

**Story of the  
American Bible Society  
1920**

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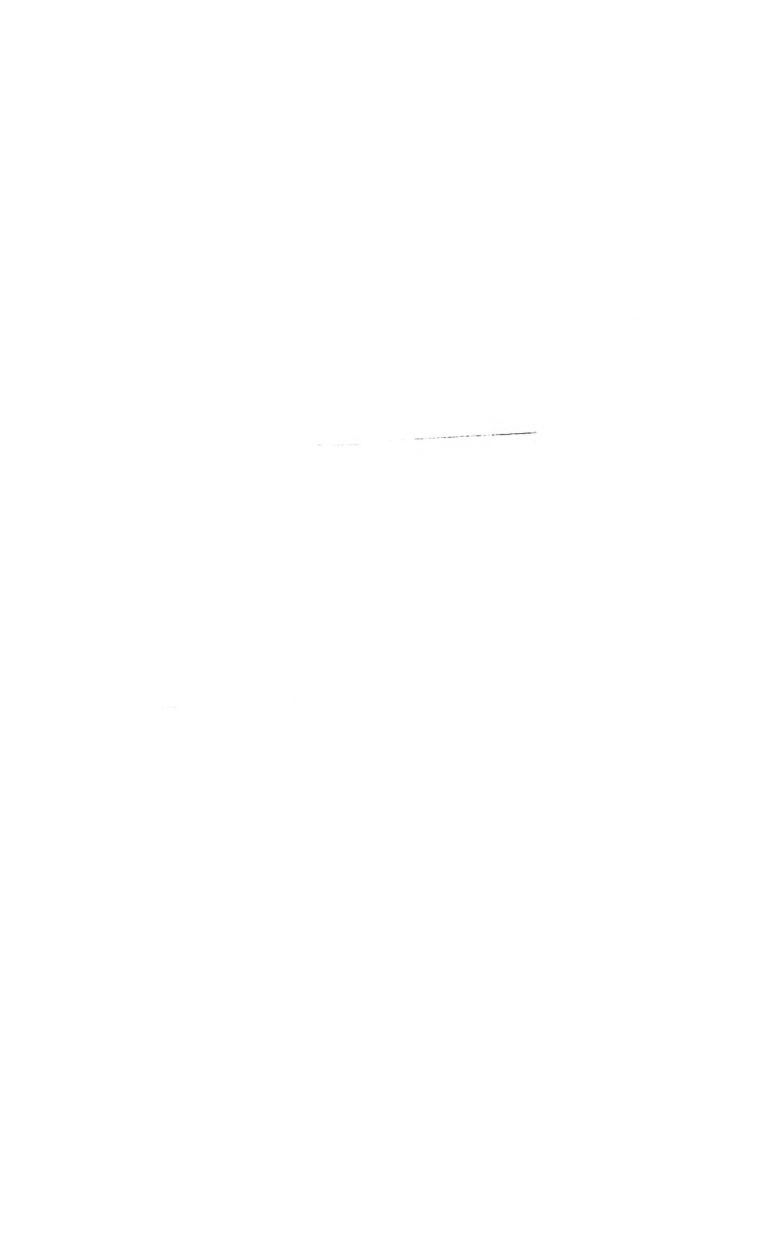
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 Story of the American Bible  
 society, 1920.





# Story of the American Bible Society 1920



AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY  
NEW YORK

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Among the tenements  
of our great cities or among  
the lonely ranchers on the plains  
**WHEREVER**

We find those who do not have  
Gods Word-want it-but cannot pay-  
The Bible Society offers free of charge

**THE BLESSED BOOK**

Tens of thousands of copies are  
gratuitously given every year.



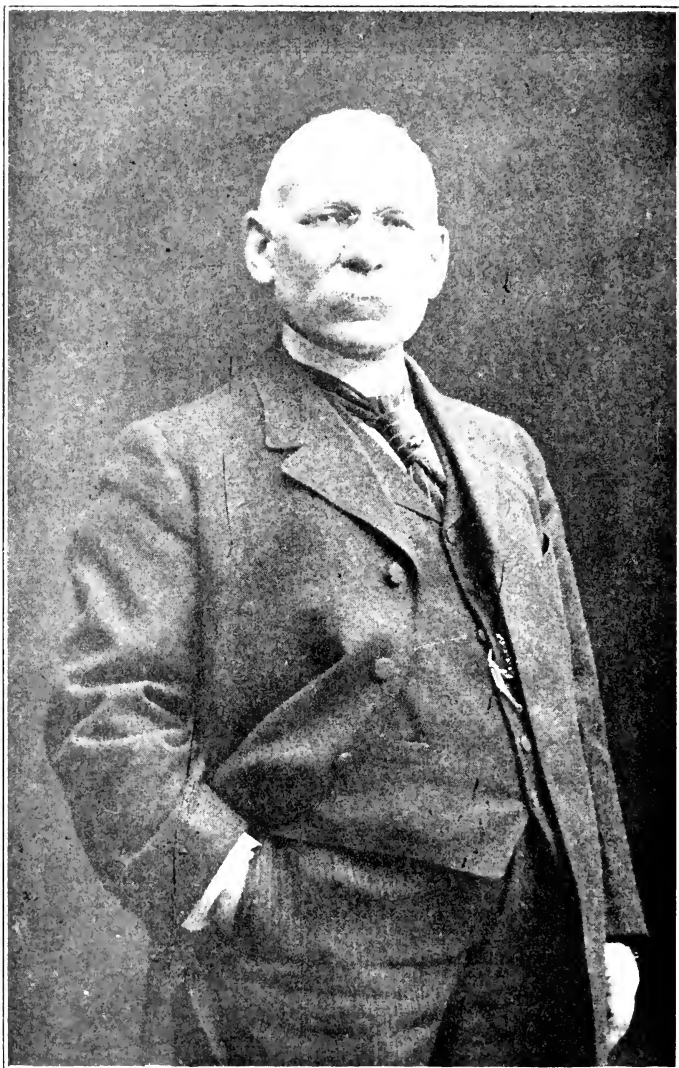
## Foreword

The STORY has a defined purpose. Its duty is to present compactly the more important features of the work and results of circulating the Scriptures by the American Bible Society, for those who wish to know or tell of it. The sources from which it draws are the reports from the nine Home, and eleven Foreign, Agencies, with some additional facts from headquarters and from the Foreign Correspondents in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Printed in full these constitute the *Annual Report*—an octavo volume of over 500 pages. The STORY is not a tithe of that size. It, therefore, is necessarily a selection and condensation, aiming to give the main facts, and incidents of most human interest.

This issue of the STORY deals first with the facts and factors largely common to the whole work, such as the year's output, the directing and distributing agencies, and some of the outstanding features of the year's experience; then passes on to the individual reports from the Home and Foreign Agencies; and ends with the Foreign Correspondents.

Howard Chandler Christy's war-time poster picture is used on the cover to emphasize an American problem in the solution of which the American Bible Society is actively contributing—the problem of assimilating and unifying the ever incoming and widening stream of peoples from divers races, nations, classes, and conditions.

On July 1st, before this has been printed, the death of Mr. William Foulke has deprived the Society of one who had been its loyal Treasurer since 1886. A Christian gentleman of the finest type, he will be greatly missed. In May, Rev. Gilbert Darlington had been appointed Assistant Treasurer. These events of 1920 necessarily receive only brief mention in this STORY.



CHURCHILL HUNTER CUTTING

# Story of the American Bible Society, 1920

## Introduction

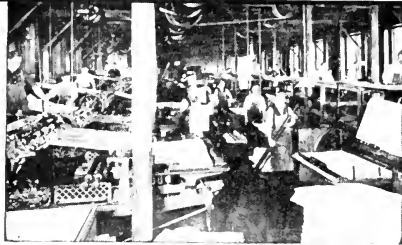
“**T**HE sole object shall be to encourage a wider circulation of the Holy Scriptures without note or comment.” . . . Thus Article I of the Constitution of the American Bible Society.

The record of 1919 on the fulfillment of this object has two aspects. The obverse: The demand was far beyond the supply—a glad fact and stimulating prospect. The reverse: The supply was far below the demand—a sad fact and a call to action.

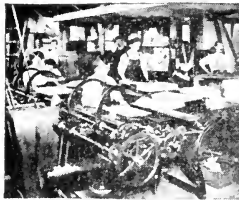
The call for the Word of God in 1919 was increasing not only in nominal Christian lands, but even more in lands where other faiths and superstitions still hold sway. The uniform statement from Home and Foreign fields was that the chief limitation of the circulation was the lack of books. Even the comparatively few employed workers, reduced by the stringency of former years, were often left without sufficient stock to carry on, much more to make a progressive campaign.

In Brazil, our largest sister republic in the West, where Bible distribution doubled that of the previous year, Bibles desired could not be supplied many times because they were not on hand. In the Philippines, where the American Bible Society has taken the sole responsibility, “owing to lack of supplies most of our sellers had been compelled to cease work and to seek employment elsewhere.” From a sub-Agency Secretary in China, with a territory equal to an ordinary Agency, comes word that 300 centers of Scripture distribution which existed in his field, during the first part of 1919 dwindled almost to nil, all for the

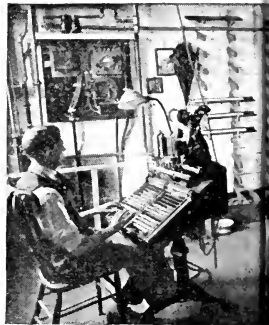
# BUILDING



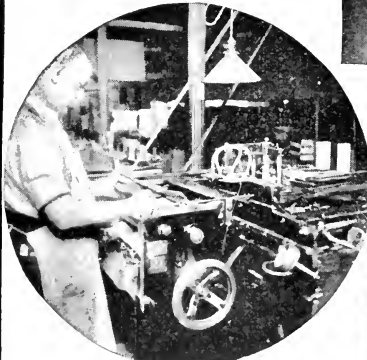
One of the Press Rooms of the Bible House



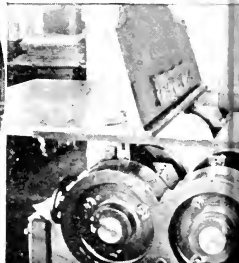
Folders—Annually Many Millions of Sheets, Representing Tons of Bibles and Testaments Pass through These Machines



A Corner in the Composing Room  
Machines for Bible



Covering Machine—In the Bindery, as in Other Departments, Are Labor-Saving Devices Which Interest Many Visitors

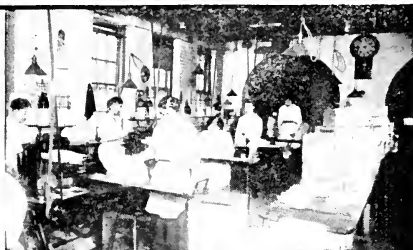


Printing Bibles for the Blind. The in Existence—They Emb Sides with On

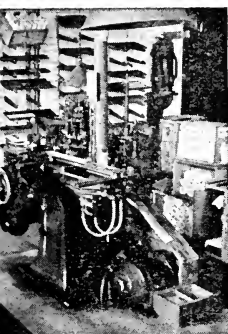
\* When the war began the American Bible Society Press was the only Testaments.

\*\* This remarkable and unique printing press was the invention and gift of

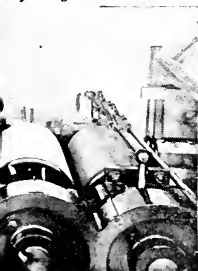
# BIBLES



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mpse  
g-Room



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any Tongues



but Two of These Presses  
ne Page on Both  
ression ★★



Sheet Room—Containing About 17,000 Reams  
(Equivalent to 2,439,000 Testaments).  
56 Languages Are Represented



Depository—Stacking "Vest Pocket" Testaments.★  
Over 2,500,000 of These Were Supplied to  
the Army and Navy during the War

in the United States making these small, thin-paper, narrow-margin  
W. B. Wait, 42 years principal of the New York School for the Blind.

(See pages 12 and 13.)

want of books. From another such sub-Agent comes the word: "It is no exaggeration to say that had books been available we could have sold three times as many." Well may the China Agency Secretary himself say that it is "poor mission policy not to furnish all the books which could be circulated by our present staff, when we could easily distribute an additional 1,500,000 copies for the cost of printing, boxing, and shipping that number of portions."

Nor has it been altogether a matter of lack of books. In part it has been a lack of funds. In these days of unrest and weakening morale, when it is especially important that the youth of the land be given safe and sane foundations, think what it means when the Scriptures are not available even for those who desire them. A state legislature, realizing its value, passes a law requiring the reading of the Bible in all the schools supported by public funds. A county superintendent of public schools seeks 400 Bibles to carry out this requirement in as many schools. But the Agency Secretary had not the funds to help meet the request!

However, there is an offset to the depressing failure in the supply. It has not been because Christian givers have failed to give. The fact is, more money has been given, but, fewer books have been produced because of the increased cost of production.

## I. The Year's Output

### ISSUES

Despite the lamentable lack of supply, we still may rejoice that 3,752,309 volumes of Scripture were issued during the year; 1,734,864 in the Home field; 1,954,671 in the Foreign Agencies; and 62,774 by Foreign Correspondents in other parts of the world. Remembering that the sun never sets on the work of the American Bible Society, and that every minute of the year some one is probably distributing its Scriptures, this issue of over 3,700,000 volumes means that, on an average, over eleven volumes have been issued every minute of the year. This is no small achievement.

### Where?

Roughly, 30% of the circulation of the year was in the United States; 17% in countries where Roman Catholicism has been dominant; 2% in countries distinctly under Moslem influence, and 50% among other peoples of Asia and Africa.

Full data and tables of statistics may be found in the *Annual Report*. Here we add only two details. Of the issues named, 354,387 were Bibles, 689,967 were Testaments, and 2,707,955 were portions.

During its 104 years the Society has supplied—

In the United States.....	82,697,551	volumes
In Foreign Lands.....	55,206,388	"
Or a total of.....	137,903,939	"

### TRANSLATION AND REVISION

During the year, the most notable contribution in translation and revision was the completion of the Union Revision of the Mandarin Version of the Bible. For a generation translators have been engaged on this important task. The Mandarin Version now makes the Scriptures available in a language

said to be spoken by more people than any other on the face of the earth—300,000,000. Other revision work is in process, such as that in the Siamese and Laos versions, and some final touches in the Portuguese and Spanish. The Rev. George Allan is continuing translation in the Bolivia Quichua. Translation of the four Gospels into Mukri Kurdish has been completed by the Rev. L. O. Fossum.

The complete Bible has been printed for the first time in the Union Mandarin Version above mentioned and also in the Union Wenli Version, completed in 1918—triumphs of a generation of scholarly effort on the part of missionaries and educated Chinese in that great land. The four Gospels were also printed in Mukri Kurdish for the first time in 1919.

#### PRINTING AT THE BIBLE HOUSE

Another phase of the year's output is worthy of separate mention. The publishing department of the Bible House is, in several respects, the most remarkable in the world. During 1919 it added 8 languages to its repertoire of those in which it prints the Scriptures, making now 68 languages in which it has printed them, besides six systems for the blind.

In 1919 there were printed and bound in the Bible House, 1,237,575 volumes of Scriptures, and this was less than half of its output in 1918 or 1917. Roughly, the average of recent years has been 2,000,000 volumes a year. What does this mean? Think a moment. Deducting Sundays and holidays, there are 275 working days a year of eight hours each. This 2,000,000 volumes means 16 books printed and bound for every minute of every working day in the year!

Here we may add some other surprising recent tabulations. Presses were first set up in the Bible House in 1853. The *Annual Reports* state the num-



ber of volumes printed and bound in the Bible House. The total for the years 1853 to 1919 are:

Bibles.....	19,352,069
Testaments.....	34,304,730
Portions.....	20,021,513

Almost twenty million complete Bibles! Adding 24,647 volumes of Scriptures for the blind, manufactured in the Bible House, there have been produced in this building the magnificent total of 73,702,959 volumes of Scripture. This averages over eight volumes a minute every eight-hour working-day in 67 years.

### Other Publications

To the truly remarkable record of Scriptures annually printed, is to be added the record of other publications produced in 1919: 2,000 *Annual Reports*, 7,000 copies of the *STORY*, an aggregate of 100,000 copies of the monthly *Bible Society Record*, and over 300,000 pamphlets, leaflets, etc., making more than 420,000 copies printed. The preparation and editing of these publications, from the one-page press notice to the six hundred page *Annual Report* volume, is the work of the Secretaries.

### OUR WAR SERVICE—IN FIGURES

Another phase of the year's output has been that consequent on the war. During 1919, 379,088 volumes of Scriptures in the special Army and Navy editions were issued; which, added to those previously issued during this one war, made a total of 4,920,543 volumes of Scripture supplied for the forces of the United States on land and sea.

Abroad, 41,270 volumes were supplied, chiefly among the European forces; which, added to the previous distribution, made a total of 1,887,758 volumes supplied by the American Bible Society among the forces of foreign nations.

The total thus far reported as distributed by the American Bible Society during the war among the forces engaged is, therefore, 6,808,301.

Such is the marvelous outcome of a work undertaken in faith by the Board of Managers at the beginning of the war, when there were no funds available for this special purpose. This faith has been rewarded. Contributions of \$247,121.57 have come to the Army and Navy Fund. Expenses were \$264,578.25, leaving a comparatively small deficit of \$17,456.68 on this account.

This ministry is being continued to the soldiers, sailors, and marines of the United States.

#### **OUR WAR SERVICE—IN INCIDENTS**

While the active work of circulating the Scriptures consequent on the war has ceased, the reports for 1919 contain many references to the results of that circulation and other incidents growing out of it.

#### **At Home**

A colporteur, calling at the home of a retired soldier at Battle Creek, was shown an American Bible Society khaki Testament, which had been given him by a Red Cross officer. It had been through many engagements, in one of which bursting shrapnel had pierced halfway through the book, carried in his breast pocket, and remained embedded there. But for this Testament it would have been a mortal wound. Another worker saw khaki New Testaments in many homes, and found ex-soldiers gave the khaki Testaments friendly recognition, mentioning seeing them overseas and scattered over the fields of the Argonne drive. A stalwart soldier told of carrying his Testament in many a conflict. Another told of a soldier who lay dying with a Testament in his hands, and said to his companion, "Bury it with me."

Bishop Wilson told of a Y. M. C. A. secretary who

saw two of our boys, their eyes open, but fixed in death, and in their rigid hands these khaki Testaments.

A sister of a soldier who had returned from France told of his losing his khaki Testament on the battlefield. An English soldier had picked it up, and from the name and address within, sent the book home. "He always reads from that little Testament at our evening prayer," said the sister gladly. One colporteur found that the great war had not diminished people's interest in the Bible. Those revisited were found even more willing to purchase and still more to have its teachings explained.

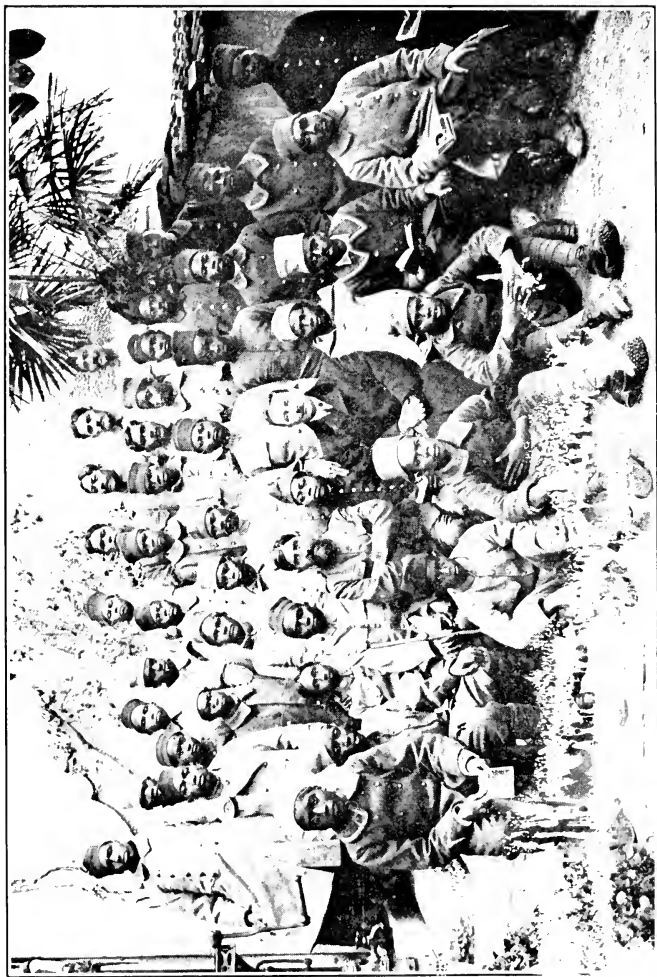
It was through co-operation of the South Atlantic Agency that 2,500 volumes of Scriptures were given to the large detachments of Czechoslovakian soldiers as they passed through Norfolk, Va., on their way from Siberia to their homeland.

### **Abroad**

In the West Indies khaki Testaments have been distributed to the Porto Rican soldiers, the churches having taken interest in supplying their soldier-members, and making contributions to the Bible Society in return. During a revolution in Costa Rica members of churches distributed Gospels to the several hundred soldiers going to the front. Many times a regiment was formed in line to receive the Scriptures. Not a soldier refused a Gospel.

The Pacific Agency had an old stock of Chinese Scriptures, which were sent to France, where they were distributed to, and gladly received by, a Chinese labor battalion, that was under the spiritual and moral oversight of a former American Bible Society worker in China.

A group led by a consecrated young Brazilian put a New Testament in the hands of each man in the Brazilian Navy. In 1919 a Brazilian sailor came with



FRENCH COLONIALS

The American Bible Society has been by money grants the Bible Society of France supply Scriptures to colonial soldiers, as to French troops. In this group are those from Madagascar, Annam, Tahiti, and New Caledonia.

his mother and sister to a mission hall and asked for baptism, reporting that this step was the result of reading one of these Testaments.

Belgium, France, Switzerland, Italy, and East Africa give additional reports of our war service. Printing these all in the *Annual Report*, here we reproduce only one; but that fully. Though a belated report of the work of 1918, it is peculiarly interesting in giving a further chapter in the strange and striking story of what was accomplished by the Scriptures in Sheetswa, printed at the Bible House and sent during the war to Africa. It comes in a letter from the Rev. W. C. Terril, of the Methodist Episcopal Mission of Inhambane, East Africa.

#### **Like Daniel of Old**

"Some of the boys to whom I sent copies of the Scriptures while they were in Niassaland are back again at Inhambane. I wish that I could relate in detail their experiences. They are inspiring. João or Tim Enosi and Timote—others as well—tell us how they called the natives together for prayers in the mornings and evenings, and also that on Sundays they would find time some hour during the day for a regular Sunday service like they had at home. All the white officers were very kind and considerate to them and did not offer any objection.

#### **An Objector Answered**

"One black officer only opposed them, but Enosi said to him, 'I understand that in all the armies of the white races religious services are held for the white soldiers, and such has been done in all ages when they have gone to war. The black man must also have services and in that way find help from God; for we are acting just as the white man is, to establish righteousness in the world.' The officer said no

### **Cultivating and Sowing**

On Sundays the Christians would walk a distance of ten or twelve miles to attend services. Moham-medans were stimulated to hold similar services by the example of the Christians. "There is no doubt but that the Inhambane native Christians helped to keep alive the work of God in their midst, as well as in their own hearts, by these meetings while in German East Africa. Heathens who had never heard the gospel came in contact with it, and they will doubtless carry back to their homes some gospel seeds that were sown in their hearts. The Sheetswa Scriptures helped to keep the work of God moving on at this eastern front."

### **To the End**

"Some of our lads will never return. They shed their blood and gave their lives for the cause of democracy. Enosi said that some of them pillowed their heads on their Bibles when they lay burning with fever. When it would cease its raging for a brief moment the Bible was opened and some word read from it. Ofttimes, he said, he saw his brethren die with their Bibles for their pillows."

### **The War Retards Work in China**

A regrettable phase of war's effects is set forth by an unexpected source—the North China Sub-Agency as follows:

"Owing to conditions brought about by the world war, the circulation of Scriptures has been as follows:

"1915.....	1,058,781
1916.....	885,480
1917.....	602,201
1918.....	377,901
1919.....	327,766"

And this sad decrease is all the sadder because it is due entirely to the constant decrease in stock, cut down by lack of funds for publication.

## II. The Directing Agencies

### THE BOARD OF MANAGERS

The action and outlook of the Board have been that of "Forward in faith." Over against appropriations in 1918 totalling \$670,000, in 1919 the Board of Managers, in faith, appropriated \$775,000, and for 1920 have made appropriations totaling \$988,000. The receipts for the two years completed indicate God's approval, and Christian giving, have been with the Board in these advances. The receipts and expenditures for the years 1918 and 1919, omitting those in connection with the special Army and Navy Fund\* in both years, were:

	1918	1919
Receipts.....	\$766,469.51	\$857,037.23
Expenses.....	740,595.52	853,544.80

The increase in appropriations has been made in part to help meet the increased cost of production, and in part to help retrieve the ground lost during the years of war when the employed forces and the activities were both curtailed.

