

Geraldus Cambrensis would publish his works in Wales, he "had a pulpit erected in an open thoroughfare in Brecon, from which he read them aloud to passers-by, who, if any desired to obtain copies, might have opportunity to get them transcribed." When Wycliffe's translation was finished, he multiplied copies by the aid of penmen, and through his poor priests commended it to the people. "In their hands [says Lingard] it became an engine of wonderful power." When Frederick I. of Germany would give the widest circulation to his inaugural proclamation, he directed that it be placarded throughout the empire.

If to weaken the position I have taken, it be said that the Master Himself wrote no sacred book, indited no catholic epistle, committed no sentence to parchment; we answer that He was the exceptional teacher. Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples. So, He discoursed, and they treasured up His discourses; made careful record of His deeds; selected and set in order the things most worthy to be remembered; and thus supplemented the ancient Scriptures by the new, and filled out the book which we call the Bible.

We concede that "Christianity did not *start* as a volume, but as a voice." But the voice gets permanence and power by means of the volume in which it is recorded. That Christianity is a power in the world to-day, is due in large measure to this book of our religion. There were other apostles besides Paul, but what influence of Matthias or Philip or Andrew is comparable to that which has been exerted through the writings of Peter and Paul and John, included in the sacred canon? There were other words spoken by the Master, and other things which Jesus did, but no word of His has lived in tradition, no reported act of His has gained universal credence in the Church, except those which were written down in this book before the death of the beloved disciple.

Therefore we think that wise men, going to the Scriptures for counsel, will find in the example of Christ and His apostles convincing proof that the divine plan for the renovation of the world requires that all missionary effort should include the circulation of the Holy Bible as one of the prime agencies by which the darkness of the earth is to be dispelled.

II. We notice how it has ever been the instinct and practice of the Christian Church to publish its message of glad tidings by translations of the Holy Scriptures and the multiplication of copies.

Cardinal Wiseman has indeed said, boasting of the antagonism between Rome and Protestant principles: "We give not the Word indiscriminately to all, because God himself has not so given it. He has not made reading an essential part of man's constitution, nor a congenital faculty, nor a term of salvation, nor a condition of Christianity. But hearing He has made such." And he adds, that, "as God did not furnish the Church with the means, nor with the command, so He has not instilled into her that spontaneous impulse that guides her to new duties, in favour of this mode of propagating the faith."

But surely God has given this Book to mankind in the same sense in which He has provided all the resources of nature for our use; and the instinct of man to learn by reading is no less characteristic of the race than the instinct to learn by hearing.

And as we read church history, it is manifest that the instinct of the Church has been to translate and multiply copies of God's Word, and to diffuse them as widely as its opportunities would allow. Syriac and Latin translations of the Bible, and three Greek versions of the Old Testament, had been made by the end of the second century. Within two hundred years more, the Scriptures could be read in Coptic, Sahidic, Armenian, Ethiopian, and Gothic.

At the very outset of his missionary life, before leaving England, William Carey said to William Ward, a young printer to whom he was introduced in the streets of Hull: "We shall want you in a few years to print