

It has been a year of sorrows of unusual poignancy, of anxieties and cares, of moving accidents too, and sudden deaths; but the work has never once been straitened for lack of means. God has buried the workmen, but carried on the work.

FRANCE.

M. Monod, after a series of journeys, during which he minutely examined every part of his field, finds that his men have circulated 75,000 copies, out of a total of 134,000. In some countries colportage is an incident of the work; in France it is almost the work itself. "Patient continuance in well-doing" is the conclusion to which the review of the labours of these earnest toilers leads the mind. It is fifty years since M. de Pressensé organized the staff of colporteurs in France. They have done noble work there. This Society has expended upon France three-quarters of a million of money, and circulated there over seven millions of copies. The Report, of which this is an abstract, is founded upon work done and observations made in nearly sixty departments. It is impossible to condense them into a sentence. Amidst influences friendly and unfriendly, the men have once more carried a real Gospel to every part of a land in sore need of it. They are all Frenchmen. Their work, and that of similar workmen, contrasts strangely with other French doings in Madagascar and elsewhere. Paley's dictum never had truer application—"Religion operates most upon those of whom history knows the least."

If proof were needed that the Word of the Lord has free course in France, your Committee point to the fact that fifty years ago ninety per cent. of the circulation was in a version from the Vulgate, and ten per cent. was in the version of Ostervald. Last year over ninety per cent. was in Ostervald's version, and less than ten per cent. was in the version of De Sacy. It is with deep regret that your Committee add that there are still districts where the Curé burns Bibles still there are people afraid to buy them, and in La Vendée especially it is still at the risk of ill-treatment that the colporteurs offer their books.

In Paris infidelity is louder, and apes Christian institutions. Naked and not ashamed, more than suspicious that it is feeding on ashes, it mouths out its hopelessness in tumid funeral orations, while men and women with the mark of Christ upon them prolong by prayers and labours the day of grace.

BELGIUM.

The sustained circulation in Belgium is matter for great thankfulness in the face of the terribly acute struggle between Ultramontane Christianity without an open Bible, and so-called "Liberalism" without faith. This uncompromising hostility between evenly balanced forces has been carried from the streets of Brussels to the villages of the provinces, and meets the colporteurs at every turn. Notwithstanding, their results show no decline, their sales reached 10,000 copies, raising the total to 22,000. This is equal to the best work in France.

HOLLAND.

Holland is not a country where colportage prevails. Other methods are employed. The circulation rose from 36,000 to 39,000. Your agent, in an absolutely artless report, vividly depicts the condition of his field. The mercantile depression is characterised as "fearful." Theology grows more disputatious; the love of many waxes cold. Death fells one by one the remaining trees of the Royal forest. Pious patriots pray for the outpouring of a