

Pass on during the next *fourteen hundred years* of what is called the Era of Christianity; and what do you find about books? A Bible still cost a small fortune. No printing—no societies to circulate—no contributions of money to aid its circulation; all books in manuscript!—What was knowledge—what was literature—what was the reading of the Bible in those days? We need not answer. Ages of oppression, ages of darkness rolled away, before the light inclosed in monasteries and universities began to be diffused among the people. But even then, three centuries more came and passed away before the Bible was deemed a fit book for the common people to possess. But now the power of the press in multiplying copies, and in reducing the expense within the means of most people, has caused the diffusion of the Bible to an extent, which, as a historical fact, becomes wonderful. Let us look at the present diffusion of the Scriptures. Almost unnoticed, it has been making its way into all languages and among all nations; and who shall say how much of the Social Movement, in the present age, (the American Age) is due to the principles of that book.

The modern movement of the Bible dates back comparatively a little while. The translation of the Bible from Latin, Greek and Hebrew, began to multiply soon after the art of printing began. The one necessarily caused the other. But the number of copies in the vulgar tongues were few till the Bible Societies began their career.

The translation of the Bible by King James, hastened its introduction among the people; but in the year 1771, when the subject of printing the Bible was before Congress, it was estimated that there were only four millions of printed Bibles in the world!

At that time, there were not less than four hundred millions of adult persons in the world; and of these one hundred millions professing Christians! There was, therefore, in existence, one Bible only to each one hundred adult persons! Now let us take a look at the Bible movement since.

The old Continental Congress ordered 20,000 Bibles to be imported from Holland, Scotland and elsewhere. In 1781, Congress approved the edition of the Bible, published by Mr. Aiken, of Philadelphia. It is since the "Declaration," therefore, that the great diffusion of the Bible has been made, and must of it, since the year 1800. Let us now look at the statistics of that diffusion.

	Copies.
British and Foreign Bible Society, instituted in 1804.....	60,000,000
American Bible Society, instituted in 1816.....	20,000,000
British Depot in Paris, instituted in 1820.....	2,002,211
Swedish Society instituted in 1808.....	564,278
Netherland Society.....	274,733
Frankfort Agency, instituted in 1816.....	701,027
Wertenberg Society, instituted in 1812.....	464,567
Prussian Society, at Berlin.....	1,271,194
Russian Bible Societies instituted in 1826.....	993,563
Calcutta Society, instituted in 1811.....	491,567
Madras Society, instituted in 1820.....	462,595

It is supposed that other Societies not enumerated, will make the whole number of Bibles issued by the Bible Societies at least forty millions of copies!

This has all taken place since 1815; but it must also be taken into view that in the same time vast numbers of copies have been issued by Bookselling establishments. There must, therefore, be at least twenty times as many copies of the Scriptures in the world, in proportion to the reading population, as there were in 1800. But this is not all, the Bible has been translated into nearly one hundred and fifty different languages and dialects, of which ten are languages of Africa, and three of it, that to all barbarous nations of the world the Bible is now the Messenger (the only Messenger) of literature and knowledge! It is the book of civilization where not one ray of any light has previously penetrated the obscurity of barbarism. This is a feature the world had never before presented in its progress. What effect will it have on the future nations? Who can know? We pretend not to say; but we do recognize it as one of the most remarkable features of the last half century.—We make no estimate of the moral and spiritual diffusion of sacred light. But we think that its influence is felt where it is never suspected. Its principles are working out by men who do not acknowledge its authority. Such is one of the singular anomalies of the human mind. But, perhaps, not unlike some of the operations we see in the natural world around us. "The grass seen not the gentle dew that fall upon it; nor do the fruits acknowledge the ripening energies of the descending sun-beam. Yet the grass grows and the fruit ripens; and we may hope that thus too the human mind will grow and ripen under the influence of the sacred volume."

NEVER DID A LONG THING.

A distinguished preacher being complimented on one occasion for the brevity and interest of his public services, replied, "I suppose, I have done some wicked things in my life, and I know I have done many foolish things, but I never did a long thing."

O that they who write for the public press, O that they who make public speeches on great occasions, O that they who preach sermons and lead the prayers of the people, would think of this, and take a lesson therefrom. One of the most extraordinary phenomena that we know of in the opera-

tions of the human mind, is this invincible determination of sensible men to weary the patience of their readers and hearers, when striving to please or profit them. We will not say that this tendency to length is equally in proportion to the want of depth, or in other words that men are disposed to be long, as they fail to be able to write or speak to edification.

