SKETCH

OF A

SERMON,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

NORTH CAROLINA BIBLE SOCIETY,

AT ITS ANNIVERSARY,

IN THE CITY OF RALEIGH,

ON SUNDAY, THE 12TH OF DECEMBER, 1841.

BY CHARLES M. F. DEEMS,

AGENT OF THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

RALEIGH:

PRINTED BY WESTON R. GALES, AT THE RALEIGH REGISTER OFFICE.

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At a meeting of the North Carolina Bible Society, a motion was made by Mr. John Primrose, seconded and amended by the Hon. Judge Cameron, that the thanks of the Society be returned to the Rev. Mr. Deems, for the Sermon delivered before them on the previous Sunday, and that he be respectfully requested to furnish a copy for publication, under the direction of the Board of Managers. To attend to this business, the Board appointed the Subscribers.

NELSON B. HUGHES,
RUFIN TUCKER,
WESTON R. GALES,

Committee.

NOTE BY THE AUTHOR.

The Anniversary Discourse was delivered from very slight notes, and the whole of the following Sermon was written in the interval of business, several days after. Of course the language could not be retained, and the author is conscious that several illustrations used on the occasion have passed from his mind. Some points, too, are more nearly developed in the written than they were in the spoken Discourse. These remarks are thought to be due to those who heard the Sermon, and who may kindly peruse this Pamphlet.
SERMON.

"The word of God is quick and powerful."
Hebrews, iv, 12.

This blessed Book, which we have adopted as the rule of our faith and practice, is known among us by different names. We call it the Bible, as being pre-eminently the most valuable of all books; and we call it the Sacred Scriptures, because it contains what we believe to be the writings of Holy men of old, who were inspired from on high. In the text before us it is called the Word of God, as coming immediately from the mouth of the great Creator. And that this volume is not the production of unaided human intellect, but has come from the great Spirit, is a proposition which we not only most heartily adopt; but it is the fundamental article of Christian faith, upon which we build all our hopes of happiness in the world beyond the tomb.

As believers in the genuineness and Divine authority of the Bible, we cannot see that it requires any unnatural effort of the mind, to perceive and believe that it is possible and probable that He who has given us bodies and spirits, and established the mystic union between mind and matter, should make a revelation of his nature and will to the creatures whom He has otherwise so abundantly favored. Few are so far gone into the mists of error as to deny that there is some great First Cause; for Scepticism herself, as she stands before the magnificent temple of Nature, must silently commune with thoughts of the glorious Architect; and when she penetrates the Holiest of Holies of intellect, she is awed into religious silence, under an almost oppressive conception of the unfathomed resources of the Omnipotent Original Mind. How, then, shall we dare to question whether it is possible for that great First Cause to make any impressions upon the spirit which sprung from his own?
If he has created matter and modified it into a myriad of combinations, and is able still to operate upon it, and even to annihilate it; if that intangible agent, the mind, has obtained all its endowments from the Creator, who shall say that it may not receive any impressions from his spirit?

Is it not probable, too, that God—or call the author of Life by whatever name you please—would make a revelation to his creatures? Hush the voice of the Bible and the Priest, and listen to the speakings of Nature. She tells us that on all her broad bosom she bears not an irrational creature which is born to pains, and which has a longing unsatisfied. She tells us that He who gave them desires has prepared abundantly for their gratification. Let us then look in upon ourselves. Each one of us finds himself to be a singular and incomprehensible union of substances we call matter and mind. The peculiar conformation of the former, we call body, and find in the ample store-house of Nature a provision for all the wants of this body by Him who created it. The mind, a more subtile production of this great First Cause, has as many desires as the body upon which it operates, and these desires are far more refined than the appetites of the body which it inhabits. Now, if the Author of all has made a full preparation for the satisfaction of the body, can it be thought that He would purposely or inadvertently overlook the wants of the mind? Such an assertion would be a libel upon Him who has made in mind, what He has not in matter, a resemblance of Himself. Among other things we find that the spirit within us has an anxious craving,—we cannot say that it is unlawful,—to know its origin and its destiny. When it has tested the extent of its powers, it feels that it could never have come into existence of its own accord, and that the source of its existence must be than itself inconceivably far more powerful and glorious. When it looks into the future, it can see nothing in the dissolution which it finds must take place between it and the body, to suspend or destroy its own existence. Beyond that hour of dissolution, what shall be its abode and its company, its powers and its employments, are questions which become unspeakably im-
portant. In vain does it seek a reply from Nature's thousand voices, and it turns its anxious eye to its Author to know these things which so relate to itself. But, who and what is that Author? And the profound stillness of the Universe, when the soul proposes the solemn question, settles upon it with a most oppressive heaviness. Can it be possible that He has spread the splendid firmament above us, and painted the rich scenery of earth around us, to give us indubitable proof that He exists, and then retire behind the veil which we cannot pierce, to enjoy the malignant pleasure of behold- ing His creatures groping after Him until they fall into the pit of the grave? If He thought it not trifling to create us, Oh! would it be condescending too much to reveal Himself, in part at least, that the awful suspense of our spiritual ignorance might be removed? From the little we behold of Him in the works of His hands, especially in our bodies and spirits, we conclude that there is the strongest probability that the Author of Life and of the Universe would instruct His children.