### Changes in Agencies to Meet Changing Conditions

Further, the Board has been neither unmindful nor inactive, in regard to changing conditions at home and abroad. The emigration of the colored people from the South to the North has been met by enlarging the borders of the Agency for Work among the Colored, to cover work for them throughout the United States. Abroad, to more adequately carry forward the work in the developing and increasingly important fields of South America, a part of the extensive La Plata Agency has been formed into the

\* The receipts and expenditures for the same years on the Army and Navy Fund were:

	1918	1919
Receipts.....	\$146,376.89	\$9,721.63
Expenses.....	148,497.34	4,803.72

West Coast Agency. Plans are under way for the resumption and readjustment of work in the Levant Agency, looking to a real advance in meeting the needs and seizing the opportunities which the Near East will increasingly reveal as the rigors of war are ended and the expatriated remnants return to their homes. The exchange of fields in Asia, reported last year, has been accomplished, so that the entire work of the Philippines is now cared for by the American Bible Society; while that in Korea has passed to the charge of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

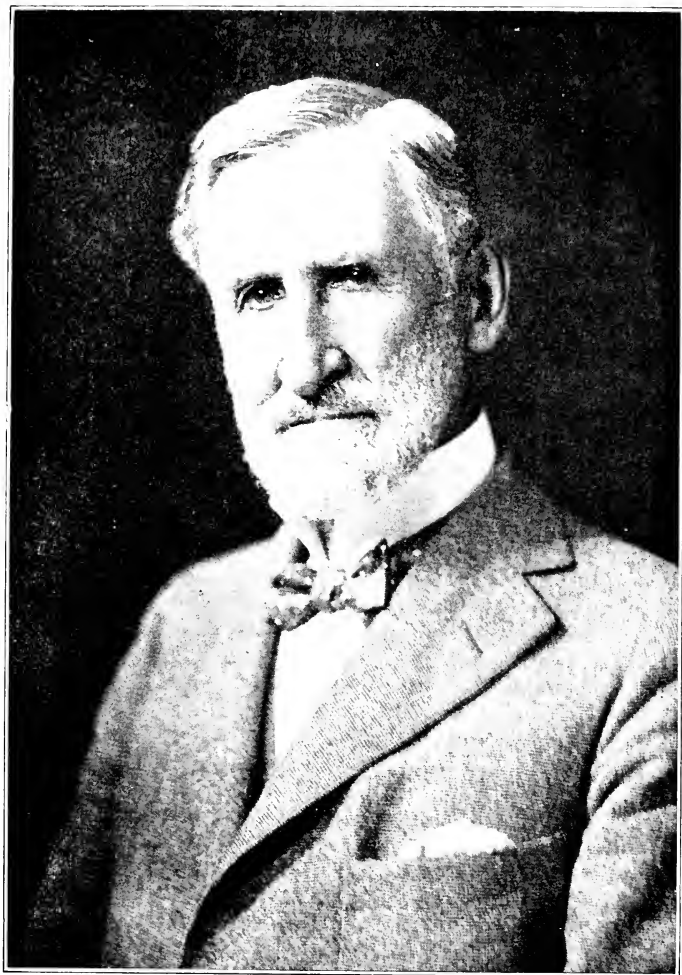
### **Strengthening the Governing Body**

The Board strengthened itself by the addition of eight new members during the year, among them being the first lady managers ever elected. Nine new Vice-Presidents were elected in 1919, increasing the number of states and communions that are thus represented, and bringing to the Society the influence and advice of leading citizens of different sections of the country. Two ladies were among these—the first lady Vice-Presidents. In thus electing ladies the Board has shown itself open to, and abreast of, the changes of the times.

### **THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

One of the most important advances of recent years was consummated in 1919, though inaugurated earlier. Action had been taken by the Board for the formation of an Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives appointed by the governing bodies of all communions or denominations contributing to the work of the Society. Its function is to advise on and recommend the budget for the ensuing year. The first meeting of this Advisory Committee was held for two days in November with the Budget Committee of the Board. Estimates from the Agencies and full information were placed before this body. The Board





PRESIDENT EMERITUS JAMES WOOD

adopted the budget proposed. Thus the contributing bodies have a direct and vital connection with the programme of the Society. In 1919 the authorities of the Congregational, Lutheran, Methodist and Methodist South, Presbyterian U. S. A. and U. S., Protestant Episcopal, Reformed Church in America denominations appointed representatives. Others have acted since.

### **OFFICERS, STAFF, AND WORKERS**

Mr. James Wood, President since 1904, retired in the spring at his own desire. His resignation was accepted with deep regret, and he was elected President Emeritus.

Mr. Churchill H. Cutting, a Manager of the Society from 1882, and Vice-President since 1916, was elected President. The names of the Vice-Presidents and Managers will be found, with the other officers, on the inner cover page.

The resignation of the Rev. H. J. Scudder, of the Eastern Agency, in order to return to his former work as a missionary in India, led to the only change in the Agency staff, the Rev. Samuel C. Benson, who had seen service as a chaplain in the United States Army during the war, being appointed in his place.

A total of 209 colporteurs and 873 correspondents—or 1,082 workers—to whom should be added 792 volunteers, made up the 1,874 persons who shared in the important and gracious work of circulating the Scriptures. In the Home Agencies there were 71 colporteurs, 201 correspondents, and 315 volunteers; while the Foreign Agencies reported 130 colporteurs, 669 correspondents, and 454 volunteers, foreign correspondents in other lands adding 23 volunteers to the total. This was an increase in correspondents and volunteers over the number reported the previous year.

### III. Distributing Agencies

#### AUXILIARY BIBLE SOCIETIES

The oldest factor in distribution has been the Auxiliary Bible Societies. There were 155 on the roll at the end of the year, the largest number being in the states of New York, Ohio, Wisconsin, New Jersey, and Illinois, in the order named. Some of these Auxiliaries are older than the "parent society" and helped to form it. Their purpose throughout the century has been to supply local needs, and to contribute to the world-wide work of the American Bible Society. During 1919 they so contributed \$23,000. Three in New York, the Dutchess County Female, the Orange County, and the Ulster County, Auxiliary Societies, through financial contributions, and two of them through active co-operation of their officers, have assisted in the maintenance of Bible booths at county fairs. The State Bible Societies of Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, co-operating with the American Bible Society, have circulations running up into thousands of volumes during the year.

A new Auxiliary was organized at Orangeburg, S. C., and two dormant Auxiliaries were resuscitated during 1919. The number of Auxiliaries, however, is decreasing. But this does not mean a loss of friends so much as that the support of these friends is coming through their churches.

#### VOLUNTEERS

An increasingly important factor in distribution is the volunteer worker, who receives no remuneration from the Society. Many disasters develop blessings. The enforced reduction of employed agencies has resulted in the multiplication of voluntary workers. This has not been universal. The very conditions

which have curtailed the ability of the Society to employ workers, have likewise curtailed the ability of individuals to give voluntary service, though eager to do it. Still a few references will show how widespread and varied is this volunteer service.

### **A Joy and Satisfaction**

A factory worker in the South Atlantic Agency, who so loves his Bible that he longs that others should have it, has given odd hours to the distributing of Scriptures in the suburbs of his town: he makes it a rule never to leave a family without a Bible, whether they have money or not. A busy minister visited, without compensation, various conferences in the interests of the Bible Society work. From the Pacific Coast comes word that "denominational workers, interdenominational agencies, independent self-supporting missionaries, and personal workers have co-operated in much larger numbers in this work during the past year—a joy and satisfaction."

### **Ministers and Laymen**

A worker in Nevada tells of pastors who have accompanied him in house-to-house visitation, and of others who took him in their autos to sparsely settled districts, similar help being also rendered by church members. A layman and Sunday-school secretary of a conference in the state of Washington spent one hundred days and traveled two thousand miles, without salary, in a campaign to get children to read and memorize Scripture verses, supplying Scriptures to all who were in need. From the Southwest we learn of home missionaries who gladly co-operate in the circulation of the Scriptures; of individuals, such as a proprietor of a marble factory who exhibited and sold Scriptures, together with his monuments and tombstones; of a mechanic in a railway shop who stocked Scriptures in his tool chest and gave his noon

hours to circulating them among his mates; of a business man who visited the sick in hospitals and won many to the reading of the Way.



A VOLUNTEER—MR. CAULKINS

Preaching and distributing Scriptures on the streets of San Francisco.  
(See page 72.)

Foreign lands send a like story of volunteer service. For brevity we quote only from two Agencies.

### **In Vast China**

Dr. Hykes reports that by far the larger number of books has been put in circulation by foreign mission-

aries and voluntary native workers. During 1919, of 967,381 books they distributed 831,850. The colportage of the great Chihli Plains was all done by voluntary workers connected with various churches scattered over most of the area. Four hundred missionaries and Christian workers are voluntarily circulating the Society's books from not less than the same number of centers scattered over the whole of Central China. Accounts of individual volunteers are too numerous for reproduction in this connection. A Swedish missionary of Hoyang writes: "I think we must give the voluntary distributors and the American Bible Society the credit for bringing to us most of the 157 persons who have been baptized in this district this year."

#### **Filipinos Setting the Pace**

In the Philippines the voluntary workers, likewise, have been an increasingly prominent factor. They are chiefly church members enrolled for special campaigns lasting for several days in a specific region. "In every instance where a church has so assumed and put through a Bible campaign, it has gained in influence in the community, and those participating in the campaign have been aroused and strengthened for personal service. It furnishes a point of contact—an opportunity for the members to "do something"—that absolutely necessary condition for healthy growth and development. Many churches are now awaiting larger shipments of Scriptures, and they will take up this same method of propaganda in the communities for which they are beginning to feel a responsibility."

The desirability and value of volunteers in the circulation of the Scriptures is indeed very real. The possibilities of such service are immense.

## COLPORTEURS—A TRIBUTE



C

OLPORTEURS, however, are the historic and still the most vital factors in Scripture distribution. The colporteur deserves a tribute if any phase of Bible circulation does. The word, originally meaning a hawker or peddler — some one carrying his wares suspended around his neck — has come to mean, technically, one who goes about disposing of Scriptures at a low rate, or gratuitously. A “book agent” is not generally thought to have an enviable task. But physically and financially it is a sinecure compared with that of the colporteur. The book agent usually has to carry about a sample, taking orders, and filling them later;

“The colporteurs tramping through countrysides or traveling by every sort of conveyance, in every sort of land, carrying with them little cargoes of books containing the Word of God, and spreading them, seem like the shuttles in a great loom that is weaving the spirits of men together.”—PRESIDENT WILSON, at the Centennial of the American Bible Society.

he ordinarily visits only the larger centers; and he has, as a rule, a large margin for profit. The colporteur, on the contrary, must carry his wares with him; a large and important part of his work is in sparsely settled regions; he makes no profit; his remuneration is usually a very modest one—so modest that one wonders how the colporteur manages to live. The value of volunteer workers has been emphasized and is gladly recognized. The importance

and need of this service is great. May the number of volunteers grow!

But it is the colporteur, after all, who is the backbone of Scripture circulation. Volunteers must be used where they live. Colporteurs go into regions where there are no volunteers; such regions exist both in the home field and especially in foreign lands; and they are often the most needy.

Those who think that the colporteurs' work is simply the distribution of the Scriptures have an inadequate conception of what colporteurs do, what they undergo, and what their chief remuneration is. This is not the time or place to present an essay on the subject. But it may help to a juster conception if, from the reports of this single year, facts and incidents are brought together showing what colporteurs do and undergo.

### **What the Colporteur Does**

Of course, the main purpose and effort is to circulate the Scriptures. But it is not the effort simply of a salesman. It is the varied, tactful, untiring effort of one who believes thoroughly in the efficacy and the blessing which characterize the article he dispenses—of one who yearns to do good to those whom he visits. So we find that the colporteur not only sells books, but he reads to those who cannot read, and thus brings to them the truths of God's Word; or he marks passages in books he leaves, so that any neighbor, reading, may bring home special truths.

*Tact is developed.* One, sitting in a Hungarian Catholic church in Chicago, takes his Bible out of his pocket and shows it to his neighbor, telling him what a great help and comfort it is, and the joy of a Christian's life: the man buys and later comes to enjoy and love his Bible. Another finds a lady buying a cake from a baker's wagon, and a purchase of a Bible results as he tactfully offers the Bread of Life. A



man goes into a depository and in broken English assails the Bible because "it contains lies": patience and tact send him out a little later, having purchased a Bible with the promise: "I vill read." A colporteur, on his way with other vendors to a county fair, arouses their interest by saying that he has a choice lot of pocket mirrors with telescope attachments, and when, later, in curiosity they come to his booth to see his wares, he reads them James 1:23-24, and Isaiah 45:22, and a sale is made.

*Methods of approach and of action are sought.* One reports that he always begins his work on the outskirts of a town and works toward the center, asking each family he visits to tell their neighbors of the nature of his work. This he finds paves the way, and often leads to his being called into homes to show his stock. There are some whose devotion has led not only to giving their own time at a minimum salary, but also to the giving of their own means and property. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, on the Pacific Coast, thus carried on their work through their own automobile. More recently, equipped with an auto wagon fitted out with all necessary sleeping and cooking facilities, they have made extensive journeys and accomplished notable distribution—\$200 worth a month—Mr. Johnson making addresses in churches, Sunday schools, and missions. Mr. Zimmerman, equipped with a "gospel boat," as he calls it, has visited 316 ships and distributed 418 Bibles and Testaments and 6,791 Gospels on them. Interesting details of this work will be found in the Pacific Agency report. So, on the Atlantic Coast, colporteurs have used many methods: the gospel car, the motor boat, and the county fair among them. Down on the Mexican border two colporteurs met with such success and aroused such interest that a public meeting was advertised in the principal plaza of Laredo, and a large sale of Scriptures resulted therefrom.

That colporteurs are not mercenary is shown by many instances where, without seeking to effect sales, they have visited the sick, prayed with those in sorrow, reasoned with those who were losing their faith, brought fresh hope and purpose to many down-cast, and others outcast, often giving away Scriptures out of their own already scant funds.

*They stir others to action.* We read of a saloon-keeper and his termagant wife won to interest in religion and becoming the channels of selling Scriptures to others; of a highly educated man interested in the Truth, and, through his co-operation and that of thirty others, a mission being started.

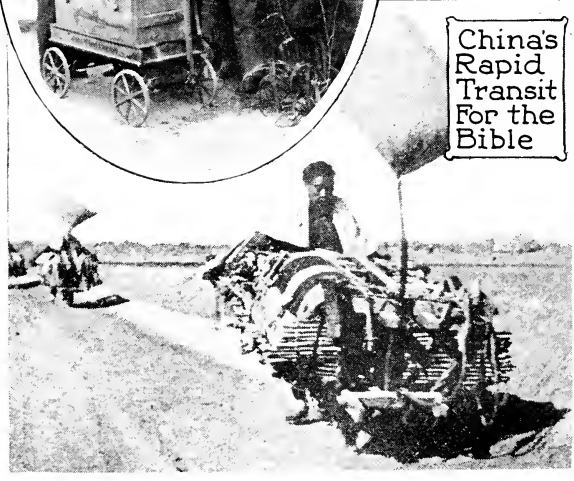
*They give themselves to special tasks.* We learn of an earnest colporteur and his wife aiming to have every child in their territory receive a Testament; of an earnest Scandinavian colporteur, who, during years of his work, has supplied thousands of English dictionaries and copies of the United States Constitution and naturalization primers to immigrants, having always insisted that every one living in America should learn the English language; of colporteurs who can use eight and nine languages and are devoting this wonderful linguistic gift toward helping win peoples of these languages to our country and to our Christ. At the request of the pastors, a house-to-house canvass of Covington, Ky., was made, selling Scriptures and obtaining for church and Sunday-school workers information about the church affiliation of the families. One colporteur reports bringing the work of the Society before 4 Presbyterian, 4 Evangelical, 3 Congregational, 5 Methodist, and 7 Reformed Church of America churches, also before 2 Ministerial Unions, he having also in nine months traveled 6,253 miles and visited 7,338 families. Another says: "I have kept record and in walks and trips by train I have traveled 2,417 miles, stood before the doors of 3,895 homes, and distributed 717 Bibles,



Our Best Export to Argentina-The Bible



The Best Book and a Good Salesman



China's Rapid Transit For the Bible



The Book of Cheer for the Lonely Ranchers

1,486 Testaments, and 342 portions by sale, and 57 Bibles, 119 Testaments, and 90 portions by gift, nearly all of them placed, one by one, in an outstretched hand."

*That Sunday schools and churches have resulted from colporteur's work* is a commonplace of Home Missions. Every *Annual Report* has instances. The Eastern Agency report tells this year of three missions resulting from one colporteur's labor.

So far only instances from the Home field have been given. More will be found not only in the Home Agency reports which follow, but also in the Foreign Agency reports. Here let a single quotation from one Foreign Agency suffice.

Mr. Jordan, who has been getting acquainted with his new field of Central America, writing of the work in Salvador, says: "As in most of the fields of Central America, the pioneer work here was done by the Bible Society"; and on visiting the old lady who was the first convert in Honduras, and that through Bible circulation, he adds: "In no other country that I know of are such large proportions of the Evangelical groups the direct results of the work of the Bible colporteurs as in Honduras."

### **What Colporteurs Undergo**

That the colporteurs are not in this work for personal gain is clear. That they are not in it for personal glory is shown by the fact that they so seldom mention personal hardships. Yet one reading between the lines cannot but admire the devotion of those who work under such handicaps. Here and there difficulties are mentioned. One casually reports that he was working in a territory where trains run only once in two days; a region where settlements disappear and spring up with such frequency that maps are not up to date, and where often heavy loads of books are carried on futile journeys. Another,

traveling in lonely regions with his Bible wagon, caught at the end of the day with no place for shelter, was turned away by the owner of the only house anywhere in the neighborhood and even threatened with a shotgun when he attempted to camp for the night under the shelter of a neighboring tree.

The changing form of city life and development of flats and apartments have greatly handicapped the colporteur, who finds access very difficult. Even out in the country regions the cost of living seems to have closed the doors of hospitality. And yet, "faithful, patient, and uncomplaining, they have faced tremendous odds, and, in spite of hardships peculiarly trying, they have never wearied in their task of sowing the good seed," as one of the Agency Secretaries writes of his colporteurs.

Because of reduced appropriations, a colporteur could no longer be employed even on the modest salary of \$70 a month. He was eagerly taken by an insurance company at \$200 a month because he could sell insurance in nine tongues. And yet it is testified that this man's heart is in the circulation of the Scriptures and he would fain return to that work. Slapped in the face by a young man on entering a barber shop, a colporteur makes no complaint, but a year later rejoices when this same young man is converted, and himself becomes a witness for the gospel.

Both modesty and indifference seem responsible for many a colporteur's bearing in silence difficulties, hardships, and handicaps, and going through experiences which are unusual. Even when called on to tell of their experiences, the answer too often comes that there was "nothing worth reporting." Two examples. Of one worker, from whom report had been sought in vain because there was "no story to tell," an Agency Secretary learns finally the following: The worker had been caught in a cloudburst,

which had carried away his buggy and stock of Scriptures and almost taken his life. He had been waylaid and beaten because he had not heeded a ruffian's command to leave town. Dogs had set upon him, and his face had been permanently disfigured. But—"nothing had happened worth reporting." Another failed to respond to requests for report on his work, because he thought there was "nothing to report." When personally visited, the following was elicited: A little girl was seen standing shyly outside of a church, listening to the singing. She would not go in nor respond to any advances. A Gospel in her own language was given to her. Several weeks later, the mother and daughter timidly entered the church; later, a grown son; then, a married daughter; and, finally, the father came. Before the year was over, the entire family was received into the church, and, through them, some neighbors—all the result of one little Gospel. And yet there was "nothing to report."

### **The Colporteur's Remuneration**

What is it that inspires those employed as colporteurs, and voluntary workers also, to do this difficult work? Reading the records with this question in mind one begins to realize that with them it is as with Christ of old: "I have meat to eat that ye know not."

Only those engaged in this service know the sweet reward that it brings. Here is one who worked and walked all day, carrying his heavy pack, and, as the evening drew on, had not disposed of a single volume. Shall he desist? Surely the ordinary hawker would have ceased. But he, impelled by a higher purpose, continued; and compensation came in finding a purchaser who bought ten, and a neighbor who bought his two best Bibles. Another, on a cold day, standing out on the street selling his wares, thinks, as darkness comes on, that he should retire to the

warmth of his room. But something impels him to continue. At seven in the evening an old lady comes to buy a Bible. "I have come to buy not for myself, but for another"; and he feels recompensed as he thus has been the means of helping in this good purpose.

A colporteur gives Testaments to two passing poor children on the understanding that they will read



A HUNGARIAN FATHER AND HIS CHILDREN

Won to a Christian life by a colporteur—the best kind of Americanization.

them. An onlooker exclaims, "Well, that was fine; I want to pay for those Testaments," and this colporteur feels rewarded. A barefooted boy, turning his pocket inside out, finds only 4 cents and gets an 8-cent Testament. The colporteur is made happy as he receives the sweet surprise of the benediction, "Thank you, sir, and God bless you." A poor girl, looking wistfully at a little Testament, has no money,

but is willing to give her only trinket, a finger ring; and the colporteur's heart is warmed as he is able both to let her have the Testament and keep her ring. A lame cripple in a lonely house becomes interested in Scripture truths and cheers the colporteur by walking several miles to get the Bible he wants. A man buys two Bibles in large type to send to home folks in another state, and the colporteur realizes that he is thus a means of blessing to others far away. A father buys a Testament and hands it to his son with the statement that "this is the best gift I can make to you."

A converted Jew helps the colporteur in his work. A cordial greeting from an utter stranger, as the colporteur goes on his uncheered way, fills his heart with joy. A glad wife reminds the colporteur of a previous call five years before, when, as the result of a long talk, her husband becomes a lover of the Bible and now points to it as the choice of all his library. At a logging camp, a colporteur is cheered when, having appointed a time and place and not arriving, he is sent for, and bought out of his stock by the rough lumberjacks. An old Croatian lady exclaims: "Oh, my own language! Now I can read when I am lonesome. If I had money, I would give one dollar—two dollars—most anything for it!"

A fine-looking Frenchman grasps the colporteur's hands: "Seven years ago, I bought a French Testament from you in Tacoma, and I found Jesus through it." A boy in a Mormon family buys a Bible and, a year later, states that he is going to study for the Presbyterian ministry. A colporteur in the Southwest reports: "A minister told me that at Lafourche a mission church of two hundred members was the direct result of the visit of a colporteur of the American Bible Society, who canvassed the town with the Scriptures." Another colporteur, who held meetings regularly at a police station, rejoices over some forty conversions and the placing of 800 Gospels and Testa-



ments among the prisoners. And so the glad story goes. Then there is the encouragement which comes through the co-operation of others. A mechanic in a shop sets aside part of his tool-chest as a Bible depository, and helps, at the noon hour, to supply his fellow-mechanics with Scriptures. The pastors of Tampa give the colporteurs cordial reception and offer words of help whenever asked. A busy pastor—active himself in Scripture circulation—writes in a letter: “Next to the grace of God—not excepting the preaching of the Word—I count the work of the colporteur the most effective means that God is using to-day in the reclamation of lost men, women, and children.” A patient in a city hospital, asking her doctor if he had a good book for her to read, is surprised by the reply, “Yes, I have the best book there is. I wonder if you have ever read it—the Bible?” And she replies: “You are the first person who has spoken to me of reading the Bible in five years.” Following his advice, she reads the New Testament, and then the Old. Is there not remuneration in such facts?

Sidelights on the results of prohibition have also proved encouraging. One colporteur in the mining regions of Pennsylvania reports that in prohibition days the colporteur feels very much safer; he is no longer subject to sudden attacks; but adds, as a fact, though not regretting the cause, that it is harder now to get men to talk on religious matters, since they talk more easily on such subjects when intoxicated! In far Nevada it is found that conditions have greatly improved since prohibition was instituted. Slum districts are becoming things of the past; the towns are clean and more quiet; and business is steadily improving; men seem more hopeful and are taking hold of business with a firmer grasp. In the Southwest prisons are empty, and many counties have no pauper institution. The Fort Smith jail was found open and only two negro boys in it, where formerly

it had been "so full of men and boys that you could almost see it breathe."

### **The Only Sufficient Inducement**

A colporteur who has given 19 years to this hard work, and consecrated his talent of speaking 8 and reading 3 other languages to it, surely can speak with authority. Facing an approaching winter he wrote: "Every door will be tightly closed, and I shall have to wait patiently before each one, either to be let in or told to go away. A colporteur must work for the glory of God and the good of the people who need the Word of God. No other reason would be sufficient to induce him to undergo what he really has to, every day and every month. Love to God and man is the only sufficient inspiration for the work."

And the greatest encouragement and reward of all is the most frequent—the turning of men and women, through the reading of the Word, to Him who is the Living Word. Many wonderful instances are given under the topic of "The Unaided Scriptures," and many others appear in the individual Agency posts. Yes, in this way the remuneration is real and rich. Truly the colporteur has "meat to eat which others know not."

### **FOUR NOTABLE ASPECTS OF THE YEAR'S WORK**

The twenty Agency and other reports, of course, vary. But on reading all, one is impressed with aspects that are common and worthy of special attention. Four will now be presented with necessary brevity.

### **MEETING AMERICA'S PROBLEM AND MENACE**

The reports reveal that colporteurs are peculiarly in touch with what is transpiring throughout our great country. They observe and think. They see America's danger. They are near the people. They know conditions. They know what is engaging the thought,

what is being read, what is being said. They realize how many languages are being spoken. They know how slowly many great groups of foreigners are dropping their foreign languages, literature, life, and thought. They come in contact with many groups who are deliberately not dropping the old; who have come over embittered by their experiences in the homeland, cherishing hatred and evil thought, sowing the baneful seed of unbelief and suspicion and jealousy and hatred.

