

education in the truths of the Bible; and in many instances the book used has been from your own depositories.

The system of colportage has for some few years been adopted in our counties and many of our larger towns, and the success which has attended its employment encourages the hope that its use will be still further extended. At the present time some efficient men are labouring in the north and in the metropolis. The issues are very satisfactory.

To literary and theological institutions have grants of different versions been made: Every case of emergency has always been received with kindness. To the different benevolent institutions which abound in this country, supplies have been afforded.

When any public calamity has involved in ruin many households, then has your committee forwarded copies of that word which reminds the sufferer that there is a better and enduring substance. To the shipwrecked mariners on our coast, to the foreigners who frequent our shores, to the indigent blind who need our sympathy, to the penitents in our prisons, Magdalenes, and hospitals; in short, to every being needy, helpless, and distressed, does the hand of your Society stretch forth its inestimable boon.

WALES.

The state of the Principality has already been assigned as the originating cause of the Institution. Such was the dearth of the Sacred Volume in the vernacular language of the people, that it was no uncommon thing for several householders to have one Bible between them as a joint property, which they were wont to keep alternately week by week. One of the earliest efforts of your committee was to meet this want.

In July, 1806, the New Testaments were issued for distribution, and an eye-witness shall describe the eagerness which was displayed when the first burden of the Word of the Lord approached the town of Bala. The peasants went out in crowds to meet the cart, welcomed its sight as the Israelites did the Ark of old, drew it into the town, bore off every copy as rapidly as they could be dispersed. The young were seen consuming the night in its perusal. Labourers carried the precious treasure with them to the field, and during the intervals of their toil, sought refreshment to their spirits by its hallowed truths.

Since the year 1836, the Rev. T. Phillips has superintended the Cambrian district, and his ability to speak in the English and Welsh has greatly increased his personal influence, and furthered the objects of this Society. His Reports from year to year attest the widespread sympathy felt by the people of every class. To select one example, look at the Isle of Anglesea. Very limited in extent, containing a population equal to Iceland, that is, about 48,000, comparatively poor; yet, in some years, has its subscription-list witnessed the goodly total of £600. Nor should it be forgotten, that this sum does not arise from the magnificent offerings of the few; but from the small but willing contributions of the many. In the collector's books are seen the names of servants.

THE CONCLUSION.

We have thus traced hastily through some of the great enterprises upon which it has been the privilege of your Society to enter. We have seen, how, in the mysterious Provi-

dence of God, from the casual remark of a solitary individual in a meeting convened for a different purpose, sprang up an Institution which stretches its sympathy over the globe, and which aims at uniting the whole family of man in one bond of Christian brotherhood—an Institution which seeks to bring before the minds of all the pure and unadulterated Truth of God; which reminds each one who receives its bestowment of the relationship in which he stands to his Maker; which points to the endless series of blessings of which he has been the object; which concentrates every thought, and terminates every hope in the person of the blessed Redeemer; which gives comfort for the present by retracing the path of God's counsels in his dealings with his people of old, and which lights up with radiant glory the future, as it reveals as a consummation all that can be hoped, or desired, or loved.

At the time that the Institution commenced its career, Europe had for long been under the feverish excitement of war, when there was but little opportunity for reflection upon any measures conducive to repose, improvement, and happiness. The pestiferous influence of the infidel writers of France had spread far and wide. Voltaire, Diderot, D'Alembert, and Rousseau, had had their day. The result of the supremacy of their principles had been witnessed, when the reigns of atheism and terror were pronounced identical, when the goddess of reason was enthroned at Notre Dame, the sanctuaries for Christian assemblies closed, the worship of God abolished, and death pronounced an everlasting sleep. There can be but little doubt that the impiety, sensuality, and cruelty which had then been justified and approved, produced a strong reaction in the minds of the Christian men of England. They felt that the only great means to counteract infidelity was to circulate the Bible freely, largely, and universally. Hence it was, that when the establishment of the Society was announced it met with so cordial a response in the hearts of the people.

