

have the hearing ear and the seeing eye. The times are, therefore, always full of interest, and always worthy of critical observation. Books of novelty are earnestly sought and eagerly read, because of their amusing variety of style, and the constant current of wonder they excite; but here is a volume as wide as the world, as varied as all people and all languages, as rich and interesting as wisdom itself, and as true and useful as the needle pointing to the pole, or as the sun upon the dial.

To any one who is even partially acquainted with the bright side of the world's history, since Guttenberg first began to move his metallic type in 1436, and since Luther boldly raised his voice against the overgrown papacy in the early part of the fifteenth century, the world, at the present moment, has a most favorable, prosperous, and flattering appearance. To look only at one side, we might almost say, "old things are passed away, and all things have become new." Science has prospered; the arts have flourished; education has been extended: knowledge has increased; the Bible has been circulated; liberty of conscience has been tolerated; religion more generally professed and respected; and all the refinements and improvements of society greatly advanced and multiplied. From the minutest rules of private life, to the highest and most public political and religious laws, embracing the whole circumference of social existence, a well defined renovation has taken place, and every old custom, opinion, and practice which has been exchanged for new, has left further room for advancement, and prepared the way for additional improvement.

Printing and protestantism have wrought a mighty revolution. Light has streamed forth copiously from science and the bible, through the printer's art and the protestant movement. Society at large has received a new stamp, a new spirit, a new soul. It is no longer the same world. Every thing is changed—dress, manners, commerce, politics, literature, religion. Hence the last three hundred years bear no more comparison to the three centuries preceding, than Martin Luther is to be compared with Peter the hermit, or John Calvin is to be ranked with John Gilpin.

Not to acknowledge the progressive spirit, the refinement, and the improvement of past years, would be not only a sin against popular faith, but a palpable sin against fact. There is, however, another side of the picture, as well marked and as strongly colored, which the popular assembly and the general multitude seldom see and never contemplate. A grand counterpart to all the light, glory, splendor, and