What problems and what menace lie in, and behind, such facts as these reported by a single Agency:

“The foreign population dwelling in Chicago may be divided as follows: Germans, 399,977; Poles, 231,346; Swedes, 118,000; Italians, 108,000; Bohemians, 102,000; Lithuanians, 25,000; Austrians, 58,000; Hungarians, 32,000; Hollanders, 17,000; Russians, 16,600; Croatians, 7,000; Roumanians, 10,000; Greeks, 9,000; Colored people, 175,000. \* \* \*

“During fifteen days’ work in South Omaha, the cash sales were over one hundred dollars; the distribution was 294 volumes in the following languages: Bohemian, Bulgarian, Chinese, Croatian, Danish, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Roumanian, Russian, Servian, Spanish, and Swedish—making twenty different languages. There were 147 volumes in foreign languages, and 147 in English. Forty Bibleless homes were furnished. \* \* \*

“A recent issue of the *Detroit Methodist* is given over to a discussion of the question of Christianizing these people. They give a list of thirty groups of foreigners and show the growth in the past four years. I quote only a few groups: Germans 150,000, Poles 125,000, Jews 40,000, Hungarians and Magyars 30,000, Roumanians 28,000, Russians 28,000, Italians 40,000, Czechoslovaks 15,000, Greeks 8,000, Syrians 12,000, and Turks (Kurds) 2,000. There is also a colony of

Brazilians and large groups from other South American states. \* \* \*

“In 1910 there were 6,000 negroes in Detroit. In the past months they have been coming in at the rate of 300 per week and now number over 60,000. \* \* \*

“It is estimated that there is an increase of 15,000 in the foreign population each year.”

A single colporteur in Detroit circulated the Scriptures in 31 languages, though only 30 languages had been listed in a careful survey of the population.

This problem and menace is true not of large cities alone. For example, in a small town in Ohio there were found 5,000 Roumanians, 3,000 Italians, 2,000 Greeks, 800 Hungarians, 700 Finns, 150 Slavs, and 50 Turks, besides a number of other nationalities. One would not expect such conditions on the shores of Florida, and yet testimony is that Tampa has become a cosmopolitan city. Over on the Pacific Coast the Scriptures were circulated during 1919 in 64 languages. One can hardly realize what lies behind those figures. Read the list.

### The 64 Languages Used by One Agency in Scripture Circulation

Albanian	Hebrew	Russian
Arabic	Hungarian	Ruthenian
Armenian (Ancient)	Ibanaz	Servian
Armenian (Modern)	Iloeano	Slavic
Armeno-Turkish	Irish	Slovak
Bicol	Italian	Slovenian
Bohemian	Japanese	Spanish
Bohemian-Slovak	Korean	Swedish
Bulgarian	Latin	Syriac (Ancient)
Chinese	Lettish	Syriac (Modern)
Croatian	Lithuanian	Tagalog
Danish	Malay	Turkish
Dutch	Marshall Islands	Urdu
English	Norwegian	Welsh
Esperanto	Pampanga	Yiddish
Esthonian	Panayan	Chinese-Mandarin
Finnish	Pangasinan	Chinese-Cantonese
Flemish	Panjabi	Chinese-Wenli Union
French	Persian	Version
German	Polish	Chinese-Wenli Delegates
Greek	Portuguese	Version
Hawaiian Islands	Roumanian	Scriptures for Blind

Down in the Southwest the Scriptures were circulated in 40 languages; while on the Atlantic Coast 33 are listed.

But it is not merely a matter of different languages and strange peoples and old customs and foreign habits. These same watchmen on the walls report that atheism has not only come with the foreigner, but is being spread by and among, these same strange and alien groups. "Every atheist instinctively fight the Bible and the church." Bolshevism is also a menace from within our borders, we are told by our watchmen. "The first aim of the Bolshevist is to make you doubt God, your neighbor, and yourself." Space will not permit enlargement on these and related menaces and problems.

And our colporteurs are doing more than simply discover and reveal the problem and menace. Through the circulation of the Scriptures they are sending out the greatest unifying influence for good in the world. This is the one great book, or one great library—term it which you please—in all languages. That is why the government uses it at immigrant stations to test literacy. Read by peoples from many lands, in many languages, it is teaching them to think the same thoughts—the thoughts of heaven and of brotherhood, the thoughts of good and of love and of service. It is a wonderful help the colporteurs are rendering America. When one man can report the sale of 1,400 Spanish Scriptures in 15 days, and another states that he sold \$1,000 worth of Roumanian Scriptures in one city; when the result of a year's work shows that the Scriptures have been actually put in circulation throughout the United States alone in 86 languages and 5 systems of Scriptures for the blind—surely it is a wonderful service to our country that is being rendered.

The colporteurs are also actively meeting the problem and menace in other ways. As they go

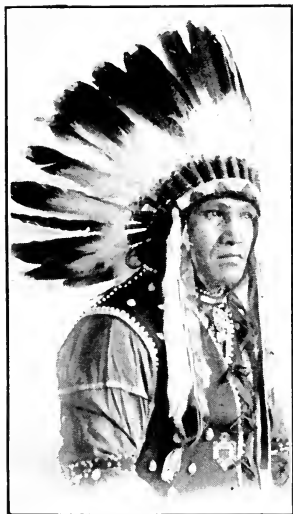
about with their Scriptures, with their faith and purpose and love they are not silent. Here a little and there a little, they sow the seeds of character which make for good citizenship. Here one teaches a foreigner to read the Scriptures in his mother tongue. Here another is teaching a newcomer to read English. There one helps in sorrow or distress, and there again he combats the evil or foolish arguments that seek to destroy the basis of our civilization. And these colporteurs, happily in many cases, go not as strangers. The Italian takes the Scriptures to his fellow Italians; the Armenian to the Armenians; the Chinaman to the Chinese; the Russian Jew to those of Russia and Hebrew thought; the Scandinavian to the people of his tongue; the Greek to the Greeks; the Slav to the Slavs. Not a few use more than one language and exert a wide influence. What a wide field the Rev. F. K. Ringsmuth can cover with the nine languages and dialects which he speaks, down in our South-western area; or Mr. John Gay in the mining regions of Pennsylvania with his speaking knowledge of eight dialects and ability to read three others. Imbued with the love of God's Word, and the love of country, how gladly and loyally these men are working for true Americanization, and helping thereby to solve America's problem and meet her menace!

### REACTION ON HOME COUNTRIES

In this connection we may emphasize another happy outgrowth of Scripture circulation among the people of foreign tongues within our borders. From the Atlantic and from the Pacific, from the Central states, the great Northwest and the Southern shores comes testimony that those thus reached and won are not only helping to circulate the Scriptures among their compatriots in this land—e. g., the Roumanian who sold \$1,000 worth of Roumanian Scriptures to his

compatriots in one Ohio city—but they are sending or taking the same good news to the people in the old countries. A Syrian placed an order for 200 Syriac Bibles in beautiful binding to take them back to his native land. Contingents of Czechoslovakian troops, returning from Siberia through the United States to their native land, were equipped by fellow-countrymen in America with 2,500 copies of American Bible Society Bohemian or Czech Scriptures. Italians, Greeks, Armenians, Scandinavians, and those from Balkan States are sending Scriptures in their languages to their home lands; while returning Chinese, Japanese, Hindus and others take the Scriptures to Asia, Africa, and the Islands of the Sea.

It would seem, as an Agency Secretary remarks, that whereas, formerly, at large expense Christian workers were sent to knock at closed ports in foreign lands, now the ends of the earth are flooding to the United States and the returning tide takes back with it the blessed Word of God, to which ports and homes are gladly opened because it comes from fellow-countrymen.



CHIEF MANITOWOG

Won by reading the Bible in the Tombs and Sing Sing prisons. (See A. B. S. leaflet: "An American Indian on a New Trail.")

### THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE UNAIDED SCRIPTURES

The simple reading of the Old, Old Story, unaccompanied by human exhortation or explanation, continues to win its

readers to the Christian life. The reports for 1919 show many incidents of this result from the circulation of the Scriptures. We will save space and should gain impressiveness by again limiting ourselves to quotations from just two Agencies, and these in non-Christian lands. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, \* \* \* so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."

### **John 3:16 In South America**

The report of the La Plata Agency is particularly full of results of the simple reading of the Scriptures:

"The eyes of an old man fell on the words of John 3:16. They were like a call from heaven, and he could not get rid of them. No matter how much he was trying to forget them, they always returned to his mind. He knew that they were of the Bible, and so he bought one and began diligently to search for them. He said to me, 'I am so happy now! God spoke to me in this Book. Each time I read my New Testament, it seems to me as though Christ himself were speaking to me.'

### **"Through the Reading of an Old Bible"**

"In San Antonio de Areco, a certain Valentin di Santo was converted to Christ through the reading of an old Bible his sister found among a pile of old books, and which she gave to him; he could not hide from his family the joy which salvation had brought to his heart, and they began to wonder what was the matter with him. \* \* \*

"I know a large family of which all are converted to Christ. The young men of that family prove to be real models of Christians, and they are employed at the railroad. Some fifteen years ago the father of the family received a Bible as a gift, and he had to promise that he would read it. He kept his promise, and the result was that the whole family became converted, and joy and peace entered his house.



Later on they became members of the Methodist Episcopal Church here." \* \* \*

Mr. Penzotti adds from his own experience: "I know a person to whom was given as a gift a Bible just as he entered the penitentiary. He read it and at last became converted, and as soon as he got out of the penitentiary, he began to preach the gospel; and his efforts have not been in vain, but resulted in the conversion of many a soul."

### **In Awakening China**

One of the China sub-Agency Secretaries was gladdened by a man who came seeking baptism as a result of reading a portion of the Scriptures, which had been placed in his hands by this missionary as they passed on the road one day in the gloaming. A modern Cornelius, a fine type of a Chinese gentleman, is cited as another example of one led by the Bible alone. "Six men took part in a testimony meeting, four of them attributing their new joy to the reading of the books alone, and two to the conversation of colporteurs."

One of the Chinese colporteurs writes quaintly: "Thanks be to God's purpose, the calling of Jesus Christ and the leading and help of the Holy Spirit, a husband and wife, who live in the West St. at Kuan Hsien, bought a set of Gospels and Acts; through reading them the whole family repented. At Chong Hsing Chang, two men, by the names of Chen and Wang, bought Gospels and repented. Two merchants from Chong King bought Bibles, the reading of which led them to repentance."

### **Apostolic Language and Events**

Another faithful colporteur reports in Apostolic language: "Peace to thee and greetings. I write on purpose to report to you the work done for the Lord during the year. I, the slave of the Lord, was

at Fenchow selling books and preaching the doctrine. Wang Fu Shan, an ex-soldier, heard me preaching; he bought five Scripture portions to take home. After carefully reading them he repented and believed in the Lord. This happened in the third Moon. Bay Wha Shuen, a doctor 57 years of age, heard me preaching on the 12th day of the fifth Moon. He bought three Scripture portions and four tracts and took them home to examine their contents. He himself, his brother, and his son all believed and invited me to their house to see their idols cast out—which they did entirely.”

Still another Chinese colporteur reports: “I am recording the names of several whom I know were once in darkness, but were illumined by the operation of God and his Word: Tan Yu Fung, who lives at Kaokentsze, read the Scriptures and believed; Ch'en Kin-Tang, at Taih, read the Scriptures and was saved; Ch'en Kentsze, also at Taih; Chang Tsze Ren, at Pukiang; Chou Shi Ching, at Tabsingchang; and Li Kuang Chien, at Pukiang. All similarly were brought to Christ by simple reading of the Scriptures. Chang Yuin-Wu, Huang Yuin-Fung, and Wu Huan-Ching found the way of life by unaided reading of the Bible.”

The Word is still efficacious. It does not return void. “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.”

### THE CALL FOR COMPLETE BIBLES

It is noteworthy that report after report, with surprising uniformity, mentions the increasing call for the complete Bible, instead of Testaments or portions. Eight of the nine Home Agency, and eight of the eleven Foreign Agency, reports specifically mention this as a notable fact of 1919. And in the one Home Agency and two of the three Foreign Agencies which have not specifically mentioned it, the circu-

lation of Bibles for 1919 has been from 30% to 100% greater than the previous year. We may not take space to quote the statements on this phenomenon. The report of the British and Foreign Bible Society records the same glad experience as reported for 1919 by its workers.

Among the causes suggested for this increased call are: at home, the increased prosperity and ability to buy the full Bible; at home, as well as abroad, the world unrest and the seeking for light on the problems of life; in foreign lands, the increased Christian community and more direct Bible study and instruction; in foreign lands, this call is recognized particularly as the fruit from the wide seed-sowing of the Gospels and portions in previous years. But, above all, shall we not believe that the Holy Spirit is at work?

#### THE SOCIETY'S FINANCES

A word on the finances before presenting the Agency Reports. Full details are given in the *Annual Report*. The total income for 1919 was \$866,758.86, against a total expenditure of \$858,348.52.

The chief items of income were: From gifts of the living, through churches, Auxiliaries, and individuals, a little over \$266,000; from legacies and the income from funds at interest, a little over \$229,000; and from the sale of Scriptures, a little over \$362,000.

The main items of expenditure were: The cost of Scriptures sold, including the cost of plates, amounting to a little over \$358,000; the value of donations and allowances on Scriptures circulated, over \$61,000; and the salaries and office expenses at headquarters and at the Home and Foreign Agencies, including colporteurs' wages and expenses, amounting to something over \$260,000.

And now we take up the Reports of the Home Agencies in the order of their establishment.

# THE HOME AGENCIES

## The Colored People of the South

Agency Secretary: REV. J. P. WRAGG, D.D.  
Bible House, Astor Place, New York.

Established 1901. Field in 1919: Fifteen Southern States. Circulation in 1919, 32,067 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1901, 605,597 volumes.

“A year fruitful in good deeds and blessed results” is Dr. Wragg’s characterization of the twentieth year of this Agency. The report shows that a very real service has been rendered and appreciated. The Agency is fortunate in being under its original Secretary as, with the end of the year, it enters a larger field. The title and the task, from being that of the Colored People of the South, has become that of the Colored People of the United States.

### The Year's Summary

Dr. Wragg says: “The following facts concerning the activities of the Agency during 1919 may be of interest to our friends and the readers of this STORY. We are happy in the knowledge that we were able to have a total circulation of 10,237 Bibles, 11,704 Testaments, and 10,126 portions—showing a grand total of 32,067 copies. The increase over 1918 was 71 Bibles; the decrease came in Testaments, amounting to 2,370, and 7,403 portions—showing a total decrease for the year of 9,702 copies. Our working force, at no one time, was ever over nine persons; and most of the time we only had two regular colporteurs. We spent 1,474 days in the work; traveled 15,675 miles; visited 179 villages and rural sections; visited 24,663 families and found 4,352 of them without Bibles—of these we supplied 2,739 who were needy and too poor to get the Scriptures.”

Brief excerpts from some colporteurs’ reports must suffice here, as in other Agencies, the full statement being available in the large *Annual Report*.

### Wasted Effort

Colporteur Benton mentions some of the difficulties of work in sparsely settled regions, and how they are added to—perhaps unintentionally—by misinformation.

“Did I tell you about the community they sent me to, telling me that I would find three colored churches and a great number of people? I stocked pretty heavy and skated over a large-sized territory, to find only twelve families by actual count. This is one of the many cases I have met up with in my travels.”

### Elusive Miners

He adds about another phase of the work: “I know this territory, but it is some job to keep up with these mines. I often go to one I knew about some years ago, and when I get there they are through there and may have moved thirty or more miles away. Why do I look these miners up at such a disadvantage to myself? My only answer is: ‘They, too, need the Word of God.’”

### Fighting Whiskey

Colporteur Lucas, in one phase of his work from the Bible stand at the Atlanta Union Station, has been able to extend a helping hand to more than one in need, especially those who had fallen under the influence of liquor. One such with whom he recently talked, said: “I know you are a good man, because you are selling God’s Word, and I am wondering if I should get one of those little Testaments and carry it in my pocket, do you think it will help me to be a better man? Well I will take one home to my little boy; he goes to Sunday school every Sunday.” Leaving me in very polite manner, he said, “Good-bye, Bible Man; may God bless you.”

Another case is reported in the words: “It was my

pleasure to remove from the pocket of a young man an empty whiskey bottle, and through constant pleading I was able to replace it with a New Testament. Since that time the young man paid me a visit, stating that 'that talk and Testament you sold me was the cause of my changing my plan of living.'"

### **War Work Praised**

Testimony to the Army and Navy work is also recorded: "Many soldiers who had been discharged from the army stopped long enough to give praise to the American Bible Society for its grand and noble work among their comrades."

### **Teaching to Read**

Colporteur Leonard reports reading passages of Scripture to some who could not read, and then, as their interest was aroused, helping them to learn to read. Dr. Wragg urges this service on ministers, telling of the experiences of some who have helped members of their congregations to learn to read, and the benefits therefrom. From his own experience he mentions interesting a neighbor, first in the Scriptures and then in learning the letters of the words in one verse, and so on to the study of a primer and first reader until she could read; and recalls starting a young man to learn to read in the same way, who has since finished a theological seminary course and is now a successful pastor.

### **Intelligence and Appreciation**

Colporteurs are encouraged by a changing attitude. Not so many foolish questions are asked about the Bible. People are reading it with more intelligence. Encouragement has come from the appreciative words of individuals, of churches, of Sunday schools, and of institutions such as orphans' homes, which have been aided in obtaining the Scriptures.

## Northwestern Agency

*Agency Secretary:* REV. S. H. KIRKBRIDE, D.D.  
332 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

Established 1906. Field: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Circulation in 1919, 165,315 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1906, 2,360,076 volumes.

The author of this report feels deeply the inadequacy of his forces and funds, as compared with the greatness of the field and opportunity. The challenge of many tongues and a teeming population is presented and faced undauntedly. The work being done, and the kind of workers who so bravely and



WORKMEN, CHIEFLY FOREIGNERS, LEAVING ARMOUR AND OTHER GREAT PLANTS

A colporteur greets them at noon and night with the Bible, each in his own language.

consecratedly carry it on, are reported with no undue pride, but with evident joy. The future is faced with a hope that "lightens toil and sweetens endeavor."

### A New and Regretted Experience

For the first time in Dr. Kirkbride's connection with the Bible Society—which began in 1907—he reports the tide of circulation has ebbed. The loss was chiefly in Testaments, and this because during the previous year over 100,000 of these had been sent out to the Army and Navy. There was actually an increase of 8,356 volumes in the number of Bibles circulated, the distribution for the year being: Bibles 37,380, Testaments 59,310, and portions 68,625—making a total of 165,315 books. However, the decrease does not reflect upon the Bible Society, the Agency Secretary, or the field force. It was plainly a lack of supply.

### An Astonishing List

Space is taken to repeat the names of the 61 languages in which Scriptures were circulated in this one Agency, for such a list cannot but be astonishing and thought provoking:

Albanian	Ethiopic	Latin	Slavic
Amharic	Finnish	Lettish	Slovak
Arabic	Flemish	Lithuanian	Slovenian
Armenian (Anc.)	French	Muskogee	Spanish
Armenian (Mod.)	Gala	Norwegian	Swedish
Armeno-Turkish	German	Oranberg	Syriac (Anc.)
Bohemian	Greek	Panjabi	Syriac (Mod.)
Bulgarian	Hawaiian	Pashto	Tagalog
Chinese	Hebrew	Persian	Tunisian
Croatian	Hungarian	Polish	Turkish
Dakota (North American Indian)	Icelandic	Portuguese	Urdu
Danish	Italian	Roumanian	Welsh
Dutch	Japanese	Russian	Yiddish
English	Judeo-Arabic	Ruthenian	Zulu
Esperanto	Karaso	Servian	
	Korean	Sindhi	

### The Challenge of a Great City

Under this caption Dr. Kirkbride mentions that Chicago alone contains a population larger than the nine states of Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Alaska, and then points out the sad fact that depleted resources had not enabled the Bible Society to have a single



paid colporteur in this vast population. It is a disconcerting and disturbing condition for those who realize what an important part the Bible can and should play in Americanizing, as well as Christianizing, this tremendous population. Workers are available if means to employ them were available. "I am humbled," writes Dr. Kirkbride, "by the case of William Kowalik. He formerly was one of our colporteurs in Chicago, working for \$70 per month. He spoke nine languages. He was dropped from lack of funds and is now selling life insurance in nine languages at \$50 per week. But he says his heart is in Bible work and not in insurance. If such a man is worth \$50 a week to sell insurance in nine tongues, is he not worth as much to sell Bibles in the same number of languages?"

Only a few of the many interesting incidents and facts from this important Agency can be given here.

### **Reaction**

One feature has been emphasized: the Scriptures carried abroad by returning immigrants, or sent back to their homeland by those who are remaining in this country. Here is corroboration from the "Range Pastor": "Many thousands of the men who first heard the gospel in meetings on the Range have returned to their former homes in Europe, many of them to fight for their government and native land."

### **A Live Wire**

A modest, unassuming man, Gabriel Vas, is one of the chief workers of this Agency. His personal story is interestingly told; how he grew up as a boy in the homeland with the expectation of becoming a Catholic monk, came to the United States and here met a colporteur in Bridgeport, Conn., and was led to determine to become a colporteur himself, and during the eight years that followed has "sold Bibles to

English, Hungarians, Poles, Russians, Lithuanians, Roumanians, Bohemians, Germans, Ruthenians, Bulgarians, Croatians, Serbians, Armenians, Italians, Syrians, Jews, Chinese, Arabians, Norwegians, and Greeks." One of the happiest experiences of his life was to see "my own dear wife turn from Catholicism and accept the truth of God's Word, and she has given much of her time, placing the Bible in many homes." When he went to Chicago, a fellow-Hungarian said that Chicago was a poor place to sell Bibles and that his efforts would be wasted, "and so Satan tried to discourage me and drive me back. But I have sold over \$7,000 worth of Bibles in Chicago and vicinity. In my experience I find it is easier to lead a Catholic to accept the truth than a Socialist."

### **“What a Range of Work!”**

The Rev. E. W. Jennett, working in and around Detroit, has found a Babel of languages there, selling the Scriptures in 31. It is estimated that the increase in the foreign population each year is 15,000. Fifty per cent. of the inhabitants of Detroit are foreign born, and 70 per cent. are of foreign parentage; an important and importunate field for the American Bible Society. What a range of work is the colporteur's! And, incidentally, what an amount of work is involved in keeping a stock in so many languages in good condition and easily available!

### **Atheism and Bolshevism**

Miss Sarah Grindley, the president and founder of the Gershom Settlement in Detroit, speaks of the atheistic tendency and Bolshevistic teachings among the foreign masses. "The work among these classes is most disheartening, but it goes on. The missionary sows the seed of the Kingdom of God, as a preacher teaches the Word."

### **And the Children**

The Rev. Neil Love, working in Michigan, rejoices in the opportunity of service, and the record of accomplishment, during the year. "The Bible is the book that makes way for itself. Many times do I read the Word to the people in their homes, and each time I read it it has a new interest." He finds the Catholics friendly, frequently selling Bibles to them. To him it was a soldier showed the Testament, already mentioned, with imbedded shrapnel which otherwise would have given him a mortal wound. The children are his special object. "One little fellow met me one evening on the street, just as I was going to my room. He had no money, but he was anxious to get a book. He asked me if I would stay until he went back several blocks to get the money. I hesitated, for it was cold and I was anxious to get to my room. However, his anxious, honest face overcame my hesitancy. He soon appeared with the price of the book, and when he told me that he had been attending Sunday school and for a long time had wanted a Bible of his own, I felt myself repaid for my wait."

### **Officials Note and Commend**

The veteran and successful colporteur, Mr. G. A. Perkins, made Omaha the center of his service for some time. Here he trundled his stock of Bibles in a little baby carriage and became a well-known, and, by some, at least, a much-appreciated vendor. An official of the street railway saw him on the street at his work and gave this heartening commendation: "I was glad to see that man buy that Bible. He had been talking to you before. People will pass your stand and their conscience will tell them that they ought to get a Bible and read it. I have been watching you for five years. I used to watch the men at

the shipyards in San Francisco doing this same kind of work. You people are doing a great work."

### **Read Twenty-eight Times**

One of many letters Mr. Perkins receives read: "God bless you much is my prayer. Do you remember I bought a small Testament of you in Omaha when you were there last? Well, I have read this book through twenty-eight times, and it is worn out."

### **A Fortnight's and Seven Years' Work**

During fifteen days' work in South Omaha, the cash sales were over \$100. The distribution was 294 volumes in the following languages: Bohemian, Bulgarian, Chinese, Croatian, Danish, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Roumanian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, and Swedish, making 20 different languages. Exactly 147 volumes were in foreign languages, and 147 in English. Forty Bibleless homes were supplied. Additional interesting individual cases will be found in the fuller Report.

Mr. Perkins' summary of seven years' work shows a total distribution of 77,275 volumes in 31 languages; 3,186 Bibleless homes having been supplied, and he having traveled 25,000 miles in 12 states.

### **In Jail**

Another successful and devoted worker is Mr. Otto H. Nater, in Indianapolis, one phase of whose work, that in connection with the city jail, has been so blessed through 40 conversions and the distribution of over 800 Scripture volumes among the prisoners.