For many years the Scripture had become more and more scarce; and the inquiries which were set on foot in the different countries of Europe, served to bring the fact into greater prominence. In England the Bible was comparatively known; but in the Highlands of Scotland, and the wilder districts of Ireland, it was scarcely to be found. In France, with the exception of a few family Bibles, in the hands of the descendants of the Huguenots in the south, it was rarely to be met. Spain, Portugal, and Italy ignored its existence. In the several States of Germany, the noble version of Luther was confined exclusively to the Protestant population. The Lapponese, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, Lellish, and Danish were restricted to those of higher rank and of more wealthy circumstances. Towards the south of Europe, Greece has the ancient version, which was in intelligible but to the priesthood and the educated. To Turkey, Albania, Wallachia, Bosnia, Servia, it was a fountain sealed. As we pass over the Straits, and enter upon the land of Asia Minor, so often trodden by the feet of the Apostles, and renowned in its memorials both sacred and profane, there again we meet the ancient Armenian used as an ornament in its churches, but its contents were not brought beneath the eye of sense nor addressed to the ear of thought. The whole continent of Asia was almost barred against the truth, for even the portion which had been translated into Chinese lay immured in manuscript in the national museum of England; of the fifteen polish-

ed languages of India, the Tamil of Zingent-nig was the only medium of access to the revealed mind of God, over the islands of the Pacific and the Indian Archipelago was a veil of deep darkness thrown. Of Africa, the state was almost similar, the margin of the south was here and there illumined by the pages from Holland, but to the tribes of the interior was no voice sent. The Western Coast had not yet become an object of interest to the Missionary, the only region upon which could be sent the light of Revelation in any way to shine, was the northern line, where Arabic is spoken; for although, in the earliest days, the version in the Coptic and Ethiopic had been made, yet, by the mass, they were uncared for and not understood.

America in her northern regions had fared more generously—the colonies of England were partially supplied. Of the magnificent union of the States, the Bible constituted the inheritance, the pilgrim Fathers conveyed it in the Mayflower. Oglethorpe, when intent upon deeds of philanthropy, bore it to Georgia, and thus it was enshrined in the memory of her people; but in Mexico the Western Isles, and the kingdoms of the Southern Hemisphere, although their generations had, for nearly three centuries, been baptised in the name of the adorable Trinity, were called Christians, and yet acknowledged as believers in Revelation, yet to them was the book so utterly unknown, that most had never seen or heard it, and to others its existence was a fable.

Such was the state of the world when the Bible, with renewed energy, again commenced its mission, and, like the angel in the Apocalypse, was seen flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people.

Every district of our own rocky isle hath been visited by the Messenger of Peace. Over Ireland hath the sword of the Spirit been waved, and we see in the movement of its people bursting from the chain which hath for centuries held them, the promise of a speedy coming liberty from superstition and degrading bondage; the depots of France have poured forth their healing streams, and multitudes in many parts are feeling if haply they may find the Saviour. In Belgium hath a victory been won in the very heart of the citadel of Romanism. To Holland hath the Word recalled the early days of the Reformers. Germany, in spots, hath released herself from scepticism and eclecticism, whilst to the poor in Sweden, in Lapland, and the Baltic Provinces hath the blessed promises awakened a hope full of immortality. In Italy, stern despotism restrains the freedom of opinion, but the incarcerated witnesses for truth show that the Bible has lost none of its power to elevate above the fear of death, and to cause its confessors to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, or, if needs be, to submit without a murmur to bonds and imprisonment. In the East, too, has the sign been seen of coming change: look at the Protestant Armenian congregations, the shaking of the mind of the Hindoos, the gradual diminution of the numbers who attend as worshippers the great public festivals, the mouldering into decay of its venerable temples, the willingness to discuss the merits of Christianity, the readiness to accept of its acknowledged sacred books, the conviction of its superior purity, the marked contrast of its holy mysteries to their secret impurities, and the now not rare spectacle of her public baptisms, all portend a time which prophecy hath painted in its most glowing colours, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

Whilst, too, we mark the change which has come over the islands of the sea, the polluted savage of the Polynesian groups hath become the Christianised man, the hideous forms of a dark polytheism have given way before the simplicity and beauty of a spiritual worship, whilst regions which in former years revolved in Nature's wilderness have been moulded into the milder forms of a cultivated garden. Of many places, may it