

P. Coates
1 Aug 1842.

TWO SERMONS

PREACHED AT KETTERING ON THE 31st OF MAY, AND THE
1st OF JUNE, 1842,

BEFORE THE

BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

AT A
SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN CELEBRATION

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN CELEBRATION

OF ITS

FIFTIETH YEAR;

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE MEETING.

LONDON:

SOLD AT

THE SOCIETY'S HOUSE, 6, FEN COURT, FENCHURCH STREET;

AND BY

HOULSTON AND STONEMAN, 65, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1842.

THE GOODNESS OF GOD REVIEWED, AND THE HAND OF
GOD ACKNOWLEDGED.

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT KETTERING ON TUESDAY EVENING, MAY 31, 1842,

BY THE REV. B. GODWIN.

How many touching recollections are connected with a review of fifty years! This is a large proportion of our "threescore years and ten," and no inconsiderable part of that duration which measures the history of our race. It far exceeds the average length of human life, and but comparatively few of those who are now assembled to commemorate the fiftieth year of this Society's existence can look back to a period so distant as its commencement. And yet there are some of us who can carry back our recollections thus far; but they bring us to the unthinking and joyous days of childhood or of youth. And the interval has passed like a dream; its busy scenes, its constant changes, its stirring events, are now become "a tale that is told." How different are we now to what we were in 1792, and how different is the world in its condition and its prospects! How different is

the conversion of the heathen world; and who at length succeeded in diffusing his own sentiments throughout the little circle in which he moved. And this day, this very day fifty years ago, at an association held at Nottingham, this devoted man, William Carey, preached that memorable sermon which was followed by a resolution, that a plan of a society for the conversion of the heathen should be presented at the next meeting of ministers at Kettering; and in this very town, in the autumn of the same year, the Baptist Missionary Society commenced its existence. On this day, half a century ago, the man of God lifted up his voice and cried, "*Expect great things from God—attempt great things for God.*" And the expectation was raised—the attempt was made—and with humble and holy joy we make this year a jubilee, and say,

"THE LORD HATH DONE GREAT THINGS FOR US,
WHEREOF WE ARE GLAD."

This then is that portion of God's word which we shall now make the subject of our discourse, and which you will find in Psalm cxxvi. 3.

So spake the pious Jews in the warm gratitude of their hearts, when they were restored from their captivity. For seventy years they had "hung their harps upon the willows," while "by the rivers of Babylon" they "sat down and wept." But as "the ransomed of the Lord returned to Zion with singing," so unexpected and so great was their deliverance, that "they said among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them." And their joyful response was,