### **Conclusion**

Dr. Kirkbride closes his report by the remarks: "Our problem is simply to furnish the books when wanted and in the quantities desired."

## South Atlantic Agency

*Agency Secretary:* REV. M. B. PORTER  
313A East Grace Street, Richmond, Va.

Established 1907. Field: Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Circulation in 1919, 71,563 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1907, 1,193,514 volumes.

Candor is appropriate and only right in these reports. Discouragements as well as encouragements, difficulties as well as advances, should characterize and do characterize them. For example, Mr. Porter mentions the difficulties which more or less have been experienced by all his fellow-Secretaries, where depleted appropriations have diminished the working force, and the condition of the money market, the upheavals in the labor world, the uncertainty of transportation, and the limited supply of books have all been serious handicaps. On the other hand he rejoices in, and gives numerous illustrations of, the encouraging increase of voluntary service.

### Distribution

More than the mere figures will be seen by the sympathetic reader in the following table:

	Bibles	Test's	Portions	Total	Value
Sales at the depository.....	8,728	6,942	9,447	25,117	\$6,240.07
Colporteurs' sales.....	6,925	13,017	12,764	32,706	11,938.94
Donations at the depository.....	687	2,823	8,096	11,606	1,121.78
Donations by colporteurs.....	132	288	205	625	135.97
Miscellaneous.....	4	1,505	....	1,509	456.00
Grand totals.....	16,476	24,575	30,512	71,563	\$19,892.76

### A Child Shall Lead

One of the effective workers, Mr. Herbert G. Spence, had come with experience from service in Canada with the British and Foreign Bible Society, and produced very encouraging results until business compelled his return to Canada. He found Tampa quite a cosmopolitan city and tells interestingly of experiences in his work. A Cuban lad, met on the

street and asked for information, led to the selling of 12 Bibles. A cordial woman, having obtained a Bible for herself, sold it to a neighbor and called for another, doing this four times, thus helping in the circulation of the Scriptures.

### **Godless Husbands**

Mr. Spence writes: "There were grievous instances of husbands being indifferent or opposed to the use of the Word of God in the home, and wives having to buy the Bible on their own account, in some instances without the knowledge of the husband. Other happy instances occurred of parents buying the Bible for their home when the opportunity thus offered, saying they had been neglecting God's Word, but were glad to get and read it again. Through the visit of the colporteur, blind Jananschek, a newspaper vender, is now the delighted possessor of a Book of Psalms in the raised characters for the blind.

### **A Factory Hand Helps**

Mr. J. W. Nimmo, employed at a factory, loves the Bible so much that he wants others to receive and believe its message; so he gave odd hours to its distribution. "My work has been mainly in the suburbs of the city, and now and then I find families without Bibles. I never leave such families without putting a Bible in the home, whether they have money or not."

### **The Poor also Buy**

Another who circulates the Scriptures while on his rounds in other business, says: "I find an increasing desire on the part of the people not only to purchase Bibles and Testaments, but to get the best bindings, and generally larger type. It is marvelous how the poor people among the whites buy the Bible. A few weeks ago, in St. Johns Presbytery, Florida, a sixteen-year-old girl wanted a Bible, but had no money.

After selecting the one she wanted, she offered to pay in huckleberries, which I accepted; and the girl seemed happy with her new Bible."

### **His Plan of Work**

"Whenever I undertake to canvass an incorporated town of any size—from 3,000 to 15,000 population—I first seek the acquaintance of the pastors, then I go to the mayor and explain to him my work and its nature and get his consent to operate in his territory; otherwise I am sometimes accosted by some policeman or town officer asking for my authority or license to place Bibles for sale in homes in the town. I always begin my work on the outskirts of a town or city, and generally work toward the center, requesting each family visited kindly to tell their friends concerning the nature of my work and how I do the work. The plan paves the way for me, and frequently I am approached by persons who desire me to come to their homes. I preach without fee or reward in as many places as I possibly can, as this also makes easier my entrance into many homes. I am a member of a few secret orders and I also get acquainted with the people the quickest way possible, and thus in these methods my work is accomplished."

### **A War By-Product**

"I have observed during the latter days of war an increased interest in the reading of the Scriptures. Whether this is due to a care on the part of the people to search if the end of time were approaching, or to a deeper spirituality, I will not say; but the fact remains that I have increased my sales at least 33 per cent. since the world war began."

### **Good Results**

In North Carolina, the Rev. George R. Gillespie has been a main factor in the circulating of the

Scriptures, in connection with his pastoral work. "During the months we have been distributing your Bibles we have noted a wonderful increase in the interest manifested in the study of the Word and the interest in hearing simple Bible expositions. More than a hundred homes, besides an equal number of individuals, without Bibles or Testaments of any description have been supplied, either at reduced price or free of charge. The county jail and the chain gang have been furnished with Bibles, hundreds of portions have been distributed to the young people and uneducated, and many souls have been won into the Church of Jesus Christ through personal work in the distribution of Bibles and Testaments—souls that possibly could not have been reached in any other way. Next to the grace of God, not excepting the preaching of the Word, I count the work of a colporteur the most effective means that God is using to-day in the reclamation of lost men, women, and children." Mr. Gillespie has put others in his church to work and reports that the commissions from sales support one family of three: an invalid mother, a crippled son, and a son who is able to act as a colporteur; all formerly being supported through church charities.

### **Memory Pictures**

The Agency was afflicted through the death of one of its valued and consecrated workers, Mr. J. Q. Swann, also a worker in North Carolina. He drew effectively various memory pictures, some of which have been mentioned in previous pages: of a bare-foot boy whose benediction on receiving an eight-cent Testament for four cents was such a sweet surprise; of a poor girl who was ready to give her only trinket in exchange for the Testament she so longed to obtain; of a stalwart soldier, just returned from the tumult of war, who, in a serious vein, told of the



little khaki Testament, "the armor of light," he had borne in many a conflict; of a khaki Testament picked up on a battlefield in France by an English soldier and returned by him to the given address in America, and there discovered with glad surprise by its owner on his return, who, now, his sister said, "always reads from that little Testament at our evening prayer"; of a lame cripple in a house on a hill, whom the colporteur, at the end of the day, with all Bibles sold, found without a Bible, and who walked several miles with no little difficulty that he might obtain a Bible, the need of which he realized as a result of his conversation with the colporteur.

### **A Suggestion to Ministers**

There is, perhaps, a suggestion to other ministers, who, although busy in their own work, still would be glad to forward the circulation of the Scriptures, in the example of the Rev. R. N. Hartness, who, without compensation except traveling expenses, visited a number of Conferences in the interests of the Bible Society.

### **Conclusion**

Mr. Porter concludes: "We believe that the work we are doing is the work that God has planned for the saving of the world. There have been days of apprehension and fear, but we must not fail, for with His help we *can*, and upheld by the optimism of the Cross, we *will* succeed."

## Western Agency

*Agency Secretary:* REV. A. F. RAGATZ, D.D.  
808 Railroad Building, Denver, Colo.

Established 1907. Field: New Mexico, Arizona, Idaho, Wyoming, Montana, Utah, Colorado, Missouri, and Kansas. Circulation in 1919, 32,757 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1907, 544,853 volumes.

The most mountainous Agency is this Western. In its extensive and difficult area, through the co-operation of 13 colporteurs, 15 correspondents, and 24 voluntary workers, the 32,757 volumes of Scriptures distributed consisted of 9,560 Bibles, 13,756 Testaments, and 9,441 portions.

The burden and sorrow of his own home, bereft of wife and mother, did not interfere with the realization of the importance and variety of the work of his difficult field, or his appreciation of the devoted and self-sacrificing labors of his co-workers, on the part of the Agency Secretary, Dr. Ragatz. Several weeks of the spring and early summer were spent by him at New York, rendering important and original help in the preparation of charts and other material for the Methodist Centenary at Columbus.

### Helpers Scarce

While the aid of voluntary helpers has been appreciated and is mentioned in the report, it is also recorded that the Western Agency has never had so few voluntary or unpaid workers—this, because the high cost of living had compelled so many who had formerly co-operated to seek some remunerative employment. It is Dr. Ragatz who makes record of the diffidence and silence of correspondents who claim to have “nothing to tell,” but who, on interrogation prove to have had very interesting and sometimes very unusual experiences, some of which are mentioned on page 33.

### In Missouri

One of his choice workers, the Rev. Rade Pesut,

was employed in Missouri and gives an interesting report from which but few illustrative excerpts may be given.

### **Two Factors which Diminish Distribution**

"I have found it somewhat more difficult to distribute Bibles and Testaments in the year since the signing of the armistice, than in the war year immediately preceding. There are two factors entering into the problem: first, the rising cost of living, which leaves the working man with a narrower margin of money to spend out of his income; and second, the spirit of criticism and fault-finding, which has increased much in this period.

### **Light on Life's Problems**

"One man told me he was very glad to read the Bible in such trying times, 'because I find in it help for a better living.' Another said, 'This Book is my life; it shows me the right way to go; I would be glad to have my friends buy Bibles and each man to learn the Way for himself.' Another man told me, 'When I read my Bible I find an explanation of my life problems, and help to meet them.'

### **"Dear to Me"**

"I sold a Bible to a man who showed me a copy which he had marked copiously. As passages here and there 'found him,' he would underscore the same. As I looked at the book he said, 'You will see that I use my Bible. It is a very dear book to me. I wish to purchase another copy and take it to my son that he too may read and find therein the Way of Life.'"

### **Purchasers of Seven Nationalities Testify**

He mentions interesting testimony from numerous purchasers: A converted *Jew*, who, in answer to an atheist, replied: "Once I was blind, but now I can

see the Light of the World in Jesus"; a *Finn*, who said, "The Jew is right; I, too, have been converted by reading the Bible. This book in my hand reached my heart and is a lamp unto my path"; a *Croatian*, who said that atheistic teachings had not disturbed his faith. "I believe in God; no man can rob me of this comfort and experience"; a *colored* man, who said, "I found the best education in this book. I never have had trouble with anybody, because I followed the teachings of Jesus Christ"; a *Serbian*, who testified that the Bible is "a book that every man should study"; a *German Catholic*, who said, "Bring the best Bible you have, regardless of cost; it is a book that every man should study"; and an *American*, who showed the Bible he had purchased a year earlier, much marked up from his study of it.

### War's Influence

"My experiences have revealed the interesting fact that the great war has not diminished the people's interest in the Bible. I have revisited several communities where a year ago I made some rather remarkable sales, and found happily that on this occasion the people were even more willing to purchase the Scriptures, and yet more willing to have their teachings made plain."

### In Idaho—Reaching the Lonely

An earnest and successful colporteur, whom the Agency has lost because of a physical breakdown, was Mr. Lee Moran, who worked in Idaho. The rigors of the climate and the strain of traveling did not daunt him, though they told on his strength. He found the people in rural districts seldom had religious services and the children no Sabbath school and, therefore, naturally not religiously inclined. But he rejoiced in placing Testaments in many needy homes. The contrast of work in the city with that in the

country embarrassed him deeply, the influence of city life being not Godward. He truly says:

### The Colporteur a Missionary

“The work of the colporteur should be vastly more than mere ‘salesmanship’ and ‘commercialism.’ He must be in the fullest sense a missionary, with a burning love for the souls of men. His great task is to so present the Scriptures, as to arouse interest in the



Just as the munition factory is to the soldier at the front, the Bible Society is to the Missionary in the field.

It translates and supplies the Bible to the Missionaries of all denominations



Bible Society Secretaries and colporteurs are Pioneers Of Missions at home and abroad

**NO BIBLES—NO MISSIONS**

ONE OF MANY CHARTS PREPARED BY DR. RAGATZ

Word; people will then possess themselves of the Book and earnestly seek the truth it contains.”

### In Utah—The Gospel Mission

The Utah Gospel Mission has been a channel of distribution in that city. It sends out only voluntary workers, providing simply for their living expenses, and has a definite programme for its workers. First, to visit every home and endeavor, through

personal conversation on religious matters, to bring a message to the individual, special literature dealing with Mormon doctrines being provided. The second object is to supply every home with a Bible, the Word being expounded, its claims discussed, and every home urged to buy and to study reverently God's Word. The third objective is the conducting of evangelistic services. During the year 10,913 calls were made by colporteurs—reaching approximately 60,000 people, and selling 2,731 volumes of Scriptures besides donating 42 copies.

### **The Task**

“Let our readers not fail to place the proper importance upon this work. Imagine the task of traveling by horse and wagon over thousands of square miles, and canvassing 103 towns or villages ranging in population from 100 to 30,000. And here is the climax and ultimate proof of the need of this work. Only *nine* of the places visited, so far as we know, had even so much local Christian work as a family Sabbath school.”

### **Unexpected Helpers and Purchasers**

Another worker in Utah is the Rev. William Hutton, connected with the Presbyterian Church, who had the joy of winning the interest of a boy in a Mormon family to the reading of God's Word, and a year or two later learning that he had determined to be a Presbyterian preacher when he grew up. He also tells of a hotel-keeper's little son, who induced his father to buy him a Testament on Saturday, and on Sunday not only read two Gospels himself, but coaxed men sitting about the lobby to buy Testaments and read and talk about the Scriptures.

### **Sales in a Poolroom**

Mr. Hutton says: “A poolroom is probably the last place one would think of selling Bibles; but there is

no more needy place, and so I do not pass them by. In one of these poolrooms, the proprietor bought a Bible for himself and a copy of Hurlbut's Story of the Bible for his children. Through his example several of the men who were playing pool stopped, examined my stock, and bought either a Bible or a Testament."

### **In Missouri's Swamps and Woods**

A worker in Missouri, Mr. Luther Blackshare, spent much of his time among the settlers in the swamps and woods. In order to get to many of the homes he had to walk on saw logs. Some houses were not accessible on account of the mud and water. He found many of the people thankful to have him call and bring the Bible to them, no minister ever having called in some of the homes.

In one home a girl of perhaps sixteen appeared. She was keeping house for her father. They had no Bible. She said she had been a Christian and had gone to a revival in a nearby town on purpose to be helped in finding her way back to God, but got into evil company and came home further away from God than when she went. She gladly accepted a Bible and promised to go to God in prayer and confession.

### **Astonishing Ignorance**

The ignorance of people about the Bible is sometimes discouraging and astonishing. "One of the most influential business men of the town listened to me while I told him about the Bible, and, when I showed him my stock of variously bound books, asked, 'How many different Bibles are there anyway?' He actually thought each binding was a different Bible. After a long series of most amazing questions, he bought a copy and said he would read it."

### **In Kansas—Teaching Children**

Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Bowie, faithful companions and faithful colporteurs, completed another fruitful

year with the Bible Society. Equipping themselves with a Ford, they had gone overland, visiting scattered homes and putting emphasis on every child having a Testament, reporting considerable success in spite of opposition on the part of some parents and unconcern on the part of others. They found fewer families without Scriptures in Kansas than they had ever before encountered under similar circumstances. One remembers in this connection that Kansas has been a prohibition state for some time.

### **In Colorado—Helping the Sick**

A devoted worker, Mrs. Lea M. Bennett, had an unusually eventful year in her Bible work among the sick in Denver's County Hospital. She tells of a very sick man in the tuberculosis ward, approaching sixty years of age and in great distress of soul because of the wicked life he had led, who by hearing the Bible read recalled its message in his boyhood days and ultimately found forgiveness and peace. A deserted little mother, only twenty-one years old, who had attempted to commit suicide, through the story of the wonderful love and forgiveness of God through Jesus, was transformed into a happy, radiant-faced woman of purpose who wanted to get well to help others find Him in whom she had trusted. An old paralytic, blind for twenty-seven years, had been run over by an automobile, but to him the message of the gospel came with its healing, strengthening grace, and, though it was a hard struggle for him to give up bad habits, he persevered and said it was worth while being run over, because he was happier now than he ever had been in his life.

### **Conclusion**

“Truly the Word of God accomplishes marvelous things when received by a penitent heart and accepted in faith and trust.”



## **Pacific Agency**

*Agency Secretary:* REV. A. WESLEY MELL.  
122 McAllister Street, San Francisco, Cal.

Established 1907. Field: California, Nevada, Washington, and Oregon.  
Circulation in 1919, 75,014 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1907, 986,739 volumes.

The report of this elongated and important Agency discloses a variety in work, alertness and audacity in method, and vigor and joy in service, that are stimulating. The Scriptures were circulated in the 64 languages and dialects named on page 40. It is no small matter either that the Scriptures were available in so many languages, or that they were desired by peoples of so many tongues. And it is even better to know that many of these Scriptures have been distributed by those whose knowledge of the language concerned, and love for the Word itself, have helped to win a welcome to the message. Mr. Mell was fortunate in having many fellow-workers who use Italian, others who use Spanish, Swedish, Chinese, German, Finnish, and Japanese, as well as the languages of other nations.

### **Increased Co-operation**

Glad record is made of the fact that there was a larger co-operation on the part of regular church workers, interdenominational agencies, and independent self-supporting missionaries and personal workers. By the aid of 240 such volunteers, the 7 colporteurs and 91 correspondents, covering 31,148 miles of travel, visited over 15,173 families and supplied 2,068 of the 3,080 found without the Scriptures. The circulation was 9,027 Bibles, 14,722 Testaments, and 51,265 portions, a total of 75,014 volumes, slightly exceeding the circulation of the year before.

### **Extra Agency Work**

Mr. Mell gave some time to special work in New York, assisting in the preparation of the Bible So-

ciety's exhibit for the Methodist Centenary celebration at Columbus, Ohio. His annual report, like his Agency, is large and, like his methods, is varied. Only a few of the many interesting features can be here presented without endeavoring in each case to give credit to the individual concerned.

Here is something of value, not only for its interest, but for its suggestion. It comes from a lady volunteer who has sent out the Word in a score of languages.

### **A Stimulating and Suggestive Example**

"Your Bibles and Gospels have found an entrance into the Isolation Hospital, among the lepers, where there are many nationalities. I rejoice whenever I see an ash-wagon, for it gives me another opportunity to plant the seed in the heart of an Italian. Some one said to me sometime ago, 'Oh, you seem to know just the word to give away and the nationalities.' I replied, 'Just begin to give God's Word among the different nationalities, and you, too, will soon see in just what work they are divided. You will find the cement workers are Italians and the bootblacks are Greeks and Italians, and the restaurant owners Greeks, etc. I praise the Lord he has opened my eyes, and I no longer pass them by, but grasp even the open door and heart for God's Word, that he promises shall never return to him void.

"Oh, that every follower would daily pass along His Word to the milkman, the grocery man, the ashman, the gardener, and all the neighborhood—Jew and Gentiles, Filipino butlers and French maids in the neighborhood! Our Heavenly Father is expecting us—every one of his family—to witness and distribute his love letter to us, the Bible, beginning at Jerusalem and Samaria, to the uttermost parts of the world."

### **Tact and Results**

A worker in Portland found a man standing on the street looking with a critical eye at a new building. It was not difficult to get into conversation, with that opening, and the result was:

“I gave him the Book of John and I marked the following verses: John 5:24; 6:37; 1:29; 8:10-11; 7:17; 15:11; 10:27, 28, 29. In about four weeks I received a letter asking me to come and see him. This I did and found a home where the family altar had been established; he had become a member of the church and he told me that the Scripture in the Book of John which was given him led him to Jesus Christ.”

### **A Happy Frenchman**

Mention has been made on an earlier page of a fine-looking Frenchman who greeted Mr. Ole Johnson with the words, “I am so glad to see you again. Seven years ago you and your wife were in Tacoma, Washington. You were in an auto and I bought a French Testament from you, and I found Jesus through that little book, and he makes me now very happy.”

Work has been carried on among the Indians, the logging camps, the border Mexicans. Also among transient Asiatic seamen at San Pedro, on Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and San Francisco Bay. Mr. Zimmerman, who obtained a “gospel boat” for such work in San Francisco harbor, mentions many interesting results of his 316 visits to the ships of all nations, in which he distributed 418 Bibles and Testaments and 6,791 Gospels.

### **Sailors of Many Nations**

Two hundred Dutch soldiers on one cargo vessel had not a single Testament, and two hundred hands went up to get the dozen that were available: more

were brought and all were satisfied. Only the chief engineer on a Nippon freighter had a Bible: he had been to a mission school in Japan and learned there to love and carry his Bible with him. The only one, of many Japanese offered a portion of the Scriptures, who ever declined, could not read or write. "A Japanese chief officer who was found to be a constant reader of a copy of the New Testament given to him two years before on a previous visit testified, 'Jesus is very precious to me.'" Spanish Scriptures aroused the interest of those on a Peruvian ship, who eagerly sought copies, none of them having a Bible. "On a Japanese liner both the officers and crew were without Scriptures: the chief officer took a Testament, looked it over and said, 'I don't know how to become a Christian'; he was shown, and he took the Lord at his word and also the Book itself gladly." "The Testament given a young Chinese made the way clear, and he went his way rejoicing." "A young apprentice having a Christian mother was writing a letter home when he was shown a copy of the Scriptures: he said, 'My mother is praying for me, I know it'; he read parts of the book shown him and before I left him he said, 'I will settle it now'; he promised to finish the letter in the right way by writing home the good news."

### **Volunteer Street Preachers**

Considerable space is given in the full report to the voluntary service of a devoted layman, Mr. Caulkins, who has been doing preaching on street corners in San Francisco and distributing Scriptures in this connection. Many have been reached. Among them was a wealthy man who frequented the street preaching and finally, through it, was led into a happy Christian experience, and himself participated in the preaching. Two young fellows, showing marks of dissipation, were also reached through the study of

the Word and, while undergoing a "cure," "took with them a little Gospel of John and found in Christ the real 'blood cure.'"

### **In Nevada**

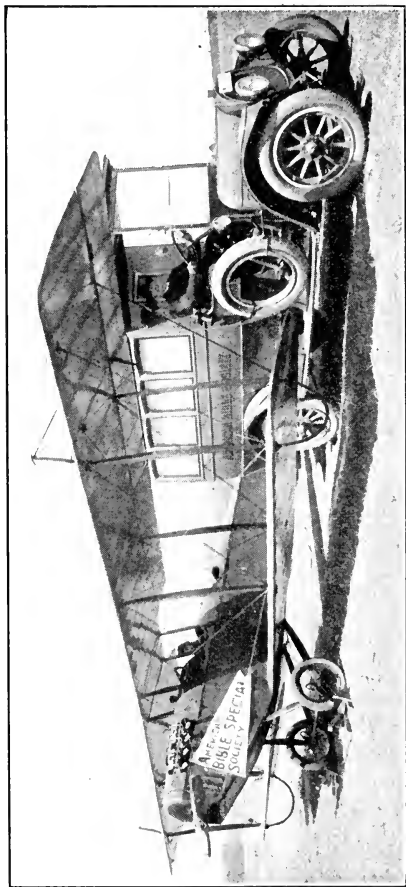
A colporteur in Nevada tells of an experience which would be encouraging to any worker. "Some of the pastors accompanied me in my house-to-house visitation in the towns. Others took me in their autos to visit people in the more sparsely settled country districts. Some of the church people were also very helpful in this respect." Conditions in Nevada were found to be improving, largely through the introduction of prohibition.

### **A Layman's Activities**

C. W. Anguish, layman of the Free Methodist Church in Washington, is the Sunday-school secretary of the Puget Sound Conference, and is making a special campaign to get the children to reading and memorizing the Scriptures. Though a layman and without salary, he has spent about 100 days in this service, and traveled some 2,000 miles. Mentioning several instances, he concludes: "I have secured pledges from 1,500, young and old, to memorize a verse and to read a chapter of Scripture each day."

### **By Aeroplane**

One of the arresting features of the year's report is the use made of the aeroplane for Scripture circulation. The first lot was a consignment from San Francisco across the Bay to a convention in Sacramento. It consisted of 2,000 Gospels of John, each having stamped on the cover the outline of an aeroplane with the words, "A Message from Heaven, Delivered by Aeroplane." Later, in celebration of Universal Bible Day, 6,000 similar volumes were sent to the Church Federation of Los Angeles, over the



#### HOW THE BIBLE GOES

The great bulk of Scriptures are circulated through colporteurs, correspondents, voluntary workers, and over the counters of depositories. Any and every legitimate method is used: Pack-saddles, bullock carts, boats, and more recently automobiles, and now even the aeroplanes are helping in this world-wide service. (See August, 1919, *Record*, page 122.)

Tehachapi Mountains, the Church Federation of San Francisco being represented at the dedicatory services. Still later, Scriptures were similarly distributed in celebration of Christmas to the inmates of the great state penitentiaries at Folsom and San Quentin and the military prisons around San Francisco Bay.

### **Christmas Gifts to Prisoners**

“The American Bible Society had charge of the arrangements and was to provide souvenir Gospels of St. John. The Jewish community, through the kind co-operation of Rabbi Martin A. Meyer, provided Psalms, and the Catholics, through the Paulist Fathers, provided a little manual of Scripture verses and several prayers. These were packed separately, but went in the same cargo with the Scriptures from the American Bible Society. The California Sunday-School Association paid the expenses of the aeroplane for San Quentin and Folsom and the hydroplane for the San Francisco Bay prisons; the Young People’s Societies, the Christian Endeavors, the Epworth Leagues, and the Salvation Army provided sweets to be delivered to San Quentin, and the Salvation Army to the other prisons, while Southern California Orange Growers, through the kind co-operation of Dr. Haywood, provided an orange for each prisoner at San Quentin.

