

voted, as it was to the extension of physical science, was as important a link in the chain of causes which resulted in the religious reformation of the sixteenth century, as Luther himself, although, historically Luther formed the last. For what affects the mind of an age must necessarily affect its different manifestations, religious as well as the rest. The mental and spiritual parts of our nature interlace and overlap each other, so that what affects the one necessarily affects the other. It is so with respect to the national mind. Mental activity, and progress reacts upon spiritual, and determines its character and tendency. An event which contributed, in a pre-eminent degree, to disseminate and perpetuate the blessing of the Reformation, was the invention of printing by Faust, about the year 1442, A. D. The importance of such an event, at this time, was incalculable. Had it not taken place, the Reformation could have been partial in character and local in influence. Its progress would have been slow, its benefits—the possession of a few. But the printing-press communicated rapidity of diffusion and perpetuity of life. By means of it, the mental acquisitions of one age are preserved for the benefit of the succeeding, and the progress of thought invested with continuity, and certainty. The religious movement of the time, from this circumstance, received an impetus which gave to it a widely diffusive character. It spread like leaven and soon premeated the age. But the rapidity of its diffusion indicates another fact, viz: that the age was partially at least, prepared for its reception. Luther simply gave expressio to a feeling of which the whole age was conscious, and which, sooner or later, would have developed itself. His courage, therefore, in this movement was greater than his originality. He was the living, personified expression of the age. The path which he followed, was not untrodden. Liberty of thought struggled for expression and found it before Luther came. Under its banner mighty champions had fought. They had perilled their lives in its cause. They had followed her wherever she went. Her voice to them was the voice of God. It inspired, it cheered, it supported them. Its music rang in their souls. Such men were Copernicus, Roger Bacon, Galileo, and many others whose works are stamped upon the ages in ineffaceable characters, whose lives yet live in the acting effects they produced, and which shall live down to the remotest generation. Thought never dies, it is as immortal as the thinker who gave it birth and infused into it the breath of life. As the blood is the life of the body, so is thought that of the mind. Without it, the spiritual nature would die, and man would sink to the level of the brutes that perish. It is man's glory and crown, it dignifies, ennobles and immortalizes him. It elevates him above the brute, it invests him with the power of the seer, it makes him god-like and divine. It is the director of events and the creator of reforms. It controls the destinies of individuals and nations. It is the pioneer of civilization, the friend of liberty, and the companion of truth. It extends its sway from the lowest strata of society to the highest. It is the originator of all movements, whether religious, political or social. It presides in the Parliaments of empires, it rules in the halls of learn-