

INTRODUCTORY

STATEMENT OF FACTS.

THE following historical facts are here succinctly stated, in order to assist the readers of the following discourse in understanding the matter in controversy between those who think with the author, on the one side, and the President and Secretary of the American and Foreign Bible Society, on the other.

1. The American and Foreign Bible Society was provisionally organized by a Convention of Delegates who assembled at the Oliver Street church, N. Y., May 12th and 13th, 1836.

2. The immediate cause of its formation was the passage of the following resolution by the Board of Managers of the American Bible Society, adopted February 17th, 1836.

Resolved, That in appropriating money for the translating, printing, or distributing of the Sacred Scriptures in foreign languages, the Managers feel at liberty to encourage only such versions as conform in the principle of their translation to the common English version; at least so far as that all the religious denominations represented in this Society, can consistently use and circulate said versions in their several schools and communities."

3. In April, 1837, a large Bible Convention, consisting of Baptists from all parts of the United States, assembled in Philadelphia, "to decide upon the duty of the denomination, in existing circumstances, respecting the translation and distribution of the Sacred Scriptures." At this Convention, several days were occupied in discussing the above

subject; a large portion of the time upon the question, whether the Society should be confined to the *foreign* field, or should also include operations *at home*. It was thought by many, that as the difficulty with the American Bible Society referred only to the foreign field, the Society ought to be confined to that. A fear, also, was repeatedly expressed, lest, if the new Society should include the home field, the Managers should attempt an alteration of the commonly received version of the Scriptures.

4. In the circular issued by that Bible Convention, we are informed as follows:

“As a matter of *compromise*, it was unanimously agreed to confine the operations of the society which has been organized by the Convention, *during the ensuing year*, to the circulation of the Sacred Scriptures in foreign tongues; and in the mean time to solicit the denomination throughout our land, to send up to the first annual meeting of the Society in New York, the last week in April, 1838, their views as to the duty of the Society to engage in home distribution after that period. The following are the resolutions passed by the Convention on this subject:

1. “*Resolved*, That under existing circumstances, it is the indispensable duty of the Baptist denomination in the United States, to organize a distinct society for the purpose of aiding in the translation, printing, and circulation of the Sacred Scriptures.

2. “*Resolved*, That this organization be known by the name of the American and Foreign Bible Society.

3. “*Resolved*, That the Society confine its efforts, during the ensuing year, to the circulation of the word of God, in foreign tongues.

4. “*Resolved*, That the Baptist denomination in the United States be affectionately requested to send to the Society, at its annual meeting, during the last week in April, 1838, their views as to the duty of the Society to engage in the work of home distribution.”

5. At the annual meeting, held at Oliver st., New York, April 26th, 1838, in compliance with a very general response from the denomination, it was resolved that the Society should include in its operations the HOME as well as the foreign field, and it was at the same time also

“*Resolved*, That in the distribution of the Scriptures in the Eng-

lish language, they will use the commonly received version until otherwise directed by the Society."

6. In April, 1845, a memorial signed by Rev. Spencer H. Cone, President of the Society, and others, remonstrating against the addition of the title *Baptist* to the name of the Society, in a proposed charter, was addressed to the New York legislature, containing the following expressions:

"In addition to other insuperable objections to any alteration of title, the introduction of the term *Baptist* was peculiarly offensive, because the opponents of the Society had, from the time of its organization, *industriously circulated the unfounded charge*, that your memorialists could not co-operate in circulating the common English Bible, but were bent upon publishing a 'Baptist Bible,'—which design, if not already accomplished, they would certainly carry into effect at some future day. Such a charge would wear the color of probability with the common mind, were the institution, represented by your memorialists, to be officially designated a *Baptist Bible Society*."

7. At the Annual Meeting of the Society, May 11th, 1849, at a short business meeting of one hour, previous to the public Anniversary, at which few members were present except those residing in the immediate vicinity, the following Resolution was hurriedly passed—no notice having been previously given of any intention to take so important a step, and no opportunity for discussing it having been afforded, viz.:

"*Resolved*, That the restriction laid by the Society upon the Board of Managers, in 1838, to use only the commonly received version in the distribution of the Scriptures in the English language, be *removed*."

8. During the present year, a corrected version of the English New Testament, with the word *immerse* substituted for *baptize*, and various other alterations, has been "prepared" and stereotyped, under the supervision of the Rev. Dr. Cone, President of the American and Foreign Bible Society, and Mr. Wm. H. Wyckoff, Corres-

ponding Secretary; and a pamphlet advocating such a "version" as they have "prepared," has been published and circulated very extensively, with their own signatures attached. In this pamphlet, the authors say—

"A corrected edition of the English New Testament has been prepared by the subscribers, in connection with eminent scholars, who have kindly co-operated, and given their hearty approval to the proposed corrections. A copy of this will be sent gratuitously to the written order of each member of the Society, who wishes to examine it. You are invited to procure and read it, and to attend the ensuing anniversary of the Society, when the stereotype plates will be offered as a donation, with the provision that they be printed from according to the demand."

9. It is in opposition to the encouragement of such a "new version" by American Baptists, and to dissuade from its adoption by the American and Foreign Bible Society, at its approaching anniversary in May, 1850, that the following "ten reasons" have been given to the public. The discourse was first delivered at Hope Chapel, Broadway, New York, and repeated, by request, at the First Baptist church, Brooklyn, under the pastoral care of the Rev. J. L. Hodge. On the latter occasion, a few additional paragraphs were added, which are incorporated in the following pages. •

NEW YORK, }
April 10th, 1850. }

J. D.