

From Spain let us turn to ITALY. "The one word which expresses the work of the year," Sig. Meille writes, "is that of Progress." The circulation has been the highest ever known; it has risen to over 166,000.* Nor do these figures sufficiently describe the advance, for it is significant that the number of complete copies of the New Testament has been exceptionally great. It should be remembered that alongside of the Society's editions several others, illustrated and sold in serial parts, are commanding a large sale. So pronounced is this popularization of the Bible that Sig. Meille can write—and the sentence is of immense import—"More than ever it can be affirmed that no book is more widely circulated in Italy than the Book of Life." This is the latest report from a country which, but a few years ago, was dominated by the Papacy, and in which, consistently and characteristically, the Bible was popularly unknown.

From Italy let us turn to HUNGARY. Not indeed to the exclusion of the other and diversified Provinces which compose the Dual Empire, but because of its own special attractiveness. In a recent conversation Mr. Millard described Hungary as the "Bible Society Paradise of his Agency," and his latest report may perhaps illustrate his meaning. In other provinces—in Bohemia where Huss and Jerome testified, or in Moravia where the fragrance of an early piety still lingers—there may be perhaps brighter spots, but within the mountain-guarded valleys of the Magyars there is a diffused warmth and light which implies a prevalent Christianity. In Hungary as in Italy the circulation of 1891 has been the largest hitherto known: the previous year it was hardly over 40,000, it is now close on 50,000.† There has been a "great demand for the Word of God." The Government officials have been most courteous and, as might be expected, the authorities of the Protestant Churches have been warmly sympathetic. "Christian life and activity are making visible progress year by year. Sunday schools are increasing. Special efforts are being made to enlarge the circle of Christian workers throughout the whole country." These sentences imply not only the existence but the glow and the activity of life. They recall the morning of the Reformation when the clouds had not yet gathered after its rain, and Pázmány had not won back Hungary for the Papacy. Better still, they awaken the hopes of a future when the race which once broke the force of the Turkish invasion of Europe, and in later years secured its political liberties, may repossess itself of its spiritual inheritance and fulfil the promise of its prime.

While a new Christian state is thus slowly rising north of the Danube, the Muhammadan races which once held its southern shores are slowly falling backwards along that track which, four hundred years ago, was desolated by their terrible advance. And along with temporal power is slowly vanishing the prestige of their Prophet and the influence of the Kurán. It is being superseded by a higher and a purer Gospel. In the heart of CONSTANTINOPLE the stranger notices a Bible Dépôt; it is one of seven in connection with the Society in the Turkish European provinces; and occasionally he may see a colporteur at his unobtrusive work. He is one of thirty-eight who are distributing the Scriptures over the same area, and last year, in spite of epidemics and opposition, with such success that the circulation within the Agency rose to almost 40,000 copies.‡ This includes the issues to GREECE, and in spite of the recent outbreaks at the Piræus, Dr. Thomson can write that "in the Greek circulation everything is

* Total circulation for the year in the Italian Agency, 166,915 (previous year, 153,770); by colportage 106,390 (previous year, 93,988).

† Total circulation for the year in the Austria-Hungary Agency, which includes Vienna and neighbouring provinces, Bohemia, Hungary, Croatia, Slavonia, Transylvania, Trieste, Bosnia, Russian Poland, Servia and Roumania, 165,192 (previous year 143,483); of which 100,534 copies (previous year 90,683) were circulated by colportage.

‡ Total circulation for the year in the Turkish Agency, which includes the Turkish Provinces, Albania, Bulgaria, Eastern Roumelia, Greece, Cyprus, Crete, the Ionian Islands, &c., 40,164 (previous year, 35,990); by colportage, 21,825 (previous year, 22,193).