“With prayer and benediction, the huge hydroplane, piloted by Dan Davison, who carried the 2,000 Scriptures to Sacramento and the 6,000 over the mountains to Los Angeles, sailed across the San Francisco Bay, and in circling flight over the great military disciplinary school at Alcatraz, dropped a bundle of Scriptures for the prisoners, to the awaiting chaplain and officials; and then after sailing over Angel Island and dropping some Scriptures there for Miss Mauer, the deaconess, and our co-worker among the emigrants,

the big hydroplane flew north across the waters to the world-famed San Quentin penitentiary. It circled the prison four times. The 2,000 prisoners were out in the court-yard and it seemed as though every officer was on top of the walls or buildings to welcome the coming of the plane with the Word of God. The hydroplane landed on the water, where it was met by a boat from the prison, and the transfer of the 2,000 Scriptures was made to the prison officials. They were distributed, with a package of candy, to each one of the prisoners. Two large bundles of California red berries were also sent to the prison with the Scriptures. The Chaplain's letter of thanks said in part, 'The whole has proved interesting, and from all reports very highly beneficial to the men.'

### **Help Out of the Sky**

As will be readily understood, all of these occasions aroused much interest. Souvenir copies were eagerly sought. One remarkable incident is reported: "A broken-hearted young woman was in a Los Angeles cemetery selecting a spot in which on the morrow to lay the form of her dear mother. Overcome with grief and unutterable loneliness of heart, all seemed dark. Suddenly there fell at her feet, out of the sky, like a pearl blown from a rose, a tiny copy of the Gospel of St. John. She was attracted by the name, as her mother had come from St. Johns, New Brunswick, and, opening it, her eyes fell on the fourteenth chapter, "Let not your heart be troubled.\*\*\* I go to prepare a place for you." And her heart was comforted and courage strengthened. It had come 4,000 feet through the air from an aeroplane which had passed, unnoticed, over her."

"We often think how it would interest Mr. Pfeiffer, the Frenchman, who, in 1914, studied aviation with a view of dropping Gospels upon the crowds at the Panama-Pacific Exposition. Mr. Pfeiffer had been



converted by reading a New Testament given to him when he landed at Ellis Island. His joy was great, and he felt that the one way above all others to bring men to Christ was to get them to read the New Testament. So, when he came to San Francisco, he spent half of his salary purchasing French Testaments and Gospels for distribution in the San Francisco French and Italian quarters, but he could not reach as many this way as he desired, and when, in 1914, an aeroplane school was opened by Mr. Christofferson in San Francisco, he became a pupil of aviation and sent to France for his engine, and expected to become a Gospel distributor, dropping Gospels from the clouds in San Francisco. He expected each copy to be beautifully and artistically bound and souvenired. The war broke out. Immediately he joined the colors in France. His own plan failed, but the suggestion bears fruit to-day."

### **Jews**

Mr. Mell closes his report with this interesting statement: "There has undoubtedly been among the Jews a new interest in the Word of God. Colporteurs and correspondents have testified of the increased willingness of the Jews to purchase the Scriptures, New as well as Old Testaments, and a number of times Jews have come to the depository and have purchased the whole Bible. Only recently three Jews came into the depository and purchased a Bible for \$17.50, and wanted to make very sure that the New Testament was in the volume; and one of these men, who confessed that he had never read the New Testament, purchased the whole Bible in special leather binding, as a present to his son."

## **Southwestern Agency**

*Agency Secretary:* REV. J. J. MORGAN  
1304 Commerce Street, Dallas, Texas.

Established 1907. Field: Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Arkansas.  
Circulation in 1919, 69,217 volumes. Aggregate circulation since  
1907, 981,506.

The happy effect of prohibition, the regrettable depletion of stock limiting the circulation, the demand for family Bibles and whole Bibles and the sale of 1,400 Spanish Scriptures in fifteen days by one worker are a few of the striking facts of the year. It saw the Scriptures circulated in 40 languages in this area: 12,891 being Bibles, 26,653 Testaments, and 29,673 portions—a total of 69,217 volumes. Home missionaries rendered valuable assistance.

### **Many Things Different**

Rejoicing in a valued colporteur and linguist, the Rev. F. K. Ringsmuth, who speaks nine languages and dialects, Mr. Morgan gives his interesting story, from which we can take but little: "I observed many things which seemed to me entirely different from what I experienced three years ago. There is a real healthy hunger after the Word of God now, while some years ago there was among miners a general contempt for the Bible."

### **A Babylon of Religions**

"In my house-to-house work I encountered many interesting incidents. It is astonishing how many queer and erroneous views are held by people these days—a veritable Babylon of religions. People do not know what they believe. The 'Red Letter Bible' contributes to that. I find people who are sure that only the things printed in red ink are of God; all the rest is 'just history.'" He rejoices in the fruit of his labor, as well he may.

### A Chain and New Life

Through the making of a chain of verses in the Bible a woman is led to a new life. "She laughed and cried and kissed the Book and wanted to kiss my hands. She was an American, married four years to a miner, and was never in a church since her marriage." An old, invalid, forsaken man visited, and a



COLPORTEUR WILLIAMS, A FULL-BLOODED CHOCTAW

For work among Indians, as Armenians, Bohemians, Chinese, Hungarians, Greeks, Japanese, etc., are used to reach their countrymen in America.

young couple restored to faith, were others of whom he tells with gladness.

### "Why," Indeed?

An Italian purchased two Bibles and a New Testament in defiance of a priest's order and threat, saying: "The priest has the Bible, we know. If it is not an evil thing for him, why should it be for us?"

### **The Mexican Border**

Of peculiar importance was a three months' canvass of the Mexican border made by our native Mexican colporteurs, Luis V. Rodriguez and Reynaldo Torres. Not less than 6,000 Mexicans were supplied with Scriptures at this time. We regret that we have only a brief account of their work at Laredo for publication in this STORY.

### **On the International Bridge**

"I sold many Bibles to some of the most prominent men of Laredo and to the employees of the custom-houses on both sides of the International bridge. Some of the employees of the Mexican custom-house paid fifty cents for the Gospels and Proverbs, saying that they would give the money left to furnishing Gospels to poor families that could not afford to pay for them.

### **Mexican Protestants Unite in Honoring God's Word**

"In Laredo, Texas, a group of Mexicans bought a good number of Gospels, that were given to the children of poor families. All this stimulated the Christian people and aroused their interest in the propaganda of the Bible. They all agreed to hold a public meeting, and it was advertised in the Mexican press of the city. We held the public meeting in the principal plaza of the city and it was largely attended. The people that gathered around were not only content to listen to the Word of God, but many of them bought books to read in their homes."

### **In Louisiana**

It is estimated that 80 per cent. of the homes of Southern Louisiana are without a single copy of God's Word, and this is chiefly because the Roman Catholic priests object to the Bible, whether it

is a Catholic or Protestant Bible, telling the parents that they cannot understand the former, and that the latter "is full of lies." One of the workers says, "Bible distribution in Southern Louisiana is very discouraging. Doors of Roman Catholic houses are shut—ordered closed by priests."

### "R.F.D." Box Helps

One colporteur tactfully put a Gospel in the mail boxes on a country road. A girl thus found the Gospel of Luke and read it. The priest discovering it, threw it into the fire, angrily saying: "This book is prohibited by the Holy Mother Church." But the truth had begun to make her free, so she sought and obtained another Gospel.

### Suspicious and Inhospitable

"Creoles are markedly suspicious and inhospitable. One evening I was ten miles away from a livery stable. It had been raining and the roads were very muddy. After repeated failures to find a lodging, I had decided to stop alongside of the road, when someone directed me a mile away to a man who would *surely* take me in.

"'Impossible! We have hardly room enough for ourselves,' he said. I then asked to be admitted into his barnyard, saying that I could rest in my wagon. The man became visibly nervous and stammered that he was not the owner of the place. 'The proprietor is a kind of queer man,' he said, after he had recovered. 'He had me swear that I would never let a drummer or any stranger stop here overnight. Should it become known that a stranger is spending the night on our premises, I'm sure they would set fire to the buildings and you would be charged with the crime.'

"I had to follow my former plan. Driving my wagon alongside of the road in front of his gate, I unharnessed my horse, hitched him to a pecan tree,

and returned to my bed on wheels. After an hour or so I was awakened by a shout from the yard. Lifting up a blind of my wagon, I saw by the light of the moon the farmer standing at a distance, with a long rifle in his hands. 'Do you expect to spend all night here?' he said. 'I have to spend it somewhere,' I answered. 'No doubt you have,' was his reply; 'but it would be safer for you should you drive a few miles farther.' 'It must be a dangerous place, indeed, since you cannot go out at night without a long gun,' I replied. 'But both I and my horse are too tired to go any further for the present. You had better keep watch over me while I rest. I will be here until six o'clock in the morning.'"

### **In New Orleans**

Mr. Fernand Cattelain, a former colporteur in the West Indies, spent a part of the fall in New Orleans, starting Bible work and finding it a very difficult field. "The illiteracy, poverty, and unbelievable living conditions remind you of India and China," said a pastor. "In the city of New Orleans we found over fifty stores where articles for Catholics could be bought, but in none of these could a Bible be obtained." Nevertheless there was a refreshing fact stated by a minister, that a mission church, now having about two hundred members, in Lafourche, was the direct result of the work of a colporteur of the American Bible Society.

### **Arkansas**

A sad blow fell on the sub-depository and the Rev. D. H. Colquette in charge at Little Rock, through a fire which destroyed a large part of the stock. However, the work has been pressed on. The prisoners, the blind, and the poor have been supplied, though here again comes the good word that prisons and pauper institutions are decreasing in population, and

also in actual number, since the introduction of prohibition. "In the days when saloons were running in Fort Smith, I happen to know that often the old prison was so full of men and boys that you could almost see it 'breathe.' Only two negro boys were anywhere about the institution when recently visited."

### Volunteers

Among the voluntary helpers is mentioned a proprietor of a marble factory, who kept a stock of Scriptures and succeeded in selling many right among his other wares. A mechanic in a railroad shop set aside a portion of his tool-chest for Scriptures, and at the noon hour and other convenient times sold them to his fellow-laborers. A cripple was met who seemed ever ready to spend his spare cash for the Scriptures, distributing them among his friends and acquaintances.

### There Is no God

There is food for anxious thought on the part of those who care for the future of America, in the concluding paragraphs of Mr. Morgan's report, which we here give:

"There are 100,000 Bohemians in Texas. They are, for the most part, thrifty farmers, scattered about in the best farming sections of the state. Many are Roman Catholics; very few are Protestants; while the present-day drift is toward infidelity organized among them as the Society of Free-Thinkers. Their catechism teaches the following damnable tenets:

- "(1) GOD: is a word representing an imaginary being which people themselves have worked out.
- "(2) JESUS CHRIST: The illegitimate son of a virgin named Mary.
- "(3) BIBLE: Written by ordinary men; record of notions, not events; undependable; unbelievable."

# Eastern Agency

*Agency Secretary:*

REV. H. J. SCUDDER, B. D., January–September;

REV. SAMUEL C. BENSON, October–December.

137 Montague Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Established 1908. Field: The State of New York and neighboring regions not otherwise cared for. Circulation during 1919, 58,323 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1908, 600,932.

A double report is presented this year—the first part from the pen of Mr. Scudder, and the latter part from Mr. Benson, under circumstances already mentioned. An interesting and instructive variety of means and methods of Bible circulation in this populous, though somewhat limited, Agency, is set forth.

## **Variety in Means and Method**

County fairs, the active and financial co-operation of local Auxiliaries, the assistance of volunteers, the joyous, devoted, and fruitful activities of the employed workers, a motor boat and a motor bus, the aid of special funds, provided through the legacies of Bible lovers for work in certain areas, and other influences, have produced a circulation of Scriptures nearly double that of the previous year.

## **Accomplishment**

In 39 languages and dialects, 9,583 Bibles, 12,023 Testaments, and 36,717 portions, or a total of 58,323 volumes, were circulated in 1919, as against 30,393 in 1918. The Agency is unfortunate in having a very small force, because of limited funds; but it is fortunate in the quality of this force, according to the testimony of the Agency Secretaries.

Mr. Carlson, who had been with the Agency for some years and had lost health through his untiring activities, had to devote a part of the year to recuperation, but during this time was able to realize the accomplishment of his long-desired object—the pur-



chase of a good-sized motor boat to work along the water front of Brooklyn and other parts of the harbor.

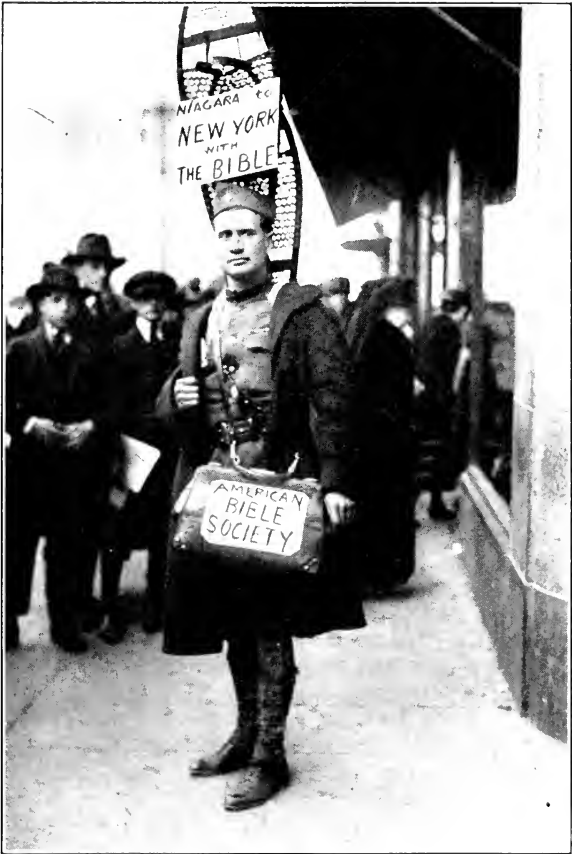
Another faithful and valiant worker, Mr. D. H. Findlay, sends in much of interest. He has continued his special activities in displaying the Bible Society's wares at county fairs, exercising considerable originality and versatility in competition with the vendors of other articles. He writes:

### **Pocket Mirrors with a Telescope Attachment**

"When I came off the car at Canandaigua the other day, I had my two large boxes in my hands, and I can tell you they were heavy; especially when you have about half a mile to walk from the car to the grounds. Well, as I was going along two men came walking beside me and began talking about the fair as usual; and when we were almost at the gate, one of them said to me, 'And what may you be selling, Mister?' 'Oh,' I said, 'I am selling pocket mirrors with a telescope attachment. Come over there,' I said, pointing out where my exhibit was to be, 'and I will show you something worth while.' Well, I did not get them until afternoon, but I got them all right. 'Whe're those mirrors, Boss?' one said. 'Right here,' I said, holding out the Bible. I began to read from James 1: 23, 24—the mirror—and also Isaiah 45: 22—the telescope attachment. Well, praise the Lord! I sold them each a Bible and had a heart-to-heart talk with them also."

### **Definite Results**

But this has not been his only line of activity. "During the past nine months, the dear Lord has used me in getting nine men and women to become church members, and they are worthy of the name, for they are Bible Christians, searching the Scriptures daily for themselves."



CHAPLAIN BENSON AT THE END OF HIS HIKE ACROSS NEW YORK  
Getting acquainted with his field, while circulating the Scriptures.

### **After Many Days**

“About ten days ago a lady called to see me about Bibles for a young ladies’ class. After she had secured what she wanted, she said: ‘Mr. Findlay, I am ashamed I have been so long in telling you this story, but I know you are not working for praise: you are working for results. Five years ago you were calling in our district, and you came to my door. My husband happened to be at home that day, praise the dear Lord; he was always a good man, although a Roman Catholic. Well, you and he had it out that day. If you remember, he brought you the books he loved to read and you said to him, “They are fine; but they are only man talking to man. Here is a book where God himself is talking to you and me.”’ I did not sell him a Bible, and yet I did, for I sold him the 31 portions with the little cover, and also secured from him the promise that he would read the Word for himself. He is one of our business men here and has now been a member of the Baptist Church for over four years. Continuing the story, the lady said: ‘This summer we had some of our friends from the West staying with us, and they, knowing that he was a great reader, asked him one day at the table who was his favorite author now. Well, Mr. Findlay, when I saw him go for his box of portions, I just cried for joy. “This Bible is my favorite book now and has been for the past five years. I will never forget what brought the change; when that Bible man stood before me holding out his book, he said, ‘This is God himself talking to you and me—read it for yourself’; and I did, praise the Lord.”’

### **A New Worker and Real Work**

Mr. A. B. Traina is a new worker on the force, but has been able to accomplish a real work. “Please note,” he writes, “that among 2,666 families visited, 1,793 had no copy of the Bible nor a portion thereof

indicating that there is a large portion of people still without the Word of God, and some have never heard of it. In these families I have left a copy of the Scriptures either by sale or gift, if there was anyone in the house that could read. In general the people receive the Word with gladness. The Italian, Polish and Greek Catholics are easier to reach than the American or Irish Catholics; and of the latter class they oftentimes refuse even a gift of Scriptures. Among the Italians I find that ninety per cent. of those who read are more willing to buy than to receive books as gifts, unless it be on account of sickness."

### **A Gospel Car**

Feeling greatly the need of a car to assist him in his work, Mr. Traina, by much self-denial, succeeded to acquire a car that had been used as a 'bus. This he fitted up so that there would be sleeping accommodations for two, and has used the car very effectively for several months. He had a number of signs made with texts and notices, in English on one side and in Italian on the other, so that they could be used for work in the two languages.

### **"She Would not be Frightened"**

On Long Island an old paralytic German Catholic lady delighted in having the colporteur read the Bible to her. When the priest learned of it and "told her she go to hell and be in pains forever after" she would not be frightened off. Eventually she and several relatives were converted.

### **Auxiliaries and County Fairs**

The work at county fairs has been participated in by different agencies and workers. The Ulster County Auxiliary conducted a Bible booth at Ellenville Fair; the Dutchess County French Bible Society met the entire expense of a similar work at the Rhinebeck

Fair, and the Orange County Bible Society co-operated with Mr. D. A. Silliman in the fair at Middletown, New York. "The Treasurer, M. Hurtin, generously assisted at the rush hours, charging nothing for his labors. We sold 9 Bibles, 36 Testaments, 2 portions, a total of 47 books, and received \$23.66.

### **Three Missions Formed**

The Rev. A. M. D. Riggio, "with his enthusiastic disposition born of his Italian blood, and his burning religious passion born of his love for Jesus Christ and his people, inspires those with whom he comes in contact." Through his colportage work, three missions have been formed; one in Jamaica, one in Corona, and one in Inwood.

There is space to simply quote a few other incidents without mentioning place or person:

### **"My Mother's Bible"**

"My mother died when I was only nine days old. I had one brother several years older than myself. When I was nine years old, I said to that brother, 'John, I have nothing that belonged to my mother; how I wish I had her Bible!' So he gave it to me, and I was so delighted that I spent all my spare time reading it. It told of a Saviour's love, and very soon I gave my heart to Jesus."

### **"This House Will Have a Bible Hereafter"**

"Not many miles from Gouverneur I called upon a well-to-do farmer, and after showing him my stock of books he selected a Bible priced at \$1.50 and said that he would take it, and passed me a ten-dollar bill in payment. After making the change he took the Bible and remarked, 'There, wife, this house will have a Bible in it hereafter.' 'No Bible in this house?' said I. 'No, Sir, this is the first Bible I have ever owned.' He was a man past middle life."

## Central Agency

*Agency Secretary:* REV. FRANK MARSTON, D.D.  
424 Elm Street, Cincinnati, O.

Established 1909. Field: Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi. Circulation in 1919, 50,143 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1909, 733,656 volumes.

“Contrast” may well be the word that epitomizes this report. Dr. Marston, while oppressed by the greatness of the need and opportunity, as compared with the supply of Scriptures and workers, is nevertheless full of courageous determination and definite plans for development. In Ohio, he contrasts rural and urban, the native-born American and the incoming foreigner; in Kentucky, the mountains of the east and the blue-grass region of the west; in Alabama, the emigration of the colored to the North, and the immigration of foreigners to industrial centers.

A force of 12 colporteurs and 14 correspondents, some of whom worked only half time and others even less, visited 45,000 families, and distributed 13,237 Bibles, 23,615 Testaments, and 13,291 portions, or 50,143 volumes, in 24 languages. The number of complete Bibles circulated were practically as many as the number of portions.

It may help to impress readers with the facts which exist in all the Home Agencies in varying degree if, from this report, we make selections revealing general conditions, instead of incidents of work.

### Character of the Population

The very character of the population makes it difficult to reach the people. The state of Ohio, for instance, is made up of a decidedly polyglot population. Here we have the confusion of tongues. Not only is it difficult to secure the Scriptures in the languages spoken, but it is likewise difficult to get men to assist in the distribution who can speak a

sufficient number of languages to make themselves understood, as they go from house to house.

### **Difficult of Access**

Then as to the people in the mountains and sparsely-settled districts, they live remote and are difficult of access. Homes are more difficult to enter now than a few years ago. People are more suspicious of strangers and tired of the multiplicity of calls from agents and solicitors. The breaking up of the old-fashioned individual home, and the substitution of the flat and apartment house "where people hide themselves away like foxes in the dens of the earth," increases the difficulties in the way of the colporteur. "It makes a woman mad to ring her door-bell these days, and you can't sell a Bible to a woman when she is mad." The labor question, the unrest of the present day, the high cost of living—all interfere with the sale of Scriptures.

### **Rural Ohio**

Speaking of Ohio, Dr. Marston calls it a "commonwealth of contrasts and cleavage lines." "We speak of Ohio as the 'mother of presidents,' and think of her as one of the banner states of the Union. At the same time we need to awake to a sense of our danger even here. The facts revealed by the recent Ohio Rural Life Survey, as to the real moral and spiritual conditions existing in some of the counties of south-eastern Ohio, are perfectly appalling. Evidently there is a great dearth of the Word of God in that whole section. It is unfortunate that the surveys made did not inquire into the situation of the people as to the supply of Bibles in the homes, as well as to the supply of church privileges. Many country churches were found to be closed for most of the year, if not entirely abandoned. The country church is constantly spoken of as the feeder to the city churches and the

source from which comes the largest proportion of the ministry. But if this is the condition of the country church, what of the city and the ministry? I speak of these things because of the vital relation between these conditions and the Bible cause. I am convinced that this distressing condition could never have arisen in the country had the Bible been given its proper place. When the 'Book of the Law' becomes a 'lost book,' the temple doors are shut and the nation's life is imperiled."

### **A Fine Auxiliary**

The Young Men's Bible Society at Cincinnati, which is a part of the Central Agency, co-operated in making a complete canvass of a large downtown section in that great city, visiting over 17,000 families, of which were found 4,000 without the Scriptures, and supplying 1,100 of them. This same Auxiliary has completed a canvass of the colored population of another section of that city and supplied Bibleless homes. A canvass of the Italian population is contemplated.

### **Kentucky**

"My men have found many Bibleless homes and many were so eager to buy. One of our colporteurs, a Baptist minister, went to a logging camp in the hills and told the men in the woods that he had come with a supply of Scriptures and would be at a certain place in the camp that evening with his supply. Not reaching there at the appointed time, they sent for him and bought out his entire stock. At another time, they came and stood in line, each man taking his turn, as if they were buying stamps at a post office." In this state also a house-to-house canvass of Covington was made. "A great many Bibles were sold to Catholics, and they were glad to get them."



### **Tennessee**

Into this state has come "a large influx of Mexicans—workers in the aluminum plants and lumber mills." "We were glad to make a donation of Testaments for a boys' clubroom in a mountain mission school, the request coming from a young man who is not himself a Christian. For while not a Christian, he felt that the best book to put within the reach of the other boys was the Word of God."

### **Alabama**

"The development of the rich mineral deposits, and the large manufacturing interests that have seized upon the vast belts of pine timber have brought into Alabama a great mixed population that has materially changed old customs. The large emigration of the colored population has changed conditions on the cotton plantations. The South feels this shifting of the population very materially."

### **Reaction on Bible Work**

"I speak of these things because these conditions react on the religious and church life of the people and thereby affect the work of the Bible Society seriously. A few years ago a colporteur of the Bible Society could travel through the country and be freely entertained in the homes of the people. He can do so no longer. The spirit of materialism seizes some classes; the Bible does not appeal to them. With other people the Bible has not lost its hold and the demand is greater than ever before. An old, experienced colporteur says that the only hindrance is a lack of sufficient Scriptures to supply the demand."

### **The Children Look Up and Are Not Fed**

Alabama has recently passed a law requiring the reading of the Bible in the schools supported by

public funds, and the Agency had not sufficient funds to respond to the opportunity offered by the superintendent of the public schools of Mobile County when he asked for 400 Bibles to be placed in the schools. "What a great thing it would be if we could say to every public school teacher in the whole state of Alabama, 'The American Bible Society stands ready to supply your school with sufficient Bibles for your needs.' But again it is true, that 'the children look up and are not fed.'"

### Mississippi

"This is a rural state, with only three towns having a population exceeding 20,000 people. Great destitution of the Scriptures exists among the poor. The pastor of one of the churches told me that, in one of the counties, he did not think there could be more than 10 per cent. of the people supplied with Bibles. I think he said 1 per cent., but I have put it 10 per cent. so as not to be guilty of an over-statement." The need for Bible distribution is surely apparent.

