

to fulfil the mission which they had set themselves. Just as the century was expiring, and at the very moment when the groundswell which followed the French Revolution was making its way into the quiet harbours of English thought, and causing not a little strain upon the moorings and even some shipwreck of the faith—then it was that these two venerable societies were joined in their work by the Church Missionary Society—not a hostile agency, but a young fellow-labourer in the great harvest field. The circumstances of the present century have brought about a wonderful development in the extent and thoroughness of missionary enterprise. One of the most interesting things in connection with that development is the wide translation of the Holy Scriptures into the languages and dialects of the various peoples among whom our missionaries are working. This prime necessity of Bible vernacular translation for evangelizing the heathen is not of modern recognition. In the early church it was seen and acted upon; and we have now, not always in a complete form, at least four translations of the Greek Testament into the common speech of Egypt and North Africa, which date to the second century of the Christian era, and were made for missionary purposes. The Bible is now translated into three hundred different languages and dialects. How near to its fulfilment, it would seem, in these closing years of the nineteenth century is the dream of Erasmus, which he expresses in the preface to his New Testament in the year 1516:—"I wish that even the weakest woman should read the gospels—should read the Epistles of Paul; and I wish that they were translated into all languages so that they might be read and understood not only by Scots and Irishmen, but also by Turks and Saracens. I long that the husbandman should sing portions of them to himself as he follows the plough; that the weaver should hum them to the tune of his shuttle; that the traveller should beguile with their stories the tedium of his journey." Yes, that is possible now not only for the people that Erasmus mentions, but for nations unborn in his days, and in countries only then discovered in part for the first time, now known to contain a multitude of dialects which Erasmus never suspected.

And what agency is that which has chiefly realized the dream of this ancient scholar, Dutchman by birth, Englishman by adoption? That grand honour rests mainly on the British and Foreign Bible Society. Let me particularize. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel used about thirty-five translations. A large proportion of these are obtained from the Bible Society. Twenty of these—that is more than half—cannot be obtained from any other source in the world. The Church Missionary Society uses about sixty different translations. Very few of these can be procured from any other society. The case is even more forcible in regard to the Nonconformist societies. They are practically dependent upon it for all their versions. It comes to this, that without the Bible Society, missionary work would be at a standstill.

That to my mind is the chief argument for the support of all Christian people.—*H. Gee, in the Bible Society Reporter.*

CONFIRMATIONS OF BIBLE HISTORY.

BY WILLIAM HAYES WARD, D.D., LL.D., IN "ZION'S HERALD."

The Bible has not been buried, and never will be, but an immense amount of lost history, illustrating the Bible, has been dug up from eastern ruins and recovered. The Bible, that which makes it the Bible, the one book different from other books, is what St. Paul tells us it is when he says (2 Tim. 3: 16) that "All Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."