembly. We are indebted to them, and to one in particular, for the manner in which this society has been conducted. We live in an age, when we see all the