And now, with this probability strengthening upon it, where shall the human mind turn to find this revelation? It is not upon the page of Nature, for that has been studied in vain. And of the many theories which have been presented, each has in its turn been discarded as unsatisfactory. The Bible is now presented with its high claims to a divine origin, and the human mind is called upon to render a verdict in favor of this volume, as being a production of infinite mind. Its defenders say that it brings more external and internal evidence of its genuineness and authenticity, than any other book in existence. They say that it contains all that it is necessary for us to know concerning the nature of the Creative Cause, of ourselves, our duties and our destiny. They claim for it a character of truthfulness without the slightest mixture of error; and challenge for it an examination by the light of all learning and the scrutiny of the severest tests.

That this book is "the word of God," all Christians firmly believe. To review the many powerful arguments which:
sanctified learning has brought to its support, would be a task which would as far exceed the ability of the present speaker, as it would be inappropriate to this occasion. We cannot forbear, however, alluding to one of its internal arguments, which alone, we think, would be sufficient to commend it to every heart sincerely seeking after truth. It is, that doctrines necessary to the salvation of our immortal souls, which could not possibly have been discovered by unaided human intellect, are clearly and satisfactorily developed in the Bible. It is a truth not only asserted in the Holy Scriptures, but corroborated by the history of mind that “the world by wisdom knew not God.” Take the theories concerning the Deity which are the offspring of the most gifted minds in those ages which had all the light that possibly could be possessed without the Bible, and we find that they represent God as a Being who, with all the greatness with which they clothe Him, is only an Almighty monster. If thus the great have conceived him to be, what can we expect to be the ideas of the vulgar? The mass have made him a detestable wretch, superior to themselves only in his greater ability to indulge more frightful lusts. But the Bible gives us a view of His nature, which is as sublime as it is consoling. A secret prompting of his heart told man that he must appease God, because he was sinful, and was exposed to punishment. But the world’s wise men could not tell him where he might be cleansed of his moral defilement, they could not devise any manner of mediation between him and his God, they could propagate no plan of salvation which would suit all souls, under all circumstances, to the end of all time. This the Bible does! It reveals a God whose attributes of justice and mercy, both infinite, kiss each other upon a platform which His right arm has thrown up, in the presence of the Universe, for the salvation of a world. The mightiest human intellect may ponder upon the sublimity of this plan for ages, and rise from the study with expanded powers. It must be from the Creator of all—the book which develops such glorious doctrines! As Christians, we so receive it, and present the Bible to the world, saying, “Here is the Word of God!”
Of this book, the passage of Scripture before us says, it is living and powerful.

I. As our God is living, and is the fountain of all life, and the source of all existence, we may reasonably expect that the words which proceed out of his mouth shall have all the elements of life. Not like the sound which is given from an inanimate thing when a master hand touches it cunningly, it has the tone of life upon it.

