

Did the evil continue? did it cease? was it confined to Italy, or did it not extend to all Christendom? Was the remedy supplied by those who had the power and means to do it? Was it made more accessible than it had been to all or any, and whom, and where?

Pope Pius VI. lived twenty-two years after writing this letter—he died at the end of the century; but I am ready to admit he lived in very troublous times, and was driven from Rome, and whatever his wishes or intentions may have been, had less in his power than most of those who have preceded or followed him in the Pontificate. In his time the flood-gates of anarchy and atheism were opened wide, and the lands were deluged not merely by the flood of infidel, blasphemous, and wicked publications, but of all other evils and wickedness which the mind of man, free from all influence of God's holy Word could conceive, or his hands perpetrate.

Assuming that Pius VI. was sincere in what he wrote, I know not, if he had been asked on his death bed in 1800, what institution was then most needed, or what would be productive of most good, what truer answer he could have given than this: A society which will publish the Holy Bible in the language of all countries, *suitable to every one's capacity*, in such number and at such prices as may enable all to possess it. He might add what "especiallies" he please. His eyes were closed in death without having seen anything effectual undertaken to realize what may have been his hopes. But four years after, namely, in 1804, that noble association was formed—the pride and glory of our land—the British and Foreign Bible Society; based upon the only principle on which a common union among Christians could be effected, desirous of carrying to every man the oracles of truth. We look around us to discover and supply destitution: we offer the Bible to the members of the Roman Catholic community as well as to others. When our version is objected to, we ask is your own supplied? What have you done to make it accessible to the poor? While for the past fifty years you have been obstructing our course by denouncing our society—why do you not improve upon it if you can? Print and circulate the apocrypha, point out the errors of our translation where you think they exist. Let the people have the means of comparing the two, and of testing by the only infallible criterion, the truth of the doctrines you promulgate.

If during the 80 years which have elapsed since Pius VI. issued his memorable letter, the circulation of the Bible, even in the version of Martini, or the Douay, or others according with them, had been promoted, as it might have been, how might the state of many countries now lying in darkness and ignorance, some relapsing into barbarism, have differed from what it now is! I am happily relieved from employing my own words, while urging this consideration. In a very recent number of the *Revue des deux Mondes*, a publication highly esteemed and of wide circulation, issuing from the Roman Catholic press at Paris, is a remarkable article, from which a few quotations may be properly made:—

"We shall not discuss the point whether those communities in which the Bible is read produce men who are more intelligent as well as more moral than those in which it is not read. It is a melancholy but an incontrovertible fact, that since the sixteenth century, precisely those nations who have been nurtured in the Bible, notwithstanding the variety of sects prevailing among them, have continued to be fundamentally religious; whilst among those nations where the Bible has not been read, all that has been lost to Roman Catholicism has been lost to christianity, and it has