## Atlantic Agency

*Agency Secretary:* REV. FRANK P. PARKIN, D.D.  
701 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

Established 1910. Field: Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. Circulation in 1919, 144,277 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1910, 1,751,323 volumes.

With this report the first decade of the Atlantic Agency is completed, although organized work of Bible distribution in the United States was first begun in this region, and the Agency contains some of the oldest local Bible Societies. Its fields and problems are the crowded hives of industry rather than the wide stretches of farms and ranches. In 53 languages and 5 systems of embossed type for the

blind, 27,186 Bibles, 23,509 Testaments, and 93,582 portions, or a total of 144,277 volumes, were circulated.

Dr. Parkin spent a portion of two months at the Bible House in New York during the fall, in special duties in connection with the observation of Universal Bible Sunday.

### **Increased Demand For Foreign Bibles**

“One of the interesting phases of the ‘after-the-war’ period has been an increased demand for God’s Word by many of the foreigners. This has been especially true of the Ruthenians, Russians, and a few others. They require good Bibles and demand the large-size print. Unfortunately many of these foreign editions desired are still unavailable, owing to the delays in securing them from the foreign publishers. Our sales of foreign Bibles and portions could have been multiplied many times, had there been available supplies of these much-coveted versions.

### **A Spirit of Independence**

“While priests in certain sections have ordered many who purchased Bibles to burn them, the people are beginning to show a spirit of independence.”

### **Russian Students**

“In Philadelphia there is a large Bible school devoted entirely to the training of nearly one hundred young Russians, who are being prepared to return to their native land as evangelistic workers as soon as conditions will permit. I had two of these students during the summer vacation traveling among their countrymen and others, and acting as colporteurs. Their zeal and enthusiasm were an inspiration. In the providence of God, these devoted young Russians being trained here in America may prove to be among

the most effectual barriers to the spread of radical doctrines, so subversive of real liberty in Russia or elsewhere."

### **Colporteur Gay**

Not long since, the pages of the *Bible Society Record* had a brief review of his nineteen years of service as a colporteur from Mr. John Gay, who also has the distinction of being able to talk in eight languages or dialects and read three others. One further incident:

#### **"By Their Fruit Ye Shall Know"**

"A Slovak girl in Homestead, Penn., when some persons were speaking disrespectfully of the Bible, rebuked them and openly bought a New Testament. She said that she worked in Protestant homes and saw what kind of people the Bible makes. She also said that she had worked in other homes, where the Bible was neither read nor seen, and she can see the difference between the people that read and know the Bible and those who do not. The difference was also seen in their treatment of their servants."

### **Depositories**

Depositories are maintained at three major centers: At Pittsburgh, under the Rev. J. Walker Miller, "who has been in charge of this important industrial field for many years and has shown himself to be an upright, conscientious representative of our work in every respect"; at Scranton, under the Rev. H. G. Harned, our veteran superintendent, gladly aided by his devoted wife; and at Wilkes-Barre, under Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Stone, faithful colporteurs in connection with the Luzerne County Bible Society, which celebrated its centennial on Bible Sunday, November 30, 1919.

# THE FOREIGN AGENCIES

## The West Indies Agency

*Agency Secretary:* JOSÉ MARCIAL-DORADO, Ph.D.  
10 Allen Street, San Juan, Porto Rico.

Established in Cuba and Porto Rico in 1898. Field: Cuba, Porto Rico, Haiti, Dominican Republic, the Islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe, the Virgin Islands, and Venezuela. Circulation in 1919, 44,789 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1898, 791,127 volumes.

This is one of the two island Agencies of the Society, and probably is more diverse than the Philippines Agency. Dr. Marcial-Dorado is evidently getting into sympathetic touch both with his work and with representatives of various classes and occupations. He reports testimonies on the importance and results of the work, from officials, physicians, merchants, ship captains, writers, laborers, and sailors, as well as colporteurs and denominational bodies, some of which follow, and all of which are in the full *Annual Report*. They are very encouraging and leave a regret that a larger work has not been possible. Dr. Marcial-Dorado spent the earlier part of the year in visiting Venezuela and other portions of his wide-spread territory, and in the autumn went to Spain to bring his family to their new home. He reports that the territory of the Agency covers an area of 472,006 square miles and comprises a population of 10,549,700 inhabitants—of whom 6,500,000 are white, and 4,049,700 are colored. With sub-Agents in the various islands and 16 colporteurs, aided by 32 correspondents and 2 volunteer workers, 7,956 Bibles, 6,356 Testaments, and 30,477 portions, or a total of 44,789 volumes of Scripture, were circulated. He adds that could the workers have been furnished with all the Spanish and French books for which orders had been received, the distribution would have been four times larger.

### **Professor Bustamente's Remark**

“The demand for Bibles has been so great this year in the territories that form a part of our Agency, that we can truly say that the Holy Book is the Lighthouse of America. This truth was expressed and confirmed by a prominent man of Cuba, professor of the University and one who figured in former years in the government of the island—Mr. Bustamente. He said: ‘The citizens of the United States should make their first large donations to the Bible Society. The United States will gain more with the Bible than it will gain with its commerce and its politics. Because the Bible is the moral code, which attracts and impresses souls.’”

### **Testaments for Soldiers**

The American Bible Society during 1919 supplied an edition of khaki-bound Spanish Scriptures for distribution among the soldiers of the West Indies. These have been eagerly taken. Churches have sought them for distribution among the soldiers of their congregations and have made contributions for the expense involved. Some of the soldiers who had seen the English editions elsewhere were especially glad to get the khaki Testaments in the Spanish language. A soldier, who had been in the garrison in the Panama Canal Zone, said, “I cherish very highly this book, because I already have proved its healthy influence over many of my comrades.”

### **PORTO RICO**

The circulation in this island has been double that of the two preceding years, although it was impossible to supply enough volumes to fill in any way the demands. Church bodies and various denominations have taken action showing their appreciation of the work of the American Bible Society, the Presbyterian

Church temporarily supplying a place in which the offices of the Agency are established.

### **Why She Learned**

Dr. Marcial-Dorado writes: "Some very interesting experiences have come to me regarding the influence of the Bible upon all the social classes. Dr. Francisco del Valle, a prominent physician and sanitation officer of Porto Rico, said to me not long ago: 'I have a servant who learned to read after she was 59 years old because of her strong desire to read the Bible. One day after dinner she asked me for some money, and explained, "I am going to buy a Bible." "What for?" I asked; "you do not know how to read." "But I am going to learn right away," she replied. And sure enough, within seven weeks, the woman could read the Bible. A colporteur spoke to her first about the Bible. Soon after this she began attending a church, and then she became desirous of having a Bible and learning how to read it.'"

### **" Please Pardon the Mistake "**

On his various trips, Dr. Marcial-Dorado has met a variety of people. Some of them have spoken slightly of the Bible in conversation. Months after one of these conversations on a steamer, a rich commercial man of Cuba wrote: "I am now an assiduous reader of the Bible. Please pardon the mistaken statements I made when we talked together about religion. I understand now why such a sublime book as this has proved to be should be spread throughout the whole universe. I believe that the work of the American Bible Society is the best work done by Americans." A few days later a donation of \$26, to help pay for the khaki edition of the Testament in Spanish, was received from this man.

**SANTO DOMINGO****“This Is the Epoch”**

The sub-Agent in the south, the Rev. Van Vleck, and the Rev. Leon in the north, both have accomplished an encouraging distribution, though neither could be supplied with all the books ordered. The latter wrote: “This is the epoch, the moment, for the Bible. There are many people here anxious to help in distributing. The distribution of the Bible is the basis of the new Christian congregations that are now being formed.”

Mr. A. Davila, a noted writer, said to Dr. Marcial-Dorado on one of his trips, “I have never seen in Santo Domingo so much interest shown over religious matters as now.”

**CUBA**

The Rev. Sylvester Jones, of the Methodist mission, was in charge as sub-Agent, of the work for the first part of the year, and the Rev. Odell, a successful missionary of the Presbyterian Church, took up the work on Mr. Jones’ departure, giving a good deal of time and interest to it.

**Volunteer Helpers**

Mr. Jones writes: “In one church, the Christian Endeavor Society has taken the responsibility of distributing portions in the country districts, and the members of that society are doing a good work. In one town a poor, decrepit man, who had been selling different notions, is giving his entire time to selling the Bible and is meeting with great success. Several young men who attended a Sunday-school Convention took Scriptures with them to distribute and sell in their native towns.”

**Gratitude to America**

Dr. Marcial-Dorado, by request, held conferences about the Bible in the larger towns and churches.



Several prominent persons in the government university and commercial world expressed themselves in favor of a crusade which should fill Cuba with Bibles. "Without doubt," said a professor, "one of the greatest things for which we should be thankful, is the fact that the American people have brought us the Bible."

### **"It Is a Treasure"**

Colporteur Barros spent a couple of hours each day, during the noon siesta, in reading the Bible to the workers in a sugar factory. A few months later he found the employees still gathering to read the Bible together in the time they had to rest, all had the open Bible and followed in the reading. When the colporteur questioned one of the workmen about purchasing the expensive Bible he desired, the reply came, "I have spent money on useless things many times. It does not matter how much this costs, for it is a book which is profitable to all. It is a treasure."

When a would-be purchaser of a Bible at the depository was asked if he were a Christian, he answered, "No, sir, I am nothing. I do not know the Book, but I have heard it spoken of a great deal and I wish to read it and convince myself of the truth."

## **HAITI**

### **Opening Up a New Road**

The sub-Agent at Port-au-Prince, Mr. Baron, writes: "Send us all the books you possibly can. The Bible is opening up a new road in the hearts of the people. Our distributors and colporteurs are without books. They cannot do efficient work unless they have a good supply. The persons who know how to read ask with eagerness for the Bible. The Bible is sold much by colporteurs in the mountain homes."

## **GUADELOUPE AND MARTINIQUE**

The sub-Agents, Mr. Phipps and Mr. Fatacey, have found prompt use for all the books sent. There is

great ignorance yet as to spiritual matters and, therefore, great opportunity to bring the influence of the Bible to bear upon the people.

### **French Patriots Are Grateful**

A Christian man who represents a French firm, writes: "I have seen with great joy that the Bible is becoming known in the French Islands. I thank God. It is the best work that the Americans do in these countries. I am sure that all good French patriots are grateful for the disinterested labor of the American Bible Society in their midst and for these countries."

The captain of a French ship said, while praising the work of Bible distribution: "Three of my crew secured Testaments in the French islands. The reading of them seems to have interested them intensely, because in their leisure moments they do not join with the rest of the sailors in gambling and drinking. Off to one side of the ship they may be seen reading and reading constantly."

### **VENEZUELA**

Here, one long associated with the work of the American Bible Society, at one time its Agent, is now sub-Agent—the Rev. G. Bailly, a zealous friend of the Bible cause.

### **Colporteurs Hit and Helped**

The high cost of living (illustrated by the fact that a colporteur had to pay 30 cents to get a couple of eggs fried, he supplying the eggs himself) makes it hard for colporteurs. But there is a silver lining, for they are often shown hospitality in appreciation of the good purpose to which they have devoted their lives.

### **Sowing Gospels Produces Call for Bibles**

¶ In Venezuela there is now quite a demand for Bibles and Testaments, consequent upon the large number of Gospels already distributed, which have proved to be the seed of this demand. When the Agency Secretary visited Venezuela, the missionaries and Christian workers impressed upon him the importance of the present opportunity for the circulation of the Word.

### **A Notable Writer**

On visiting the Bolivar Museum, a notable writer of Venezuela said to him: "It is wonderful to observe what occurs with regard to this great book. Until now the Bible only had a historic significance for many people, like a great many curious and rare books. But the work of the Bible Societies is revealing to the world what the Bible is worth and what truth it contains—'the salvation of the people.'"

### **Two Merchants Buy Two Hundred Gospels**

Two merchants from a town near Maracaibo were traveling with the Agency Secretary, and showed great interest in the reading of a Testament which he placed in their hands. They bought two hundred portions. "We wish," they said, "to present a Gospel to each one of our best friends in the city."

### **Conclusion**

The report closes with the three-fold statement that the conscience of the Latin-American people is awakening, that this constitutes a hope for great harvests in the future, and that it demonstrates the great desire that the people have to be helped to a higher and better level.

## Mexico

*Agency Secretary:* REV. A. H. MELLETT  
Apartado 1373, Mexico City, Mexico.

Established 1878. Field: Republic of Mexico. Circulation in 1919, 100,715 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1878, 1,311,712.

The first full year of supervision by Mr. Mellen is covered in this report. Interesting departures and developments in methods have characterized the year.

An almost 50 per cent. increase in the circulation of the Scriptures during the year was attained, and it would have been larger had books been available.

There were 5,852 Bibles, 6,093 Testaments, and 88,770 portions, making a total of 100,715 volumes of Scriptures, circulated in 1919, as contrasted with 70,940 the year before. More than twice as many Bibles and Testaments were circulated than the year before, and Bibles in finer binding have been called for. This increase in circulation is laid to the credit not of the Secretary nor the workers, but to the simple fact that "the call for the Bible is increasing. For this there are two causes: One is the steady growth of missionary work; and the other, a great hunger for something to sustain the inner life of the soul in the trials and hardships of life." The oldest colporteur, who has tramped the roads and canvassed the villages around Mexico City for about twenty years, is now selling more books than ever before.

A fact perhaps not often realized is stated in these words: "In Spanish-speaking countries, as well as in all missionary lands, the only Bibles available are those put out by the great national Bible Societies."

### **A National Trait Used**

The national trait of a love for the artistic and the beautiful was called into action by placing pictures in a new catalogue. Two pages of Bible story titles were also inserted. The pictures caught the attention,

and the Bible story titles led to the study of the Bible. "If there has been any perverted use of the pictures it has not come to my notice. One of the young student colporteurs told me that he entered a "pulque shop"—which is the Mexican equivalent of a beer saloon. He first offered his books with no response, and on showing a catalogue one of the men asked another to lend him money to buy one of the books."

### **Enthusiastic Young Colporteurs**

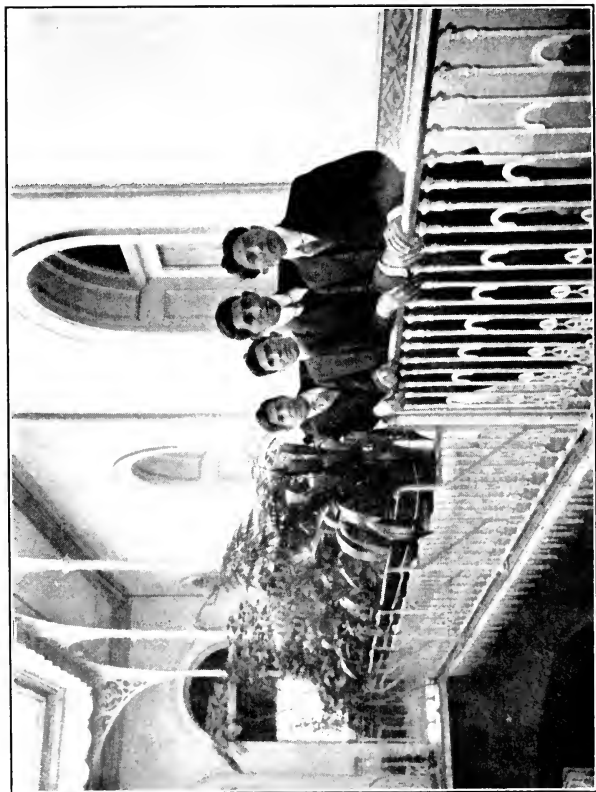
Decidedly interesting accounts of the training of embryo pastors in this field, while they are still students in the seminary, have appeared in the *Bible Society Record*. The enthusiastic young men have worked steadily while they were out, and often under adverse circumstances that have shown courage and devotion. It augurs well for their interest in Bible distribution when they become ministers. But not all of the colporteurs are these young, educated men.

### **Victor Cervantes**

A story is told of Victor Cervantes, a man of pure Indian descent, very dark, with large, prominent features, and modest, retiring manner, who wanted to sell Bibles. He had practically taught himself how to read, having worked in mines nearly all his life. Born in the Church of Rome, he had thought his way out by Bible reading. On being questioned, he showed a fine knowledge of the Bible. Having been introduced by a missionary as an active member of an evangelical church, he was soon set to work as a colporteur. One cannot but think of a scene in the Acts of the Apostles as he reads the following:

### **"Unlearned and Ignorant"**

"Yes; but what a strange difference when it is observed that they have been with Jesus. Victor



EMBRYO PASTORS IN MEXICO DO COLPORTEUR WORK DURING VACATIONS

Cervantes wrote me a letter in December of which the following is a translation:

“MY CHERISHED BROTHER IN THE FAITH: Allow me to inform you that on the 13th I went with Bibles in the direction of San Miguel Peras, in which village I was arrested and brought before the military judge of the district, who ordered me to state by what authority I was selling those books.

“I replied that no special authority was necessary in order to understand the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: for it is the purest teaching in all the world; that it has nothing to do with politics, and teaches respect for all properly constituted authority. And in order to prove this, I opened a Bible and read from the thirteenth chapter of Romans. “There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God . . . for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. . . . They are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing, render therefore, to all their dues.”

“I then told the judge that this was my authority for selling the books; to which he replied that I was doing well, and to go on selling the books. No more for the present. Thy brother and servant.—V. C.”

### Encouragement

The adoption, by practically all the different churches, of Bible Sunday, and the active support of the Bible Society’s work and of Bible Sunday by the evangelical press, is an encouraging feature, as is the fact that 69 congregations made contributions of \$272.48, which, coming from the poor people of Mexico, proves their desire for Bible circulation. English and American residents in the country have also made contributions, while gifts from Australia of money, and from the Bible House of Los Angeles of selected portions of Scripture, have been of material assistance.

## **Panama Canal and Central America**

*Agency Secretary:* REV. W. F. JORDAN  
Bible House, Cristobal, Canal Zone.

Established 1892. Field: The Republics of Central America, Panama, the Canal Zone, and Colombia. Circulation in 1919, 36,906 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1892, 621,698 volumes.

As Mr. Jordan, the Agency Secretary, widens and deepens his acquaintance with his field, he is impressed with the backward state of civilization in some portions, and especially with the downtrodden condition of the Indians. He rejoices in the fact, generally conceded, that colporteurs have been the pioneers of missionary work in most of the republics in this Agency. "This exceedingly interesting field is a more than usually difficult and expensive one to work. Traveling is costly and slow. There are few railroads and still fewer highways. Most of the travel is by boat and along narrow mountain trails. Our books have frequently to be transported long distances on mule back. In all these countries the people are kindly disposed towards our workers, and our duty is in no wise diminished by the difficulties connected with reaching them."

### **The Cristobal Bible House in Service**

The Bible House at Cristobal is now rendering a striking service to the increasing number of missionaries passing through that point on their way to various parts of Latin America. Among the boards represented by these missionary guests were the Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Gospel Union, Central America Mission, Evangelical Union, Y. M. C. A., and Y. W. C. A.; missionaries to all the South American countries except Brazil, Paraguay, and the Guianas being included. At one time there were sixteen guests in the Bible House.



### **The Year's Tale**

The prevalence of yellow fever has frequently prevented communication with parts of the field for long periods. Mr. Jordan visited New York, for conference, during the year. The circulation of the year included 4,968 Bibles, 3,907 Testaments, and 28,031 portions, in 13 languages—a total of 36,906 volumes.

### **CANAL ZONE**

The circulation in the Canal Zone has been chiefly through those connected with church organizations. The number of whole Bibles sold exceeded that of either Testaments or portions. The accession of Mr. Dufey to the local force, with his knowledge of French, Spanish, and English, gives promise of valuable work.

### **COSTA RICA**

#### **Scriptures to Soldiers**

Here also the work has been largely through correspondents, one of whom reports: "During the revolution several hundred soldiers were stationed in San Jose, and the members of the church distributed portions of the gospel to each soldier going to the front. Many times the regiments were formed in line when the worker came with the Gospels for distribution. Not one refused to receive a Gospel, and many expressed gratitude and interest in the Book and the spread of the gospel. The Central America missionaries, the Seventh-Day Adventists, and all other Christian workers in the Republic, have helped circulate the Bible during the past year. Very few Scriptures have been given away, except the portions distributed among the soldiers."

### **NICARAGUA**

The largest circulation in any of the republics is reported from this one: 13,252 volumes. It has been

accomplished chiefly through the mission workers, the Rev. W. Hooper continuing his active interest and leadership.

## HONDURAS

### Direct Results

Colporteur Hockings had an active and successful time in this republic, giving a series of Bible talks, as well as stirring up the activity of others in, and himself, circulating the Scriptures. Mr. Jordan writes: "In no other country that I know of are such a large proportion of the evangelical groups the direct results of the work of the colporteurs as in Honduras. Brother Hockings's work has been especially fruitful in this regard. He took me to see the old lady, the first convert—a result of Bible circulation—in whose house the believers used to gather to meet for worship, before ever any missionary had located in that city, the capital, Tegucigalpa."

The experiences, dangers, and inconveniences of work for the Agent as well as for the colporteurs are depicted in the following paragraphs:

### "Thrills"

"The trip between San Lorenzo and the capital is the wildest automobile ride the writer ever undertook. Most of the way the road is simply cut and graded along the sides of the mountains, with no parapet or protecting wall whatever to prevent the auto and its occupants from crashing down the steep declivities in case of any miscalculation on the part of the driver, or mishap to the steering gear. Our driver was a little late in starting and, therefore, in somewhat of a hurry on the return trip. Frequently in approaching a curve around a salient where nothing could be seen ahead but a yawning chasm full of the projecting peaks and summits of the range below, one would wish that the clutch might be thrown

out and the brake applied—seconds that seemed minutes, before the chauffeur began to take the precautions necessary to the safe rounding of the turn. For thrills I recommend an auto ride down the mountain sides from Tegucigalpa to the Pacific Coast, with the car crowded to the limit and the chauffeur in a hurry.

### **A Memorable Launch Ride**

“After this journey came the launch ride from San Lorenzo to Amapala—another never-to-be-forgotten experience. Sixteen people with their baggage were crowded into a launch that would comfortably seat ten. The engineer stood astride of the engine with the baggage piled around him. The launch was to have started at 3 p.m., and our haste down the mountain side had been in order to catch it. It did not leave, however, until 11 p.m.

“When, finally, at 1 a.m. we reached the steps of the wharf at Amapala, rejoicing that our long day had reached its close and that in a few minutes we would be stretching our weary bodies on the canvas of the cots in the one inn which the place affords, it was only to be met by a barefooted soldier with a gun and the statement that no one would be allowed to land till the military chief came down at six-thirty in the morning. Imagine the situation. Sixteen passengers in an open launch, crowded to the limit, must remain at sea until his military highness should begin work in the morning. No reason was assigned; though we learned later that one of the passengers was suspected of being connected with a conspiracy against the government. I was the only American in the party. The other fifteen were Central Americans, and among them were doctors, lawyers, and merchants. This outrage was accepted as a matter of course by all of my fellow-passengers. “*El que manda, manda*” (He who commands, commands),

remarked the doctor sitting at my right, as he twisted himself in his seat and elbowed room enough to light a cigarette. Through the long hours I heard no complaining. I suppose no one on board knew who might be a government spy, and there was no desire to be heard criticising the powers that be; or, rather that were, in Honduras at that time. Some time after daylight we were allowed to land, and the suspected passenger was searched and allowed to go on his way."

### **A Gospel Hall From a Roman Catholic Bible**

At the end of a jungle journey picturesquely described, Mr. Hockings participated in the opening of a new gospel hall in Colinas, built almost entirely by native Christians themselves, and adds: "It was Easter Week and Colinas was preparing to celebrate. How refreshing it was to see more than two hundred believers gathered here! We remembered the time when our colporteur, a native of this town, had taken his father's Roman Catholic Bible to explain the way of salvation to all his relatives here. Afterwards we were able to sell them some of our Bibles, and soon there were about one hundred people who were interested in the Bible. Now and then a missionary passed through and preached. When we passed we found them meeting every Lord's Day. Once a week they would read a chapter of Ryle's 'Gospels Explained,' sing a few hymns, have a prayer, and then go home to pray that God might send them a missionary. God answered their prayer, and for some years now they have had a lady missionary whose work has been greatly blessed of the Lord. The results of her work were seen when each night the new chapel was filled to overflowing; and while we preached the new chapel received its baptism from God and many souls accepted Christ as their Saviour."

**EL SALVADOR**

“As in most of the fields of Central America, the pioneer work here was done by the Bible Societies,” is again the record.

**Like Any Live Stock**

Mr. Jordan on his visit experienced delightful hospitality from the people, and also novel treatment when he took the steamer on leaving. “The boat does not dock at Acajutla. Passengers step into a crate and are lowered into a lighter which is towed out to the vessel, where they are taken on board in the same manner. This was the first time we had been loaded on board a vessel like live stock.”

**GUATEMALA**

The number of whole Bibles sold was 50 per cent. more than the year before, in spite of the fact that Guatemala had been passing through exceedingly trying times.

**Epidemic**

A terrible epidemic of influenza was said to have decimated from one-third to one-half of the Indian population. The helplessness of the Indians, who were without any medical advice or assistance whatever, was pathetic.