The Word of God is living light. "The entrance of Thy word giveth light," is an exclamation of the Psalmist, verified in the world by innumerable examples. Apart from the teachings of the Bible, how darkened is the human mind! It is true, that in Christian lands many men do seem to be possessed of expanded powers of mind, who never read the Bible, and who have never been accustomed even in childhood to its teachings; but their light is only the reflection of that which glows all around them in society. A conversation with such men would soon discover their spiritual darkness, as there is many a Nicodemus who is celebrated for his learning in the world, and yet not able to comprehend the simplest doctrine taught in the school of Christ. An acquaintance with general literature, a familiarity with the circle of the sciences, a close-study of the arts, will not supply the lack of a devoted perusal of the Sacred Scriptures. The chamber of the mind may be well furnished with the rich tapestry of varied learning, and the graceful statuary of polite letters, but unless the living light of "the word of God" shall illuminate it, its elegant adornment will be useless. The light of truth adds a charm to all beauty.

Again: We very frequently find men in the lowest walks of life, on whose powers the incubus of poverty has ever pressed, who never had the polish which mingling with the intellectual imparts, but who have been converted to God by his Holy Spirit, and have thenceforth given attention to the study of his word. How perceptible is the change which is produced upon their minds! In a short time we find them speaking understandingly of those things of which we thought them profoundly ignorant. And why is this? Because they
have studied the word of God, and it has turned their minds in upon themselves, and they have become deeply interested in the sublime doctrines of the Bible. Their minds are now more ready to receive instruction in secular learning, and they have become theologians and metaphysicians at the same time. "It giveth understanding to the simple."

Let the Bible, "the word of God," be taken to a heathen in his own language. It finds him in the veriest darkness, deceiving himself with the illusion that all around him is light. But the living light of the word of God plays on the image before which he is bowed in his degrading worship, and he beholds all its horrid deformity. He turns from his Deity with disgust, and is driven out a godless wretch. The light enters his mind, and discovers to him the filthy figures which crowd his imagination; it pierces into the heart and reveals its moral defilement and loathsome leprosy. This living light points him to the sword of justice gleaming from the dark cloud of the true God's indignation against sin, and he is ready to sink into despair. But a concentration of all the light of this wondrous book arrests his sinking mind, and with trembling he follows its brightness until it mantles the cross of Calvary. There he "beholds the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the word." The pitying glance of that eye in death's agony melts his heart; the blood from that pierced side sprinkles him, and lo! he is more spotless than infant purity! With this "word of God" in his hand, he joyfully pursues life's rugged way, for he beholds his path growing brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

But the "word of God" is also living seed. Deposited in the heart, as it often is, by some unseen agency, it germinates and brings forth righteousness and bliss. The living preacher is he whom God hath appointed to sow this good seed, and the field is the world. And how often does the minister go to the performance of his public duty with a heart weighed down with some of earth's cares or sorrows; how often does he retire from the altar to his private chamber, feeling that he is an exceedingly profitless servant! And yet that very discourse which may seem to him a failure, may be blessed
of the Lord to the salvation of some soul. God does not always show the spiritual husbandman the first quickening of the seed he sows. Let this consolation sustain those of us who minister in holy things, for "in due time we shall reap if we faint not.” At the family altar, as well as in the sanctuary, the good seed is planted. How often does the Spirit of God bless the reading of the sacred Scriptures in families! Fathers, Mothers, heads of families, fail not daily to gather your little ones to the reading of God’s holy word; and if they seem thoughtless be not discouraged, for the living seed is silently falling upon the fallow ground. Many a winter’s snow may come, but as surely as the God of the sun and rain exists it shall survive. The voice of the mother will be remembered, when all else connected with childhood shall be forgotten. It is the last music which dies out of a boy’s heart. Passages of “the word of God” in the mother’s tone will often ring upon the heart of the man when wrinkles and furrows are on his time-worn visage. Words of instruction and consolation, and powerful appeals from the Holy Scriptures, breathed upon his mind in earlier days at the family altar, but lost in the lapse of time, will come meltingly upon the young wanderer’s heart, when the thousand mouths of the Ocean shall yawn to swallow him, and the storm-spirit pour its unearthly shriek upon his ears. In these instances, and they are numerous, we find a fulfilment of the prophecy, “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”