"THE DIFFICULTY OF LEAVING OFF."

"I am a member of a congregation where I have the privilege of listening to a truly good and able minister, who, on Sunday to Sunday, goes forth, to a considerable, though, I fear, diminishing audience, the lessons of wisdom and truth. There is scarcely a single sermon which, for scriptural accuracy, good reasoning, and correctness of expression, might not be put into a hot-pressed volume. But I am grieved to say that our venerable teacher labours to a trying and sometimes heart-breaking extent under the "difficulty of leaving off." Forgetting, or unable to discern, the "proportion of things," and acting upon this broad, but, I think, erroneous maxim, that "it is impossible to have too much of a good thing," he does not hesitate, in his addresses from the pulpit, to lay upon the weak backs of his congregation whole mountains of instruction, which they are unable to bear. May I, sir, venture, through the medium of your columns, of which he is, I doubt not, as he ought to be, a diligent reader, to suggest to our venerable friend that he should give a little careful consideration to the duty of "leaving off," and see whether, in occupying such an unusual length of time in his discourses, he is not violating those proportions to which the above writer would have him give heed? Allow me to refer to a few of these violations.—Can a man, then, be said to have a due regard for bodily infirmity, when he sends forth the members of the family home with a head-ache—or to mental infirmity, when he calls for long-continued and deep attention to what ought to awaken the strongest emotions of our nature—or to the weakness of the delicate, the flimsiness of the young, or the drowsiness of the old—in that regularity of our mental constitution through which every impression loses something of its force by repetition—when he sails us to a seat from which we are longing to escape.

I have read that Mr. Wesley thought a single hour, supposing the mind to be earnestly occupied, to be long enough for any religious service I should certainly consider this as what is called somewhat "short commons." But I do think that all the brevity which is consistent with the solemnity of the subject—the various duties of the sanctuary—with prayer, praise, and the reading of the word of God—with the ministrations of the pulpit and communication at the table of the Lord—is a debt fairly due by a minister, both to his congregation, and to the great truths of which he is the apostle. For how can truth find an entrance into the heart of a man who is fast asleep!—N. Y. Observer.

THE INFLUENCE OF CALVINISM.

The influence of Calvinism on the human mind, is thus eloquently described in Bancroft's new volume of the History of the United States:

"On the banks of the lake of Geneva, Calvin stood forth the boldest reformer of his day; not personally engaged in political intrigues, yet, by promulgating great ideas, forming the seed-plot of revolution; bowing only to the Invisible; acknowledging no sacrament of ordination but the choice of the laity, no patent of nobility but that of the elect of God, with its seals of eternity.

Luther's was still a Catholic religion; it sought to instruct all, to confirm all, to sanctify all; and so, under the shelter of Principality, it gave established forms to Protestant Germany and Sweden, and Denmark, and England. But Calvin taught an exclusive doctrine, which though it addressed itself to all, reached only on the one hand. Lutheranism was therefore, not a political party; it included prince and noble, and to the great truths of Calvinism was revolutionary; wherever it came, it created divisions; its symbols as set upon the "Institutes" of its teacher, was a flaming sword. By the side of the eternal mountains, and perennial snows, and the arrowy rivers of Switzerland, it established a religion without a king. Fortified by its faith in fixed decrees, it kept possession of its honors among the Alps. It grew powerful in France, and invigorated between the feudal nobility and the crown, the long contest, which did not end till the subjugation of the nobility, through the central despotism, prepared the ruin of that despotism, by promoting the equality of the commons. It entered Holland, inspiring an industrious nation with heroic enthusiasm; enfranchising and uniting provinces; and making burghers, and weavers, and artisans, victors over the highest order of the hierarchy, over the power of the Inquisition, and the pretended majesty of kings. It penetrated Scotland, and while its whirlwind bore along persunation among the glens and mountains, it shrunk none to danger, hesitated at no ambition; it nerved its rugged but hearty envy to resist the flatteries of the beautiful Queen Mary; it assumed the education of her only son; it divided the nobility; it penetrated the masses, overturned the ancient ecclesiastical establishment, planted the free parochial school, and gave a living energy to the principle of liberty in a people. It infused itself into England, and placed its plebeian sympathies in daring resistance to the courtly hierarchy; dissenting from dissent; longing to introduce the reign of order, and justice, it invited every man to read the Bible, and made itself dear to the common mind, by teaching, as its divine revelation, the unity of the race, and the natural equality of man. It claimed for itself freedom of utterance, and with the authoritative words of prophets and apostles, spoke to the whole congregation; it sought new truth, deny-