**Earthquake**

Guatemala City itself was recovering from the effects of the earthquake, when visited by the Agent. “I could well believe the statement of one of my informants, that not twenty houses in the whole place had escaped serious damage. Seldom has a city been so absolutely shaken to pieces by the heavings of Mother Earth as was this formerly beautiful city. Although a year had passed, the streets away from

the center of the town were found so filled with the débris as to be impassable, except on foot."

### Slavery

Even more sad is the account—which is too long for repetition here, but which will be found in the *Annual Report*—of the condition, and the practical slavery, of the Indians. Treated as the property of the government, under a skillful system of handling debts, they are in a deplorable condition, indeed. They have been kept systematically debauched by cheap rum, from which the government reaps a further revenue. Turned into pack animals, they are used rather than mules or oxen, for they cost less to maintain. "May God open our eyes, that we may see our opportunity to help the docile, industrious, enslaved, debauched, intellectually capable, artistic, faithful, and lovable Indian of Guatemala to a knowledge of his inheritance in Jesus Christ!"

### COLOMBIA

On his visit to this republic, Mr. Jordan found that the only satisfactory way to work the valley of the Magdalena and its tributaries would be by launch, a method proposed by the British and Foreign Bible Society's agent, but not as yet sanctioned by that Society. There are 1,500 to 2,000 miles of navigable waters in this valley and the delta islands.

### Bibles, "Immoral Books"

It was in this republic that Mr. Dufey, at the port of Tumaco, through the instigation of a priest, was arrested and had his Bibles taken from him on the ground that they were immoral books. A telegram sent to the governor at Pasto soon brought about his release, however, and the local press spoke up bravely in condemnation of such treatment.

## La Plata Agency

*Agency Secretary:* REV. F. G. PENZOTTI

Casilla de Correo, 304, Calle Parana, 481, Buenos Ayres, Argentina.

Established 1864. Field: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. Circulation in 1919, 36,543 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1864, 1,703,883 volumes.

The report of this Agency is peculiarly replete with individual instances of the influence of the Bible. It also completes one definite period of the Agency. With the end of the year, Mr. Penzotti has passed over the care of the work in Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru, to the newly formed West Coast Agency, and will, in future, be freer to press forward the work in Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile, and Argentina. The circulation of the Scriptures is recorded as 10,493 Bibles, 9,656 Testaments, and 16,394 portions.

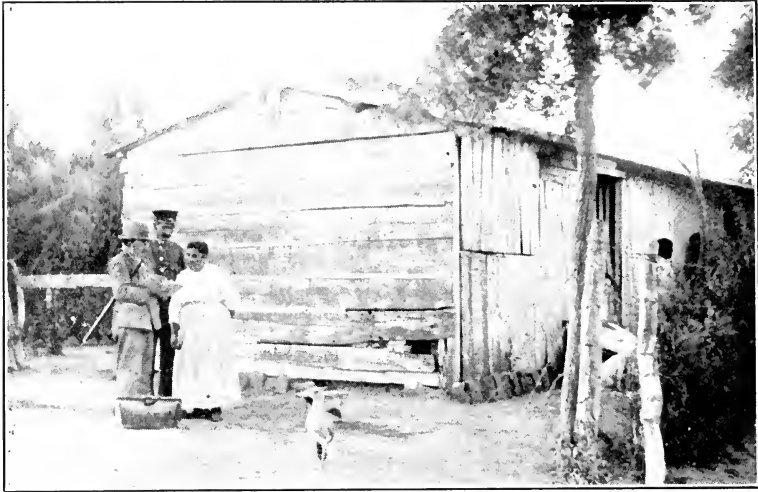
### **“The Great Shortness”**

Here again many more could have been circulated, but “it was not possible to get the necessary books. We only received a third part of the books we would have circulated during this year had we had them. The great shortness of Scriptures many a time brought to my mind the words of the prophet saying, “They shall seek my word, but shall not find it.” Sometimes it is good for us to be deprived of a thing we need, for it makes us appreciate it the more.”

### **Individual Instances**

Some of the individual instances of Scripture influence related in this report have been already mentioned. Space allows only a few more here:

“A woman said that the priest of the village she lives in, said to her that if she would not burn her Bible it would bring misfortune and sickness on her house. ‘That I dared not to do,’ she said; ‘and so I threw it into the canal; the water carried it away



COLPORTEUR PASTORE READING THE BIBLE TO COUNTRY PEOPLE IN SOUTH AMERICA

into the interior of a vineyard and left it sticking in the mud; it was found so by the contractor of the vineyard, who took it, and, after having cleaned it, he began to read therein. He said to me, "Since I am in possession of this book things have changed, and I am a very happy man now. While the hail and frost continually cause great harm to my neighbors, I am not at least harmed by them, it seems as if I were a child of God."

"I reached one of the most remote places, and came to a farm, in the court of which I saw an Italian (member of a Protestant church in Italy) reading and explaining, as well as he could, the gospel to the laborers of that out-of-the-way place. Truly we sometimes meet unknown prophets and evangelists



even in places where we would least expect to find them."

The writer of the following is one of those led to Christ through a simple perusal of the Scriptures:

### **Robbed But Happy**

"In Huince Renanco I stayed four days. The room I occupied in a small hotel, I had to share with two other persons, and I made it at once my privilege to speak to them about the gospel. And the Lord blessed my efforts, for both accepted Christ as their Saviour. Nevertheless, the enemy seemed not pleased with this my work, and the same day I was robbed of all my money. I had \$11. I moved to another small hotel the owner of which had previously granted his hall to the brethren of the Bible coach, to hold some gospel meetings in it. He bade me enter a small room, and after having locked the door, we both prayed to our God. When I left the hotel, we were both weeping for joy, because the Lord had greatly blessed our efforts in him.

### **"Being Myself One of Them"**

"I have the full conviction that the mission of a colporteur is not only to put in circulation the Bible, but his personal contact with the people and clear explaining will prove to be of double effect. It is not seldom that we meet genuinely converted persons who have been led to Christ by the simple perusal of the Holy Scriptures, and, being myself one of those, I feel it my privilege to consecrate my whole life and time to the work of the Lord, so that others, too, may find the way to Christ.—VALLEJO."

Another letter presents another phase of experience not infrequent in this Agency:

### **Invited in to Insults**

“They have here the spiritual father, by whom they pretend to be guided, and in consequence of this are a rather hostile and inhospitable element. I came to a house, whose inhabitants bade me enter. I followed their invitation, but as soon as I was in they began to insult me, and finally drove me out of the house like a dog. I called at some other houses, but only to arouse the fury of their inhabitants. They would not listen to my words. Fanaticism is reigning powerfully among them, hardening their hearts and making them blind. May the Lord have mercy on them.”

“There are still humble and sincere souls in this world, who are seeking God. A proof of that is that I rarely visit a town, or village, without meeting some one of God’s family, or, at least, some who are showing great interest in God’s Word. In some places I notice that the gospel is gaining ground fast. That was not so years ago. I often could go from town to town and from village to village without finding even a trace of gospel work. Let us take courage then, and fight to win souls for Christ; and let us hoist the flag of the Cross.”

### **“What a Difference!”**

The contrasts in a colporteur’s experiences are illustrated by two incidents within an hour of each other. The reciter was cordially greeted by a woman who eagerly desired a Bible, stating that she had, as a girl, grown up in a Protestant colony in Switzerland, and adding, “What a difference there is between a country where they keep the teachings of the Bible and a country where they do not keep them! There I felt as though I were living in a paradise, but here I feel as though I were living among savages.” The record continues: “An hour later on I passed by a tailor’s shop, and, entering, I offered the Bible to the

men in it. As soon as they understood that it was the Bible I was offering to them, they became furious, and I thought the very demon himself could be no worse in his rage."

### **"Nevertheless"**

At another place a worker reports: "In Sampacho we held several open-air meetings; the priests of that place did their best to oppose us and put a stop to our working there. A society of about two hundred persons was founded by them and a special orator employed by them in the defense of the 'rights' of their church; they even published a large handbill, which, as always, was full of calumnies against our work, and distributed about two thousand among the people of the village. Nevertheless, over two hundred persons attended our open-air meetings and the following day we sold Scriptures worth about \$40. The people were generally very kind toward us."

## **URUGUAY**

### **Not in Vain**

A colporteur reports: "One day I made a visit to a Christian man. There was also a caller who, after looking at me a while, said to me, 'I presume you do not know me, do you?' I replied that I had the impression as if I had already seen him somewhere, but could not remember where it was. Then he related to me how he became a Christian. He said, 'One day I happened to be in company with some friends of mine, when you were walking in the street, and seeing us you came directly to where we were standing and offered the Bible to us, at which my friends did burst into laughter, mocking at you; yet I bought a Bible of you. When I reached home I began to read it diligently and the Lord took my heart to be his own, and now I am a happy man.'"

## Brazil

*Agency Secretary:* REV. H. C. TUCKER, D.D.  
Caixa de Correio, 454, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

First Agent appointed 1854; present Agency established 1876. Circulation for 1919, 47,488 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1876, 1,235,798 volumes.

Only depleted shelves limited the circulation. "Many times during the year," says Dr. Tucker, "we were not able to furnish even a few copies to those who sent in requests for large supplies, and at times some of the colporteurs were without Scriptures for days, or a week, or two at a time."

The approach of Brazil's centennial in 1922 is mentioned in connection with the importance of obtaining a Bible House in Rio de Janeiro to meet the needs and give the work a fitting home.

### The Growing Demand

Correspondents, pastors, and evangelists, as well as colporteurs, report a larger number of persons privately asking for copies of the Bible. Letters have come in unusual numbers to the Bible House, and, increasingly individuals have called at the Bible store to purchase Scriptures. The result has been a circulation of 9,389 Bibles, 13,128 Testaments, and 24,971 portions, in 21 languages.

The Sunday schools, the mission schools, and the Y. M. C. A. have contributed much to the growing demand.

### Sunday Schools, Mission Schools, and the Y. M. C. A.

"Very special prominence is given to the Bible in the Sunday schools of Brazil for several reasons. First, it is pre-eminently the textbook of the Sunday school; second, it is a book that has been comparatively little known and read by the people generally, and consequently it attracts special attention and is of peculiar interest among those who read

and study it for the first time; third, there is a very small variety and supply of Sunday-school literature in Portuguese, hence the necessity of a more general use of Bibles and Testaments. A number of schools endeavor to have each pupil own a Bible and have it on hand at the school every Sunday.

“The mission schools and colleges make free use of the Bible, conduct courses in Bible study, and stimulate interest in the reading and daily use of the Word of God.

“The Young Men’s Christian Associations have made special provisions for courses and classes in Bible study. Their movement is awakening interest and tends to increase demands for Scriptures. There is the most cordial co-operation between all these agencies and the Bible Society.”

### **Where They Work**

Mention is made of a colporteur whose area of activity was the city of Rio de Janeiro; another whose field was the region of the Central Railway and its branches, and another who gave the entire year to São Paulo, the greatest commercial, industrial, and social center, next to the capital; while another worked through the district composed of the states of Pernambuco, Parahyba, and Rio Grande do Norte. By mutual arrangement with the British and Foreign Bible Society certain states in the republic are allotted to one Society, and certain states to the other.

### **Correspondents**

“As has been the case for several years past much of the work of Bible distribution in this Agency has been accomplished again through our efficient correspondents and the colporteurs employed by them. The mention of their names or even a brief account of the work of each would make this report too long.

### **A Notable Journey**

“One of the most active and successful of these is Mr. F. C. Glass, who some years ago was for quite a time on our roll of colporteurs. Mr. Glass made during this year a notable journey along the coast by boat, over railroads, on horseback, and about 2,000 miles in a canoe down the Araguaya River. He traveled in all about 6,000 miles and occupied four months. His object was to visit a tribe of Indians known as the Carajas, of whom he writes:

#### **The Carajas**

““These Indians live in just the same way their forefathers lived four hundred years ago when Brazil was undiscovered. Their customs and culture are about as rudimentary as those of any people on earth. Their only weapons are bows and arrows, clubs, and stone instruments, with which they are equally skillful in war, the chase, or for obtaining the fish which is their chief article of diet; calabashes and shells forming about their only utensils. They use no clothing whatever, painting their bodies with bright vegetable colors, and are perfectly unashamed. A healthy, dignified, and most interesting people, without the ban of caste, the curse of idolatry, or a counterfeit Christianity, who, with the lovely setting of the great Araguaya River, form a very picturesque and romantic picture; yet, on the other hand, living like wild animals, and whose only ambition or God seems to be their stomachs. They possess vague ideas of evil spirits of the forests that shut them in, and are naturally superstitious. They appear to have no words in their dialect which convey the idea of any of the great masterwords of the gospel; yet they are not image worshipers like many Brazilians, and they are largely free from the gross and cruel ideas and immorality of the so-called savage races.’”

## Levant

*Acting Agency Secretary:* MR. W. W. PEET  
Bible House, Constantinople, Turkey.

REV. FRANKLIN E. HOSKINS, D.D.  
(In charge of the Arabic-speaking portion of the field),  
Beirut, Syria.

Established 1836. Field: The former Turkish Empire in Europe and Asia, Bulgaria, Greece, Servia, Bulgarian Macedonia, Albania, Egypt, and the Soudan. Circulation in 1919, 49,643 volumes. Aggregate circulation 4,018,995 volumes.

An authoritative and important statement of conditions in what was formerly the Ottoman Empire is made by Mr. Peet. Long a resident in Constantinople, and widely recognized and consulted as a wise counselor by government authorities as well as by missionary bodies, he tells with calmness and force the story of the conditions in 1919. Incidents given show the Turkish mind is opening to the acceptance of the ways of Christian thinking.

### Three Sections

Conditions necessitated the continuance of the arrangement by which the work of this large field was practically directed from three different centers; Mr. Peet in charge, at Constantinople, of the work in European and Asiatic Turkey; the Rev. Dr. Hoskins, at Beirut, looking after the Syria section, with the co-operation of Mr. C. A. Dana, of the American Press; and Mr. Mikhail Bakhit caring for the work in Egypt, with the advice of Mr. C. S. Bell, of the American Mission. The total circulation of the Scriptures in all these sections is still far short of what it was in pre-war days—8,148 Bibles, 12,985 Testaments, and 28,510 portions, giving a total of 49,643 volumes.

### Uncertainty and Expectation

“Uncertainty and expectation may be designated as the main features of the year that has just gone

by," writes Mr. Peet in beginning his report. "It cannot be denied that the Peace Conference in Paris has already done a very important work; but as long as the destiny of these lands of the Orient remains unsettled, its task will by no means be completed." Commercial intercourse has been far from stable, postal communications slow and precarious, and traveling difficulties prevailed only second to those during the height of the war. "Perhaps no country except Russia was shaken in 1919 with so many convulsions of anxiety as the lands of the Orient which have hitherto constituted the Turkish Empire."

### **Allied Wisdom and Benevolence**

"It must be acknowledged in all justice that the Allied Powers, who have been holding this country in their hands since the day the armistice was signed, have shown, besides a spirit of high political wisdom, sentiments of real benevolence to these long-tormented populations of the Levant, irrespectively of race or creed. Though victors, they avoided an unnecessary display of their triumph at the time they occupied the country. They took every precaution to prevent an outburst of feelings on the part of those who were deeply humiliated by the outcome of the war, and to discourage any undue liberty that might be taken by sections of the population who were apt to think that the time had come for vengeance or for redressing of wrongs.

### **Ottoman Empire a Prostrate Mass}**

"The capital of the Turkish State still wears the same aspect as before the war, excepting that it has manifestly become more populous and that its motley crowds, which always attracted the tourist's curiosity, are now more richly variegated with the uniforms of British, French, American, Ital-



ian, Greek, Servian, and Japanese military and naval forces; while its famous Babel of languages is more confusing than ever by the addition of colonial languages spoken by troops from India and Australia, Algeria, and Senegal, Indo-China, and Madagascar.

“Peaceful penetration into the principal departments of Turkish administration has been slowly but effectively accomplished by the victorious Allies, who have finally become the real masters of the country with a mere phantom of Turkish authority peering from the background. They do not govern the country in the active sense of the word, but they are constantly watchful to prevent a repetition of the excesses for which Turkish methods of government have gained so unfortunate a notoriety. At this day the once mighty Ottoman Empire is a paralyzed, shapeless, prostrate mass.

### **Distress Unparalleled in Two Centuries**

“Turkey has hardly seen any prosperous days during the last two centuries, but the present situation of distress is altogether unparalleled in her history. Military conscription, massacres, and deportations have drained away three-quarters of the country’s productive force, if not more. Unsafe roads in the interior, scarcity of vessels for communication by sea, and enormous expenses for loading and unloading goods, are forming serious disadvantages to commerce.

### **General Remarks**

The relief work accomplished by the American Committee for Relief in the Near East, and that by American and Greek relief committees for those of their own nationalities, have done much to help sustain life. “Moslems and Christians were never so much estranged from each other as they have been during this year.” The Turks still reserve to them-

selves a sense of superiority over those whose forefathers were subjugated by their ancestors, and they look with scorn upon their Christian neighbors' enthusiastic hopes. Of course, there are many among the Turks who are keenly alive to the reality of the situation, and who deplore all that has been done in their nation's name by its disreputable leaders at the time of the war. "One thing seems certain, that whether the Turk goes or stays, his methods of rule shall disappear."

### **Bible Work Hard Hit in War**

"The late war has affected Bible work more seriously than any other event in the history of the Levant Agency. No direct opposition to Bible work was made, as sometimes has happened in peaceful times, but the work collapsed of its own weight, simply for the lack of a patronizing supporter. Christians were dispersed, while the Mohammedans were roused to a fierce fanaticism, which left no room for Bible circulation."

### **Beginning Again**

The year 1919, however, has seen a general resumption of Bible work, though it has not seemed wise or possible to reopen colportage work in the interior. At headquarters, printing, and especially the binding of printed sheets which were in stock, has had to be pushed forward with much energy in order to meet the call for Scriptures that is arising. The transportation of Scriptures to places outside of Constantinople has been very difficult, and has been largely accomplished through the courtesy of British officers or of the American agents of the Committee for Relief in the Near East.

### **EUROPEAN TURKEY**

Turning more specifically to the actual work of circulating the Scriptures, incidents are given of the

experiences of colporteurs, some of whom had not been heard from during the years of the war.

### **Heartless Treatment**

An Armenian, in Adrianople, was able to do good work in the first year of the general war, but in 1916 was cruelly driven out of his residence, his effects and stock of Scriptures seized by the Turkish authorities, and he himself sent in an open lighter, with other Armenians of both sexes and every age, for deportation into the interior of Asia Minor. When the lighter arrived on the eastern shore, orders were received to tow it back to the western shore of the Marmora Sea, no reason ever having been given; but the colporteur was not allowed to return to Adrianople, and only last spring found his way back to Constantinople.

### **ASIATIC TURKEY**

#### **A Surprising Fact**

It seems almost incredible, but the fact is recorded that not only were two colporteurs able to continue the sale of the Scriptures in Constantinople through the period of the war, but also colporteurs were similarly active throughout the war at Smyrna, Brusa, and Aleppo, though not without danger.

#### **Individual Experiences**

The colporteur at Smyrna lost his Armenian helper, who was seized and thrown into prison for carrying about Scriptures in the Turkish language. Nothing was subsequently heard, and it was reported that he had died. "Who knows," says Mr. Abajoghlu, the colporteur, "what horrible treatment caused my poor fellow-worker's death!" He himself escaped enlistment only by paying an exemption fee, first, and then by registering as a Protestant preacher, and through the influence of an English lady residing

in Smyrna, who helped him to circulate the Scriptures. A colporteur of Aleppo escaped death only through the intervention of an influential Turkish friend, who twice saved him from the authorities.

### BULGARIA

Mr. Popoff, the well-known representative of the American Bible Society in Bulgaria, tells of the work in that land, of which only brief excerpts can now be given:

#### Timely Help

“The Rev. T. T. Holway, an American missionary, was in Sofia in April as a member of a large American relief committee for Armenia. He had personal goods to bring from Constantinople, and it was arranged with him to engage a freight car, which for him, as an American, could be brought to Sofia. In that car he brought also the Bibles. He himself with an American soldier traveled several days from Constantinople to Sofia in the freight car to protect the goods from theft. Thanks to them, in the latter part of April I was glad to receive twenty-four boxes of Scriptures.”

#### Prices

While the price of the books has had to be advanced five times their previous catalogue value, they still are among the low-priced articles available. A priest from Plevna bought a Bible for a young man and was astonished at the price, 6.50 *levs*, saying that he had expected and was authorized by the young man to pay 50 *levs*. The total circulation amounted to 10,797 volumes of Scriptures, all but 71 of them by sale.

### EGYPT

“Egypt during the past year has been stirred up and troubled in the name of independence.” Conse-

quently, the colporteurs were much interrupted in their work, especially during the time when railway communications were destroyed, Mr. Bakhit himself having been stranded for some two months away from his family and headquarters. Nevertheless, 25,347 volumes of Scripture were sold during the year.

### **A Few Figures**

Mr. Bakhit says: "We have 18 colporteurs who worked the entire year, spending in service 6,570 days, traveling 18,119 miles and visiting 731 towns and villages. Contributions have been received during the year for the Bible work to the total of \$492.30, of which \$415.80 was from the congregations and \$76.50 from individual contributors.

### **Colporteurs' Reports**

"The universal refrain of the colporteur's report throughout the year has been one of thanksgiving to God for his care over them and their families during the troublous times. They also thank Him for helping them to continue in their work as colporteurs, in spite of their financial difficulties due to their small salaries and their heavy traveling expenses. They report that the movement toward unity in politics between the Copts and the Moslems has given them greater acceptance with the latter, so that they were able to distribute more than 800 copies of the Scriptures among them. Most of these copies were taken by the more important and educated people, such as judges, beys, and high officials."

# Siam

*Agency Secretary:* REV. ROBERT IRWIN  
Bangkok, Siam.

Established 1890. Circulation in 1919, 90,264 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1890, 1,810,196 volumes.

Food for thought abounds in this report. House-to-house visitation throughout a whole district was bravely undertaken during the year. Provision for, and progress in, the training of colporteurs, pushing forward into new and difficult fields, and the preparation of Scriptures in various languages and suitable forms, are some of the important matters which engaged the attention of the Agency Secretary.

## A Critic Answered

A correspondent of the *Bangkok Times* having criticized the Bible Societies for translating the Scriptures into the vernacular and distributing them, the report enters into such questions as, Ought the Scriptures to be translated and donated? and sets forth, both from history and from experience, the great benefits which have come to peoples the world over through the translation and circulation of the Scriptures.

## A Challenge

That the Christian life is a joyful one, and that there is the Christian paradox of happiness through service; that it is righteousness which exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people; that Christianity means, and should mean, international goodwill; that the Christian element in Siam needs to catch the vision; and that Siam and surrounding countries need "an influx of idealism"—are thoughts held up for the consideration of all, with the challenge to his fellow-missionaries to adopt the haystack slogan, "We can if we will"; for he reminds

them that Christianity is, after all, indigenous to the Orient.

### The Response

That many missionaries have entered into this large conception and are already endeavoring to bring it about, is illustrated by succeeding pages of the report, as found in full in the *Annual Report*. An illustration is given in the following about a house-to-house canvass of the entire province of Prae, together with a section of Lakawn and another of Chiengrai:

#### Prae Field—House-to-House Canvass

“Twenty-one men and four women were employed. Mr. Callender estimates the area covered at 2,000 square miles, with a population of 100,000, 315 villages and towns, and 13,867 houses. A little over 30,000 portions of Scripture were distributed, of which 1,605 were in Siamese, a few in Chinese and Western Shan. The rest were in Lao. The cost to the Society of the work was 1,485 *ticals*, or \$557. The main work was done during the first three months of the year, some mountainous districts difficult of access being not finished till near the end of the year. We quote the following from Mr. Callender’s very full report, itself taken largely from the lips of the colporteurs:

“The plan was to get as many as possible to distribute the Scriptures in order to create enthusiasm—which goes a long way towards successful missionary effort. None but Christians were employed, and we got the best available. Some were jewels, some were gems in the rough, and some were very ordinary material. But when the work is needed to be done, the best material available must be harnessed and sent forth. The plan involved bi-weekly conferences for those distributing in the Prae plain, and as often as practicable for those distributing at more distant points.”

### Difficulties and Prayer

Many of these workers had difficulties. Some of the women colporteurs, especially, encountered opposition and were ordered politely to leave, as their



AI SIANG

One of the first Christians from the Kamus, in French territory bordering Siam, where Christians "are not allowed to have instruction, and have to meet very carefully for worship."

Christian teachings were not wanted. Sometimes, as night approached, they had no place to lodge. Then



resort to prayer brought cheering answer. For example, one evening, "they were in the *sala* or public lodging-place, where it would not do for women to stay unprotected. Soon after prayer, a woman came down from her house near by and entered into conversation with them. The sequel was that she invited the whole party of four women to lodge with her that night and share her hospitality."

### **Rough Roads, Sore Feet, Kind Welcomes**

Some of the men canvassers had rough roads, high mountains and steep hills to climb, and often became sore of foot; but they were welcomed by the chief men of the villages and of the monasteries, and by the people, and had encouraging opportunities to pass on the message. "All the Siamese and Lao officials were visited, and all the monasteries. To the three highest Siamese officials in Prae City was given each a New Testament in Siamese and to the three highest Lao noblemen each a New Testament in Lao. Two of the Siamese officials wrote notes of appreciation.