“The word of God is living!” Contrasted with it, all other religious theories are lifeless, all philosophy is dead. Let the Natural Religionist read the page of that volume, which he thinks tells all that the immortal spirit needs to know, and if he find a reply it will tell him that there is a Mighty Spirit in the Universe. But of the character of
that Being its teachings will be ambiguous, for while it has lessons of his love of beauty written with the pencils of light on the graceful flower; and speaks of his love of grandeur on the rocky tablet of the immense mountain, on the glorious scroll of the firmament, and on the unmeasured undulating face of the ocean—it reveals his terrible might in the volcano, the conflagration, the tempest, and the deluge. And what are the responses of the oracle of the heathen? With a heart burdened with unspeakably interesting questions, he rushes into the temple and presence of his idol. Tell me, oh, tell me!—what and where the Great Spirit is? And what am I? and whither bound as carried down this rushing stream of life? Beyond the portentous clouds which I see settling most heavily before me, are there torments or is there bliss? Does an eternal sunlight play on the blessed islands in that veiled state, or do thunders and lightnings and a horrible tempest empty their furies on the ruined soul? Oh, when this tiresome strife of present existence shall close, shall I have seen but the beginning of sorrows? Is not the great Spirit lovely, and will he not save me?—The God is silent, the oracle is dumb! The Priest who conducts the unhallowed service of its damning rites points the enquiring wretch to the instrument of torture, to blasted hopes, to the hearts's finer feelings crushed, to a dark grave and to a hopeless hereafter.

It is not so with the word of our God, it is quick and life-giving. As when the Incarnation of that Word stood at the grave of Lazarus and commanded the buried one to come forth, so "the word of God" now speaks to the soul which is dead in trespasses and in sins, and lo! the thrill of life shoots through its faculties. And when the enquiring spirit asks of this our oracle it finds a ready and most satisfactory answer. Every objection is anticipated, every fear removed, every trouble soothed, every wound gently bound up. The living Word speaks to the soul and bids it be happy, even in this world. It tells the Spirit that God is love, that every provision is made for its wants, that in this matchless mercy and unfathomed wisdom, He has satisfied the demands of justice and effected its emancipation. It speaks to
the Spirit and its chains fall off, and in the majesty of truth, in the strength of freedom, and in the light of love, it treads the temple of that God, whose living word reveals the high and holy destiny which awaits it. It beholds in all things of beauty around it the developement of that undying love which watches all its paths, and which is preparing for it beyond the tomb a more glorious habitation. For not only does this word impart a spiritual life here, but it reveals to the soul the state of unceasing and blissful existence in the world which is to come, and informs the Christian that he is now only upon the lowest step of that sublime pyramid of life which he shall be everlastingly ascending, whose summit is lost in the inconceivably intense brightness of JEHovah's peerless glory.

And this word of God, so living and life-giving must remain forever. It bears in itself the elements of indestructible existence. Heaven and earth may pass away, but it shall not be shaken; for the throne of the Eternal must fall and the light of all life expire, before the words which he speaks shall fail. And here the Christian stands, planting his feet upon the Rock of Ages, while he defies the tempest to rob him of his immortality, or shake his trust in God. Truly, the word of God is living.

II. The second characteristic of the word of God, is that it is powerful. When that word went out at creation it traversed the ocean of chaos and startled myriads of worlds into existence. When that Word appeared on earth in the flesh it was a power which suspended the laws of nature, working astonishing miracles and destroying the power of sin. That Word, as written out in a volume, is powerful, even "the power of God unto salvation."

The effect which the perusal of the Sacred Scriptures has upon a man is very different from the study of any human composition. There is nothing in the writings of the learned, in the theories of philosophers, to change a man's entire nature. Even those who have been the authors of the best moral precepts have frequently been most wretched exemplars in practice. But the Bible, having been written by the
all-wise God, through his amanuenses, holy inspired men, is so perfectly adapted to every circumstance under which every man is placed, that it exercises a power over the human mind and heart which nothing else possesses. An arm of Omnipotence as it is, it beats down the bulwarks of pride and unbelief, bursts open the doors of the heart, seizes the lion in his fury and binds him with fetters of adamant. It leaps from heaven, a blessed preserver, into the torrent of sin on which the soul of man is borne to destruction, rolls back the tide of nature, brings him up from the fearful abyss and places him on an eminence from which he can behold his former danger and adore his Redeemer.

