

of his pictures, the Evangelists Mark and John, and the Apostles Peter and Paul, were produced under its influence, and reflect with vigour and grandeur the wisdom, devotedness, and energy of the first witnesses of the Christian Church.

The same spirit stirred among the learned, and gave a new direction to their activity, and resulted in a loftier intellectual development. The course of studies at the universities was changed thereby. Not only at Wittenberg, Luther's University, but at Freiburg and elsewhere, the Aristotelian philosophy and the Books of Sentences were laid aside, and lectures on the Evangelists and St. Paul's Epistles took their place, and were listened to by crowded audiences; and thus the study of a true Biblical theology was inaugurated, while Luther himself became the father and founder of a sound Biblical exegesis.

The impetus given, also, to the wonderful art of printing, which hitherto had been very inadequately applied and developed, was enormous in all the directions indicated, and can only be approximately estimated by considering the number and character of the writings which appeared in every department of knowledge—theology, philosophy, medicine, art and general literature. Luther's own works amounted to upwards of four hundred, while the number for and against his doctrine and movement cannot be counted up. No less than three printing presses were called into requisition to produce his New Testament rapidly and in sufficient numbers to meet the wide-spread demand. Nor was this impulse confined to Germany. For during the first thirty-six years of the sixteenth century about six hundred editions of the entire Bible and parts of it had been printed in different languages.

Alas! however, the progress of this great work of religious and national development, so signally begun and auspiciously carried on hitherto, was sadly retarded and well-nigh undone by a variety of causes into which we cannot now and here enter specifically. Suffice it to say that religious fanaticism, social conflicts, and the excesses inseparable from such agitations, and more especially the results and issues of the Thirty Years' War, interfered with the work of religious and ecclesiastical reform, and at length culminated in the physical, moral, and religious degradation of the entire nation. The universities and high schools, which were the outcome of the new movement, by-and-by lost sight of their vocation as institutions for the benefit of the nation at large; and, at length, considering it more learned to accumulate knowledge than to learn how it might be profitably used, to speak and write Latin rather than vulgar German, a "priesthood of letters" was gradually called into existence, whose pedantry separated them from the common life of the people, and retarded for at least two centuries the religious and intellectual development of the nation; a reaction which acted as an *incubus* upon the energies and aspirations of the people, and proved scarcely less mischievous and deadly than that of the Romish priesthood from which they had been delivered. Luther's work, consequently, appeared for the time undone. Whole generations grew up without any pure or practical religion, and the lower classes without any education worthy of the name. Luther's Bible was neglected, and his own writings were despised and sneered at as "little German tracts which any village clerk might have written."

The partial regeneration during the present century of the life and vigour of the nation has been, we rejoice to say, brought about by a return of that spirit which Luther first evoked by his Bible and works. The pedantry of the schools which had strangled thought and freedom has again been gradually worn aside, and Luther's dialect has once more become the prevailing language of literature and thought in all departments of life and office. "Being dead he yet speaketh" to Germany and the nations of Europe as no man but he has ever spoken. This has been peculiarly manifest in recent times, in the interest once more taken in the printing and circulation of the Holy Scriptures. Societies for this special purpose sprang into existence in rapid succession throughout every kingdom and state of Germany, as men