

III.—HISTORICAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL FACTS.

1380. Wycliffe completed his translation of the Bible, multiplied copies by the aid of transcribers ; and by the help of the Holy Spirit with His word thus delivered from alien tongues, a spirit of enquiry was generated, and the seeds sown of that religious revolution, which a little more than a century later, astonished and overturned the world.

1414. The Council of Constance ordered Wycliffe's bones to be dug up and burned for those of a heretic, which was done by the bishop of Lincoln, and his ashes cast into the river Swift, "this brook hath conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean ; and thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over."

1455. The invention of the art of printing by an obscure German aided in the revival of letters, and gave immense facilities for the diffusion of knowledge among all classes.

1517. Martin Luther nailed his famous 95 Latin theses to the doors of the Schlosskirche at Wittenberg, and became the emancipator of whole nations from the domination of Rome.

1534. Henry the Eighth of England, for the reason that the Pope would not divorce him from Katharine his wife, divorced the church of England from its allegiance to Rome, although he had previously been rewarded for writing against Luther by receiving from the Pope the title of "Defender of the Faith."

1536. John Calvin, a young French lawyer who had embraced the faith of the Reformation, came, not without personal peril, to Geneva, led by a secret providence, which changed all his plans of seclusion, and transformed the nervous scholar into a bold practical reformer.

1547. Peter Martyr and Martin Bucer, two eminent continental Protestant divines, were invited to England by Cranmer and other reformers, and were appointed by Edward VI. lecturers upon the Holy Scriptures at Oxford, who, by their teachings, greatly prepared the way for further spiritual emancipation.

1550. Puritanism dates from John Hooper's "scrupling the vestments," and refusing to take the oath of supremacy, until King Edward had run his pen through a part of it.

1553. On the accession of Mary to the crown of England, and during her reign, thousands of the Puritans fled to the Continent, and found refuge chiefly in Frankfort-on-the-Main, Emden, Wesel, Basil, Marburg, Strasburg and Geneva.

1554. The Frankfort congregation of exiles arose under the persecuting reign of "Bloody Mary," and the Puritan separation began with Englishmen outside of England.

1555. Cranmer, Hooper, Rogers and other distinguished Protestants suffered death for their faith at the hands of "Bloody Mary."