The word of God by enlightening the intellect has given man the ability to see the way which leadeth to God through Jesus Christ. At the foot of the mercy seat he hath been pardoned, at the foot of the Cross he hath been cleansed. With his mind purified, his affections hallowed, his soul sanctified, the man hath become a benefactor. He takes no longer any pleasure in living simply for himself. His mind is now lifted from its filth and degradation and gathers perception of harmony and beauty. Here we have the foundation of the Arts and Sciences which adorn life and administer more refined pleasures to the immortal spirit. It is because the Word of God is in your midst, that your houses are palaces and your meals banquets. As the intellect increases in its elevation it gathers clearer ideas of relations, and the Word of God furnishes all necessary standards of judgment in these cases. The husband learns to use his superiority as not abusing it, and the wife submits to the husband, not as to a master, but as to a stronger companion; not as a degradation, but as a relief and a pleasure. The parent learns to value his child, not as a slave to his caprice, but as a stream of intellect which he has the ability to direct for its own endless happiness and the benefit of a world. The child is now bound to the parent, not by a feeling of servile fear, not by a tie which weakens as the parent grows helpless with age, and breaks when he becomes a burden, but a love which is respectful when the parent is at the fullness of his matu-
rity and becomes more tender and refined as the infirmities of years press him down. Having thus given to man a code of morals to govern a family, the observance of which will be crowned with domestic bliss, and the least deviation from which will produce discord and misery, it leads man to look upon his neighbor as his brother, and a member of the great family of which God is the common Father. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Compare that one injunction with the code of morals of heathen philosophers.) Thus we see the social compact strengthened by the holy influence of the Bible. But man has certain rights to be guarded. The Bible clearly sets them forth in a tone of authority which is satisfactory, rebuking the oppressor, giving strength to the oppressed to assert the truth and yet restraining him from all acts of unlawful violence. We here find the power of the Bible to give a balance to Society and to erect a sound fabric of Government. The man changed through the instrumentality of that Word which is powerful, is not satisfied to have a proper government established, and the arts and sciences flourishing; his heart, now a fountain of goodness, goes out towards his fellow men. This creates the benevolent institutions which are the glory of Bible lands. We thus see the influence of the Word of God upon communities by changing individuals and giving that direction to the strength of their heads and hearts which was originally intended by the great Creator.

The preaching of "the word of God," how powerful it has been! Before it the bold face has blanched and the stout heart quailed. The proud boast of the wicked has been silenced, the mockings of the fool have been hushed. The lion and the tiger have been tamed, and the heart of the lamb has been made powerful for good. The torrent intellect which was devastating whole regions of mind has been turned into the channels of beneficence, and the powers that stagnated in indolence have been sent forth to irrigate the waste and weary land. It has thrown open the prison doors and set the captive free. It has poured light in upon the depths of darkness. It has gone into the midst of communi-
ties, and under its influence, the ignorant have become wise, the churl liberal, the spendthrift economical, the vulgar refined, and the sinner a saint. Like oil it has allayed the tumultuous waves of strife. It has dashed down misrule—trampled upon anarchy, and lifted up the comely form of fainting order. It has extended the sceptre of mercy, and arranged the scales of justice. It has reformed the laws and their executor. As the word of God has been spoken out by the lips of truth, Empires have been convulsed, crowns have fallen, and kingdoms have passed away. Its consolations have been as powerful as its reformatory energy. The widow and the orphan have had their hearts to leap within them, and the fainting traveller over earth's desert has felt the gift of new life as this Word of Power has called him to the waters. Its power has disrobed Death of its terrors and deprived the grave of its victory; and the weak child and feeble woman have calmly walked down to their resting place with a holy smile on their countenances. Even before the darkness of the tomb had entirely shrouded them, they have seen the first light of a glorious and eternal morning.

It has been powerful against the enemies of God. Every thing which human ingenuity and infernal malignity could devise have assailed it. And yet, like the billow-beaten ocean-rock, it has been unmoved, while the waves of opposition have fallen back into spray, and the lightnings of persecution have been woven into a diadem of glory to adorn its summit. And while God lives it will remain—it will be powerful.

