

The American Bible Society, is now prepared to print at the rate of three hundred thousand copies of the Scriptures yearly. We shall leave it to our readers to make the estimate how many scribes would be required to produce Bibles at this rate, together with the number of buildings, desks, &c. which would be necessary for their accommodation.

But this is not the whole view of the matter. The great saving of paper is to be taken into the account—to say nothing of the comparative neatness of execution. "The paper requisite for an amanuensis to write out in an ordinary hand, the contents of the *Times* newspaper, would cost twelve times as much as the paper used for printing it; the great bulk of this paper would make it very inconvenient to read, and almost impossible to circulate, the journal.

The importance, of compression, then, is obvious, and if, for the sake of it, the amanuensis should be obliged to compress his writing into the same space as the printing, supposing it possible, it would take at least four times as long to perform his task. To write out in this way the *Times* newspaper would, then, occupy one hundred and ninety-two thousand scribes. But the press which works off this newspaper is moved by steam, and completes the impression in two hours; if it were necessary, the same press might be kept going twenty-four hours, in which time it would do the work of two millions two hundred and four thousand scribes!!! Yet all the manual operations which produce this result are performed by about two dozen hands! Such are the advantages we owe to mechanical art, that one man can do, in the present day, what, four centuries ago, would have required one hundred thousand!"

CIVIL SOCIETY.—The only true and natural foundation of society are the wants and fears of individuals.—Not that we can believe, with some theoretical writers, that there ever was a time when there was no such thing as society, and that from the impulse of reason, and through a sense of their wants and weaknesses, individuals met together in a large plain, entered into an original contract, and chose the tallest man present to be governor. This notion, of an actually existing unconnected state of nature, is too wild to be seriously admitted; and besides, it is plainly contradictory to the revealed accounts of the primitive origin of mankind, and their preservation 2000 years afterwards: both of which were effected by means of single families. These formed the first society among themselves, which every day extended its limits; and when it grew too large to subsist with convenience in that pastoral state, wherein the patriarchs appear to have lived, it necessarily subdivided itself by various migrations. Afterwards, as agriculture increased, which employs and can maintain a much greater number of persons, migrations became less frequent; and various tribes, which had formerly separated, reunited; sometimes, by compulsion and conquest, sometimes, by accident, and sometimes perhaps, by compact. But though society had not its formal beginning from any convention of individuals, actuated by their wants and fears, yet it is a sense of their weakness and imperfection that keeps mankind together; that demonstrates the necessity of this union; and that, therefore, is the solid and natural foundation, as well as the cement of society. This is what we mean, by the original contract of society, which, though, perhaps in no instance, has ever been formally expressed at the first institution of a state, yet, in nature and reason, must always be understood and implied in the very act of associating together. viz. that the whole should protect all its parts, and that every part should pay obedience to the will of the whole; or, in other words, that the community should guard the rights of each individual member, and that, in return for this protection, each individual should submit to the laws of the community; without this submission of all, it was impossible that protection could certainly be extended to any.

GOVERNMENT.—When society is once formed, government results of course, as necessary, to preserve and keep, that society in order. Unless some superior be constituted, whose commands and decisions all the members are bound to obey, they would still remain as in a state of nature, without any judge upon earth to define their several rights, and redress their several wrongs. But, as all the mem-

bers of society are naturally equal, it may be asked into whose hands are the reins of government to be intrusted? In general, all mankind will agree, that government should be committed to persons, in whom those qualities are most likely to be found, the perfection of which, is among the attributes of him, who is emphatically styled, the Supreme Being; viz. the three grand requisites, wisdom, goodness, and power: wisdom, to discern the real interest of the community; goodness, to endeavour always to pursue that real interest; and strength, or power, to carry this knowledge and intention into action. These are the natural foundations of sovereignty, and these are the requisites that ought to be found in every well-constituted frame of government.

DIFFERENT FORMS OF GOVERNMENT.—The political writers of antiquity will not allow above three regular forms of Government; the first, where the sovereign power is lodged in an aggregate assembly consisting of all the members of a community, which is called *democracy*: the second, where it is lodged in a council composed of select members, when it is styled *aristocracy*: the last, where it is intrusted into the hands of a single person, and then it takes the name of *monarchy*. All other specimens of government, they say, are either corruptions of, or reducible to these three. By the sovereign power, is meant the making of laws; and whosoever that power resides, all others must conform to, and be directed by it, whatever appearance the outward form and administration of the government, may put on. For it is always at the option of the Legislature, to alter the form and administration, by a new edict or rule, and put the execution of the laws into whatever hands it pleases; and all the other powers of the state must obey the Legislative power in the execution of their several functions, or else the constitution is at an end.

In a *democracy*, where, the right of making laws, resides in the people at large, public virtue, or goodness of intention, is more likely to be found, than in either of the other forms of government. Popular assemblies are, however, frequently weak in their plans, and slow in their execution, though they generally mean to do the thing that is right and just, and have always a degree of patriotism or public spirit.

