

almost always be for the sake of better work, which their own abandoned work has made possible. But there have been found men who were willing cheerfully to do this also, and to see their own translations superseded, and in a large measure forgotten, in order that something better might be given to the world.

But a wonderful thing has happened which Dr. MacLaren, of Manchester, has been pointing out to us. While we all know that the translations of Homer and of the Koran and of the Sacred Books of the East are limping English even at the best, the Bible, on the other hand, goes into a language and it forthwith becomes a classic. The English of the English Bible is the most idiomatic that we have, and the German of the German Bible is the purest German, while the Bible of Utlilas among the Goths, and the Slavonic Bible in Russia, have become each in its own sphere, the foundation of a literature. This is a strong proof of the divinity and the universality of the Bible.

The policy of the Bible Society in the matter of translation has been to work through missionaries or other translators wherever these might be found. This is wise generalship. But wherever aid was needed to help forward a worthy version already begun, or wherever initiative was required to begin a work in parts where it was needed, there the helpful hand of the Society has made itself felt. It has thus come to pass that the Society has since 1804 issued the Scriptures—complete or in parts—in three hundred and seventy languages and dialects. In 1804 it is estimated that only two men in every ten could read the Bible in their own language; but in 1904 the Bible can be read in their mother-tongue by seven men out of every ten. This has been truly a century of achievement.

Let us try to think what this means. If in this church we could assemble one representative from every language thus translated, what a congregation we should have. There would be three hundred and seventy, but how varied would be their aspects. There would be the swarthy Italian, and the long bearded snow-facing Russian; there would be the subtle Hindoo, and the