And why is the Bible living and powerful? Because the Spirit of the Living and Almighty God is in it. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." Take His Holy Spirit from it, and it will be as lifeless and as powerless as a dead body. If we could preach the doctrines of the Bible without any assistance from the spirit of God, we should find it as useless as declaiming the orations of Cicero. Let us, then, remember, in our private study of the Scriptures, that we are not reading merely the writings of the Prophets and the Apostles, but endeavor to feel each word as though it were spoken immediately from the great God our Savior,
out of heaven and in an audible voice. In our efforts to supply the world with the Bible, let us keep ever upon our hearts the assurance that we are not sending the words of worldly wisdom, but "the word of God which is living and powerful," and which will do good to the bodies and souls of our fellow men. And Oh! let us who are engaged in the hallowed co-operation with the blessed Trinity, take the more diligence to make our own peace, calling and election sure! If the gifted and sainted author of the text, after having seen Christ and possessed the power of working miracles, entertained the slightest apprehension lest after having preached unto others he should himself become a cast away, let us not be satisfied unless we feel continually that God's living word is powerful even unto the salvation of our own souls.

And now, brethren beloved, this sacred gift is deposited in our hands by its holy Author, to be dispensed to the whole world. It is a Testament: our Heavenly Father's will. As the lines have fallen to us in a pleasant place, and we have a goodly heritage, let us not forget our brethren who are away in the darkness of other lands. What shall we say unto God our Father in justification of our conduct if we suffer them to perish without telling them of our home in heaven? It may cost us some sacrifice, but let us keep ever before our eyes the example of Him "who though he was rich yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." And "if God so loved us we ought also to love one another."

Father, when you retire from the sanctuary this morning and see the happy faces of your loved little ones around your board, think of your brother in heathendom who has no domestic comforts, no pleasant fire-side, no hallowed altar-spot. Christian Mother, let your mind fly from this temple this hour, to behold that mother who is now committing her offspring to the flames or to the waves.* Think not that that mo-

* To impress this remark, the following anecdote was related: "A Hindoo woman cast her child, between three and four years old, into the Ganges, as an offering to the Goddess. The little creature made its way to a raft of bamboos that happened to be floating by, and seizing one end of it has drifted along, crying to its unnatural parent for help. Perceiving from the shore the dangers of the child's escape, she plunged into the water, tore away its hold, broke its neck, and hurled its life-warm corpse into the middle of the current, by which it was soon drifted out of sight."—Jayeman's and Bennett's Journal.
ther's heart never knew woman's feelings! When she first pressed that child to her bosom she felt the rapturous thrill of a mother's pure, devoted affection. But the iron heel of a tyrannical religion has crushed the buds of her love. Would you save that innocent? Send the Bible and its power shall tear down the temple of the idol and erect the altar of that Religion whose essence is love. Lady, robed, jewelled, accomplished and happy,—think of your destitute sister in the darkened land! Less fair, perhaps, than yourself, but Oh! she hath a soul as immortal as your own! And if you leave her to die in her degradation, at Christ's judgment that she may thus upbraid thee:—I was hungry, and blind, and oppressed, and sinful, and dying; your hands held that which would have relieved me, the tale of my wo fell upon your ear, but with a profitless word of commiseration you turned coldly away to the sound of the viol, and the excitement of the dance—and I died! How then can the Lord turn upon you the smiles of his love, when he hath said that "if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his?"

And now, in behalf of the North Carolina Bible Society, I appeal to this congregation. I feel a solemnity come over me when an appeal on behalf of the cause of Christ is to be made to an assembly of Christian people. It is upon me now, for I know that for all I have said I must give an account; and lest I have said said something amiss, lest I have left some appeal untouched, there is a fear in my heart. And when I look around upon you and know that God the Father, and the blessed Saviour, and the Holy Sanctifier are here, that the Godhead knows the power of His own word and hears the thousand cries and shrieks of a heathen world, and that an account is to be taken of the doings of a crowded, intellectual and wealthy assembly of Christians, oh! how can I but feel for the result? Remember, my brethren, that "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." May the Great Head of the Church speedily send the light and health, the life and power of his Word to all nations! And let us remember that he has appointed human instrumentality to accomplish this glorious consummation as we unite our hearts in responding Amen, and Amen!