

No doubt many versions of the Scriptures do not owe their existence to the Society, and no doubt, also, many would have been produced by the labors of literary persons or missionaries, encouraged by evangelical churches or bodies, apart from the Bible Society. But as the fact stands, it is to the liberal and world-embracing spirit of that Society that the Scriptures at this moment are in whole or in part rendered into so many distinct languages. As I have said, 151 translations owe their existence to the Bible Society. This is a marvellous result! And thus the Gospel finds access to the inhabitants of nations where the minister or the missionary would not be tolerated. The colporteur can penetrate where any other agency could not subsist. No doubt in regard to Spain and Portugal, and also Austria, barriers to the circulation of the Scriptures still exist; but no sooner will these be removed, and liberty conceded to the subjects, than the Bible Society is prepared to enter in and scatter broadcast the precious treasure. In Italy, notwithstanding many hindrances, there have been twenty-nine colporteurs constantly engaged for the last year, and 27,000 Bibles and Testaments have been put in circulation.

Let us next consider the past circulation of the Scriptures effected by the Society. The British and Foreign Bible Society has been in existence now fifty-nine years. The average issue for that period is 729,565 Bibles, Testaments, or Tracts. Consider this. Suppose that one in a thousand of these copies of the Scriptures has been productive of its proper, and expected, and promised result, as under the Divine blessing. Then you have 729 individuals every year who have obtained spiritual enlightenment—been converted, comforted, upheld, sanctified, prepared for affliction, supported during dying hours, and fitted for eternity! 729! and that is only one to a thousand—i. e., one Bible or portion out of a thousand issued and supposed to produce these results. But is not the supposition at the very lowest! How many more than one in a thousand may have done the expected work, none can tell. The estimate which we have just made is for one year, and that at an average of the circulation for fifty-nine years. Take the total issues for these fifty-nine years, and even on the supposition we have made of one in a thousand being spiritually and morally benefitted, what a result is disclosed! Then we have to take the thousandth part of 43,044,334. This gives the very large number of 43,044 individuals. But, Sir, this is not a satisfactory way of looking at the matter. We may believe that not a single copy issued by the Society has been without its effects for good in some way or other. God's Word shall not return to Him void. We may certainly believe that all of the forty-three millions of issues have done real and actual service, and have more or less and in various ways influenced and benefitted an equal number and even greater than is expressed by that sum.

But to refer to recent operations of the Bible Society. The work going on for some time in Madagascar forms an interesting portion of last year's report, and the services rendered by the Bible Society in supplying that large Island have been noticed already by Mr. Armstrong. I may refer to another interesting feature in the labors reported for last year, and that is the work of the "Bible women." Some years ago, a lady conceived the idea of employing women of good and pious character to sell Bibles in destitute localities in London. The undertaking succeeded, and now in one district of London—that of St. Giles—there are, I believe, as many as 190

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