

AUSTRIA.—In this great Empire, so old and yet so new, containing so many races and speaking so many languages, where the aspirations of the people are so various, and often so antagonistic, the work of your Society must always be opposed to great vicissitudes. The task of harmonising the diversities which exist and have their home under the Austrian flag must be an exceedingly difficult one to the Government. Nor is it to be expected that the Roman hierarchy will use their power in favour of a Society whose one object it is to spread the Word of God.

Three causes were at work in Austria last year to lessen the circulation of the Scriptures in comparison with that of the two preceding years. The first cause is one for thankfulness—the cessation of war; the second is for sympathy—the spread of distress in the land; the third is a matter of economy—the increased scale of prices. The circulation reached was 116,000, the lowest for many years. Glancing at the second of these causes—the spread of distress—and looking at the field of labour through the eyes of the colporteurs, it is a landscape full of trouble. The hand of the Lord is upon the crops, and they wither; upon the rivers, and they overflow; and the cry of the perishing and the famished is keen in men's ears. When to these providential trials are added the fierceness of priestly opposition and the increasing ungodliness and indifference to which testimony is borne, it is a matter for unfeigned thankfulness that so much has been accomplished. The case of Bohemia may well be cited, as it has commanded the sympathy of English Christians, and not without result. Here, where opposition has been most fierce and vehement, where free colportage is forbidden, and the colporteurs have to carry their books as samples merely, and then, having sold a copy from the sample, have to supply it through the Post-office, the circulation has risen by 1,400 copies; and your agent reports that never was there greater susceptibility of the truth. The sales in Bohemia were a little below 10,000 copies, and this total is characterized as 'marvellous.'

Expressions like the following frequently recur in the reports of our men:—

'I will live and die with this book.' 'I cannot read enough.' 'That is just what I want.' 'I am delighted to have a Bible.' 'I like reading this book more than going to