In *aristocracies*, there is more wisdom to be found than in the other forms of government; being composed, or intended to be composed, of the most experienced citizens; but there is probably less public spirit, than in a republic, and less strength, than in a monarchy.

A *monarchy* is indeed the most powerful of any, all the sinews of government being knitted and united together in the hand of the prince; but then there is imminent danger of his employing that strength to improvident, selfish, or oppressive purposes.

Thus, these three species of government have, all of them, their several perfections and imperfections.—*Democracies*, are usually the best calculated to direct the end of a law; *aristocracies*, to invent the means by which that end shall be obtained; and *monarchies*, to carry those means into execution. The ancients, as before observed, had, in general, no idea of any other permanent form of government but these three; for though, Cicero declares himself of opinion, "*esse optime constitutam rempublicam quæ ex tribus generibus illis, Regali, optimo, et populari sit modice confusa*"; yet, Tacitus treats this notion of a mixed government formed out of them all, and partaking of the advantages of each, as a visionary whim, and one, that if effected, could never be lasting nor secure.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Narrative of the state of Religion within the bounds of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church commenced their Session in Philadelphia, on Thursday, May 13th 1827. The sermon at the opening of the Session was preached by the Rev. Dr. McAuley of New-York city. The Rev. Dr. Herron of Pittsburgh, was chosen Moderator. The Session was closed on Wednesday, May 30th.

The Narrative of the state of religion in the Presbyterian Church, was compiled from documents laid before the Assembly. It brings to view, and laments, the many evils which exist to an alarming extent—Sabbath-breaking, intemperance, profane-ness, gam-

bling, and lotteries, which in many States are encouraged by legislative patronage; also the want of evangelical zeal which prevails in many places among the professed disciples of the Lord Jesus.

Respecting the want of religious teachers within their limits, it is remarked—

In surveying the destitute settlements which are without the regular ministrations of the Gospel, the remote northern parts of the State of New-York, the States of Ohio, Indiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Missouri, Georgia, and Kentucky, present themselves in mournful array before us. For although in all these, there are some regular, faithful ministers of Christ, there is an immense territory lying waste, without labourers to cultivate it. Now and then, a travelling missionary scatters the seeds of the kingdom. But having none to succeed him, the fruit of his toil is blasted for want of efficient cultivation. Of this we have painful evidence in the fact, that within the limits of a single Presbytery in the synod of Indiana, five churches have become extinct during the last year, from this cause. The present destitute condition of those extensive western regions, and the rapidly increasing population, which far surpasses the increase of ministers, furnish pressing motives to exertion and prayer on the part of the churches, that the labourers may be multiplied, and that these thousands of our fellow sinners may not be left to perish for want of the bread and the water of life. *They are our brethren, and they cry to us for help.* Let us not be deaf to their entreaties, lest "their cries enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabbath," and he come and smite us with a curse.

In enumerating the blessings of the past year, the Assembly would notice with thankfulness the growing spirit of pious and benevolent enterprise. Bibles, Tracts, Missionary, and Education Societies are multiplying in almost every section of our church, and are increasing in efficiency and usefulness. The American Home Missionary Society has been conducting its operations during the past year with augmented success. The Pennsylvania Home Missionary Society has also been labouring in the same good cause. Christians seem to be rising to the fulfilment of their master's command, and engaging with an active zeal in the work of preaching the Gospel to every creature. A noble liberality in furnishing means for the support and extension of benevolent institutions prevails. The cause of Christ is drawing contributions from every department in society. And it is matter of gratulation that professional men of high character and standing, are becoming more decidedly the patrons of these efficient charities.

Bible classes are to be found throughout a large portion of our churches, and have been greatly blessed as a means of instruction and conversion. As nurseries of truth and piety, they deserve to be tenderly cherished and faithfully sustained.

The system of Sabbath School instruction is extending its healing influence over our land, and from many of our churches is receiving a liberal patronage. The American Sunday School Union, concentrated in the city of Philadelphia, is in successful progress, and promises to be a rich and lasting blessing to our country, and to the church of God. To recommend it to the prayers, and the vigorous co-operation of all our churches, it need only be stated, that in their last annual report, the managers inform their patrons, that from correct sources, they are able to number upwards of fourteen hundred souls, including teachers and pupils, who have been hopefully converted by the instrumentality of schools in their connection, since the last year. Men of rank and influence are lending a helping hand to this benevolent enterprise. Let this work of pious charity proceed—heaven shall recompense its deeds of mercy.

As associated with these religious and benevolent institutions, and contributing their spiritual effect, is the Monthly Concert of Prayer, which appears to be extensively observed. Other meetings for prayer and conference are multiplying, and giving expansion to the labours of Christian benevolence. Indeed the spirit of prayer is the very spirit of Christian effort, and breathes its hallowed influence over every institution which has for its object the glory of God, and the salvation of men. The Assembly would look forward to the day when the voice of prayer shall be heard from every dwelling, and when our concert for prayer, shall be crowded with the sons and daughters of the Almighty, invoking the effusions of the Holy Ghost on all the inhabitants of our guilty world.