### **Let Your Imagination Loose**

"It is difficult for those of us who have not been over the ground or done something of this kind of work, to appreciate what it means to cover the territory of a province and to enter every house in it. Remember these colporteurs went mostly barefooted and bareheaded, with only a shoulder bag and a long-bladed knife, and that it is a mountainous country, whose roads are mostly lonely trails along bridgeless streams, with tiger and robber infested forests, and whose people are suspicious of every stranger. Unless we let our imagination loose, we are apt to suppose that these men have an easy time of it on their eight dollars a month. To one who actually thinks the matter out, these colporteurs are the real Peace Commissioners."

### **In Bangkok**

Of the work in Bangkok, Mr. Irwin says: "It is a most cosmopolitan city and growing. A large number of Indians are accessible. Mrs. McClure tells of giving a Hindustani Bible to an Indian. A week later she met him and inquired whether he had read some of it. 'All of it,' he said. Incredulous, she questioned him on what he had read and he was able to tell her about the Old Testament characters, and to show an intelligent knowledge of the New. He said, 'Mem, I began at the beginning (pointing to the back of the book) and read to here (what to us would have been the beginning). Now, my friend is reading it and all of them want it.'

"A young man came to say that he and his mother and younger brother wished to become believers and desired a service in their house. He said they had been led to this decision some weeks before by reading the books given them by a man whose name he did not know. From the description and date I was able to identify the colporteur quite easily."

### **Untouched and Unopened Fields**

While he reports with joy that the British Shan States are being entered by one of the missions, Mr. Irwin records with regret that nothing has as yet been done in Eastern Siam, and that French territory is closed to evangelical and Bible work, except three cities along the coast and the central province of Cochin-China.

### **Training Colporteurs**

A phase of the work to which Mr. Irwin has given much thought and time, and for the accomplishment of which he has prepared a series of textbooks, is the training of colporteurs. As he visits the different missions, opportunity is sought and obtained of conducting classes; and results are encouraging. The

work and life of the colporteur are hard, and courage, initiative, and pioneer spirit are not particularly prominent in the people.

### **Shining Examples**

Nevertheless, there are shining examples: "Ai Noi of Chiengrai, Mr. Bachtell's cook, is a sample of the opening of mental power and aggressive energy by the gospel. He learnt to read and now is interested in the study of the Scriptures. He misses no opportunity to attend classes. He volunteered this year to go to Luang Prabang, in French territory, as a colporteur whenever the French give permission for us to enter. This result is not an impulse, but a process covering a number of years. It is noticeable that the brightest faces are the ones that have been studying the longest; some of the beginners are dull and dark.

"In one of his tours, Mr. Metcalf, of the China Inland Mission, in northern Yunnan, found several Tai villages ready to give up their spirit worship for Christianity, and appealed to Chiengrung Station to send him a native teacher. The appeal was forwarded to the Mission and in response a young man went from Nan. Now his brother has gone to join him as a colporteur, and both intend to stay there."

### **Ponderous Bibles**

The revision work is making progress in Siamese and Lao, but there is great need for the reduction, in size, of the type and the book, in order that the Siamese Bible, which is about three-fourths the dimensions of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, may be brought down to a more portable size.

# China

*Agency Secretary:* REV. JOHN R. HYKES, D.D.  
73 Szechuen Road, Shanghai, China.

Established 1876. Circulation in 1919, 967,381 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1876, 26,682,041 volumes.

“The open-door” policy is happily true of China at present, so far as the Bible is concerned. Not only do the President of China, whose words are quoted below, and other prominent officials whose testimony has appeared in the *Bible Society Record*, speak in high terms of the Bible, but also the common people are welcoming its message and its power.

**“The instruction concerning all virtue, as contained in the Holy Scriptures of the Religion of Jesus, has truly exerted an unlimited influence for good among all Christians in China, and has also raised the standard of all my people along lines of true progress. I earnestly hope that the future benefits derived from the Holy Scriptures will extend to the ends of the earth and transcend the success of the past.”**

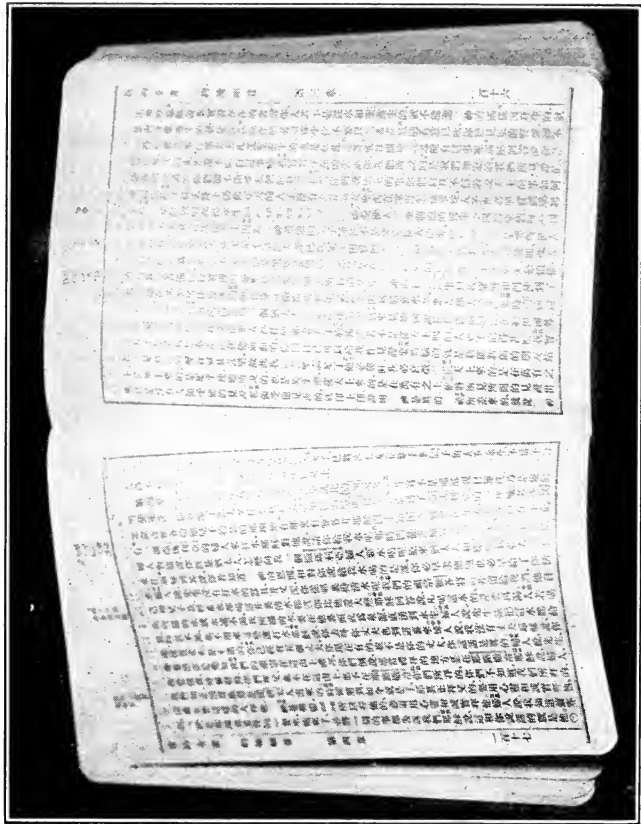
PRESIDENT OF CHINA'S TESTIMONY

## **An Immense Work**

This Agency is, like the country it serves, immense; and the report of its activities is so full of important facts and interesting incidents that it is hopeless, in the space available in the *STORY*, to give any adequate conception of them. Referring any interested to the full report as it appears in the *Annual Report*, we must here present only a scant selection, without always giving credit or balancing quotations.

## **Sub-Agency Secretaries**

The work under Dr. Hykes has been directed by four sub-Agency Secretaries: the Rev. W. S. Strong,



THE MANDARIN (UNION) REVISED BIBLE—A CHIEF ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE YEAR.

It is claimed that more people use Mandarin than any other language in the world.

at Peking, reporting for the North China Sub-Agency; the Rev. J. Johnson, at Hankow, for the Central China Sub-Agency; the Rev. W. C. Hooker, at Chungking, for the Eastern Szechuen Sub-Agency; and the Rev. T. Torrance, at Chengtu, for the Western Szechuen Sub-Agency.

### **Circulation Rising Again**

The combined circulation rose again, but has not begun to equal that of previous years, simply because the books were not available; 12,000 Bibles, 31,078 Testaments, and 924,303 portions, or a total of 967,381 volumes, being circulated.

### **The Mandarin and Wenli Bibles**

The notable event of the year in the manufacturing line was the publication for the first time of the Mandarin Union Version, in both the Shangti and Shen editions, and the Wenli Union Version in the same two editions, after a generation of work by the Union Revision Committees in their preparation. Evidencing the cordial relation and real comity existing among the three greatest Bible Societies in the world, these first editions were manufactured conjointly by the British and Foreign Bible Society, the National Bible Society of Scotland, and the American Bible Society, a form of co-operation which has long been their practice.

### **Translation and Editorial Work**

“With the completion of the Mandarin and Wenli Union versions of the Bible last year, we have no translation or editorial work in hand; and it is not likely that much more will have to be done in this line. Existing translations cover the whole of China, with the exception of some of the aboriginal or non-Chinese tribes in the west, south, and southwest. None of the languages of these aborigines have been

reduced to writing, except the few in which parts of the Bible have been translated into 'Pollard's script.'"

### **Manufacture**

Increased appropriations made possible an increase in the manufacture of books: 24,000 Bibles, 16,000 Testaments, and 1,412,500 portions, a total of 1,452,500 being produced—878,000 more than the year before; but they did not get into circulation in time to replenish all the empty shelves during 1919.

### **No Society Colporteurs**

As mentioned under that caption in the previous pages, the foreign missionaries and eight voluntary native workers have been the means of circulating the larger number of books. One such mentions that in the last half of the year he had disposed of 11,160 books personally. The Agency had no colporteurs paid by the Society.

### **NORTH CHINA SUB-AGENCY**

The report has many incidents of the wonderful effect of the simple reading of the Scriptures, a number of which have been already mentioned under that caption. Mr. Strong, in charge at Peking, says they could have sold three times as many books if there had been a supply. The direct influence of the depletion of stock on circulation is shown by a tabular statement of the number of volumes circulated for the five years of the war, 1915-1919, which gradually diminished from 1,058,781 copies in 1915 to 327,766 copies in 1919.

### **No Obstacles by Chinese Influences**

No obstacles are placed in the way of the spreading of the gospel at present in China by Chinese influences. The Bible shop at Peking is probably one of the best

known places in the city, being a Mecca for students. The new supply of Scriptures received toward the end of the year gives promise that soon the eighty centers of distribution which have been lost will be recovered.

### **Churches from Colporteurs' Seed-Sowing**

"The value of early colportage work becomes clearer as the years go by, and I know we should never have been able to build up the thirty or forty churches which have developed in this section had it not been for the preliminary work and seed-sowing done by the colporteurs of the Bible Society," is the testimony of the Rev. W. O. Pye, of the American Board Mission, Fenchow, Shansi.

### **Noted Chinese Testify**

It was Mr. Strong who obtained the testimony of Chinese officials as to the value of the Bible, which have appeared in the publications of the Society. In addition to the President of China, the ex-President, the Foreign Minister, Dr. Wu Ting Fang, formerly Chinese minister at Washington, Yu-yue Tsu, a noted educator, and Hon. Wen Shih Tsin, commissioner for Foreign Affairs to the viceroy at Nanking, sent messages on the subject, which are in the *Annual Report*.

### **"All For Want of Books"**

Nearly three hundred centers of distribution which had been lost—all for want of books—in the great plains of Chihli will soon be reopened, now that Scriptures are becoming available.

### **Bible Classes in Government Schools**

"Bible classes are conducted steadily all through the educational institutions, both mission and government, where there are mission teachers," is another encouraging statement from Mr. Strong.



### CENTRAL CHINA SUB-AGENCY

In the Central China Sub-Agency, "400 missionaries and Christian workers are voluntarily distributing the Society's books from not less than the same number of centers scattered over the whole of Central China."

#### **Voluntary Work**

"The very inability of the Society to employ its own colporteurs is proving a blessing in disguise." While the loss of employed colporteurs was deeply deplored, it led to the development of this voluntary distribution. The growing Christian communities and churches are tying up the missionaries so that they are not able to participate, in some regions, in the distribution as much as before; but their enthusiasm infused into the pastors and preachers who work with them, and into the members of their churches, is beginning to tell. In one place, two workers support themselves entirely on the proceeds of their sales on the steamers and at the railway station. Another worker is wholly supported by the native Christians.

#### **Rapid Sales**

"Last year an evangelistic band toured a few of the country points. It was the first time that such a group had been sent out. The workers had not been in the midst of evangelistic services but two days when word was sent in to hurry on some more portions. When I took account with the leader of the band, they had sold 14 Bibles, 2,169 portions, and distributed 8,184 tracts.

#### **Holy Boldness**

"A shining-faced Christian who was formerly very timid, and especially afraid to encounter the dogs of

the various houses he entered, developed a measure of 'holy boldness' and now goes fearlessly round the countryside, visiting the farm-houses and preaching Christ in his own original way. With a bundle of Gospel portions he marches in, announcing that he has come with 'glad tidings,' and to warn them of coming Judgment. 'Take this book and read it, then get to work to sweep your loft'—one is always safe making that suggestion here in China—'go up there and pray to the Living God, and ask the Saviour to forgive your sins and to save you from the calamities which are about to come upon the world.' Such is the effect of these startling words that, in many instances, the whole household have gathered round to listen to the message of salvation, gladly offering five or ten *cash* for a copy of the Scriptures for themselves. . . . Tramping over the hills, far removed from the evangelistic centers, it rejoices one's heart to run across a Christian home right amongst the darkness; then, further on, another; and then, again, another, where the portions of God's Word have gone before us—'Lights in the darkness.' What a power there is in the grand old gospel still!"

### **A Million Houses Visited**

Colportage boats are used by one missionary with telling effect, the past year six bands of eighty men in all being sent out in as many boats. "In this way a very large territory has been covered. During the past seven years these bands have been at work, countless towns and villages have been evangelized, and at least a million homes visited, in most of which Scriptures and tracts have been placed. Gospel posters have been posted up both inside and outside of inns, barber shops and other public buildings."

Though somewhat long, the following excerpt is well worth giving in full:

### **A Christian General**

“One of the most interesting characters in China to-day is the Christian General, Feng Yu Hsiang, military governor of western Hunan, with headquarters at Changteh. He is an ideal Christian, who not only loves the Lord with all his heart, but who, also, loves his neighbor as himself. And this love he manifests by taking the liveliest interest in the 9,000 soldiers under him, as well as in the seven or eight million people he rules. Amongst his soldiers he allows no smoking, drinking, bad language, or gambling. A missionary, who recently held nine days’ evangelistic meetings for them, says that he ‘never saw any smoking, nor smelt the fumes of drink.’ Another missionary says he has been with them for a year and has never heard a bad word. During the past twelve months more than a thousand of these soldiers have become Christians and have been baptized. The majority of the officers are Christians. One of these has won sixty of his men to the Lord, and another says that nine out of every ten of his men are Christians. For a year at least, there have been continuous evangelistic meetings amongst the soldiers, conducted by leading Chinese pastors and by missionaries of various denominations. The General himself assists in the services. At a morning prayer meeting recently, when the General was present, the missionary conducting the meeting put the question, ‘Brethren, what are the deepest needs and desires of your hearts? Please state them before we go to prayer.’ The General made answer, ‘My greatest wish before God is, that every one of my 9,000 men may turn to the Lord.’ There seems every probability that his desire will be granted in the near future, for baptism of one and two hundred men at a time are frequently taking place.

“To meet the needs of his men the General has bought as many as 500 New Testaments at a time.

He has again and again bought all the Bibles in the different missions. Would to God that not only in China, but in western lands also, there were more generals like Feng Yu Hsiang!"

### **"1,000 a Month"**

"One of our helpers has made it his aim this year to sell the portions in every home on the main street here. He is our business man, and a very bright Christian. It has long been our prayer that the Holy Spirit would put his heart on fire. May God help him to carry out his purpose! His aim is to sell 1,000 portions a month. He wishes to sell one kind each month, and thus get as much of the Bible into the homes as possible."

### **Doctor Becomes Voluntary Colporteur**

"We have a man who is now selling books and preaching without salary. He has come out very clearly for Christ this year. He used to sell Chinese medicine. Some weeks ago he came to the conclusion that his business was wrong—that he was sinning against man and God. He finally brought all his medicines and books to our station and destroyed them before many witnesses. He has decided to be a Christian in spite of everything. He is a man of some education, reads very well, and preaches fair. He has gifts for colportage work. He is under my direct supervision. If you will supply us with some five-cash portions of Scripture we will appreciate it very much. In this way the man will be a double blessing."

### **157 Won by Bible Distribution**

A missionary of the Swedish Mission at Hoyang writes that during the year 157 persons had been baptized, and, rejoicing in the voluntary distributors of the Scriptures, adds: "How we should do without them I don't understand, and how they would do

without the American Bible Society passeth my knowledge! I think we must give the voluntary distributors and the A. B. S. the credit of bringing most of these 157 to Christ."

### **EASTERN SZECHUEN SUB-AGENCY, WEST CHINA**

From Western China we take the following: "A new method of evangelization through meetings held in a large tent capable of seating over a thousand people, pitched in the courtyard of the Confucian temple which was offered by the gentry, was tried.

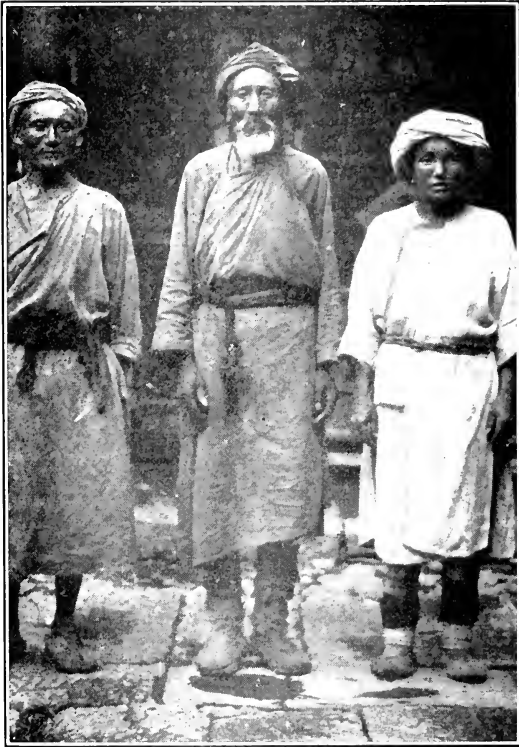
#### **Are Chinese Grateful?**

"We had a book stall at each of the three preaching halls. Books were sold at the large central tent, and we had a shop on the busiest portion of the main street devoted exclusively to the sale of books. The use of this shop was given by its owner, a cloth merchant. He removed his stock of cloth to an inner courtyard and cleared the shop entirely for our use for the duration of the meetings. He was not a Christian, but had taken refuge at the Christian church during some of the numerous robber attacks, and this was the voluntary expression of his gratitude.

"I personally sold 200 Gospels in two hours in an open space outside a city to passers-by," says Mr. Hooker, in charge of the Eastern Szechuen Sub-Agency.

### **WESTERN SZECHUEN SUB-AGENCY, WEST CHINA**

The Rev. T. Torrance, now on a well-earned furlough, for over eight years in charge of the work in Western Szechuen, mentions that during this time 3,700 Bibles, 21,000 Testaments, and well over 1,000,000 Gospels have been put in circulation. He speaks with joy of his fellow-workers, some of whose reports of the wonderful influence of the unaided Scriptures have been already quoted. During the times when funds from America were low, local friends have



CH'ANG PEOPLE, IN FAR WESTERN CHINA  
(See October, 1919, *Record*, page 177.)

risen to help, contributing \$450.00, amongst them the governor of Szechuen giving a hundred Bank of China notes. The missionary bodies also have passed resolutions showing their deep appreciation of the work of the Bible Society.

# Japan

*Acting Agency Secretary:* REV. KARL E. AURELL  
Bible House, Ginza Street, Tokyo, Japan.

Established 1876. From 1890-1904, Agency jointly maintained by the American Bible Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the National Bible Society of Scotland. In 1904, work was divided, the northern part of Japan being assigned to the Agency of the American Bible Society, and the southern portion to the Agency of the British Societies. Circulation in 1919, 102,131 volumes. Aggregate circulation through American Bible Society since 1876, 4,388,945 volumes.

Japan sends a refreshing report. Its incidents of the growth and fruits of Bible circulation are not only stimulating in themselves, but they throw light on a phase of Japanese character not too often pictured to Americans. The change of headquarters from Yokohama to Tokyo, effected during the year, bids fair to mark a new era in the life of the Agency. A somewhat detailed account of it, with pictures of the new headquarters on the Ginza, will be found in the *Bible Society Record* of February, 1920. The Acting Agency Secretary, reporting a circulation of 6,806 Bibles, 44,510 Testaments, and 50,815 portions, or a total of 102,131 copies of the Scriptures—an advance of 10,000 over that of the previous year—makes these introductory remarks:

## **An Auspicious Era**

“We live in an auspicious era of the Bible cause in Japan. Despite national convulsions and disturbing influences arising from various causes, there is no hindrance to the operations of the Bible Society, or check upon the spread of God’s Book. There are only two causes for regret: First, the difficulty of securing men as colporteurs for the different provinces. The need of laborers in the industrial world being great and the monetary inducements offered by the same being extremely attractive in these days of high cost of living, robs, as it were, Bible work of good laborers. And again, owing to labor troubles,

printers and binders have been unable to keep us adequately supplied with many of the editions of the Bible required.

“The increased demand for Scriptures from all parts of our field, especially Tokyo, is very gratifying. During the last two months of the year practically every copy arriving from the printer never reached the shelves of the Bible House, but were handed directly to a waiting customer, or immediately packed for transportation to some distant patron.

“Tokyo is the center for all enterprises of importance to this people. Learning that headquarters is in the capital, and located on a famous street like Ginza, gives the same a prestige to the Japanese mind everywhere equal to nothing else that might be done for it. We thank God therefore for this move, being convinced that the work of the Agency will progress with ever-increasing advance as the years pass by.”

From this Agency, instead of briefly mentioning the many illuminating and encouraging incidents, we will quote fully the accounts of three, as throwing most cheering light on the power of God’s Word and the passing on of the torch from hand to hand:

### **Fruit of a 5-Sen Testament**

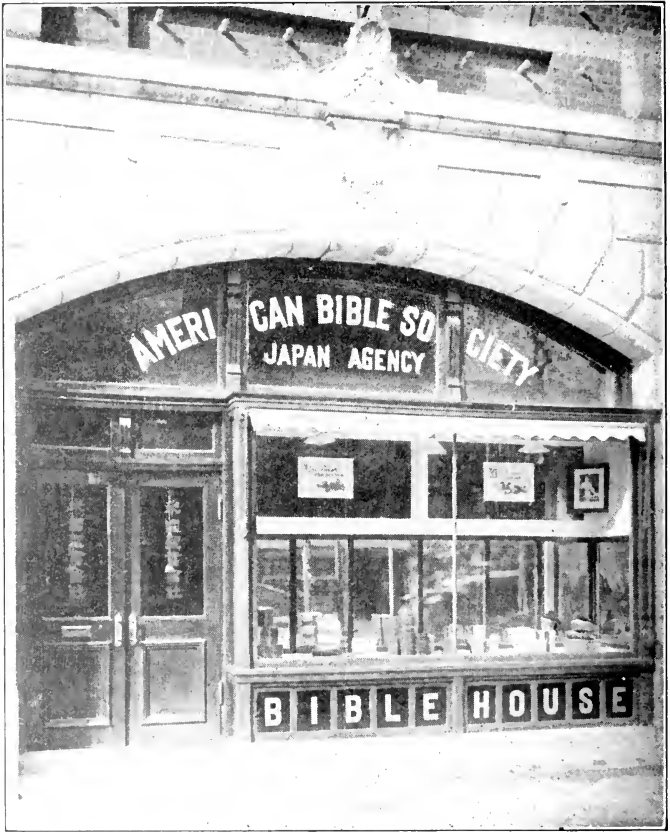
“Three years ago Colporteur Tanaami sold a 5-sen Testament to the proprietor of a woolen goods store in Hongo Ward, of Tokyo. The deal having been made, Tanaami took the Testament and read the twelfth chapter of Hebrews to the man, simply adding: ‘When you meet with failure, turn to this chapter for help and strength,’ and bid him good-bye. Some time after that this man actually did meet with failure in his business. Recalling what our colporteur had said when that Testament was bought, he immediately turned to and read the passage referred to. The hunger in his heart for the God of the Bible was kindled, and the first opportunity that presented itself



he attended a gospel mission; heard and accepted the testimony of a living witness; was saved and became a member of good standing of the church near by. Subsequent to the marvelous change in his life material blessings also were showered upon him, and to the amazement of many he regained his former business. Salvation from sin also brought new strength to his frail body. Every Wednesday evening, of his own accord, he goes out and holds open-air meetings, in which he testifies of what Christ has done for him and freely gives portions to those who become interested. Moreover, when he has his Special Sales Day in December, he encloses a portion in every package sent out of the store. Truly an act worthy of imitation.

### **A Striking Sequence**

“ This same colporteur sold a quantity of portions to a Christian by the name of Shimohira, in Kanda Ward, who used them for free distribution. As a direct result a man called Fukumoto, receiving a copy, became a sincere Christian. Shortly after that Fukumoto's wife became sick. Her case was taken to the Lord in prayer, and she was healed. This experience greatly strengthened his faith, and in order to give some special expression of his gratitude he also purchased a quantity of portions to spread in a like manner with the man from whom he had received the portion that turned his face Godward. Of the more than a thousand copies he spread, one copy found its way to a man in Nara Prefecture (about 300 miles away). It became the means of directly leading that man to Christ and indirectly his whole household of fourteen members. That is not all. It is reported that the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ introduced by that one portion has inclined the manager of a certain business enterprise, which belongs to Fukumoto, to believe in Christ as his Saviour. Furthermore,



BIBLE HOUSE, GINZA, TOKYO

Mr. Fukumoto sent 400 portions to a country school, of which he had been principal in days gone by, requesting that the pupils representing practically all homes in that school district should take them to their parents. In that way he reached all those homes with the pure story of the Saviour of mankind. Oh, what may the harvest be!

### **A Pearl Factory and a Bible Enthusiast**

“Before referring to instances outside of Tokyo, I desire to tell of the power of God’s Word in a pearl factory. It is about fourteen years since this factory was established, and by this time it has about thirty efficient artisans and seventy apprentices. The company claims that it has been good to the employees, not neglecting the care of them even morally. But in March, 1919, when a new superintendent, Mr. Saito, took charge, a new era was inaugurated. Being a very earnest Christian, he at once introduced Christianity. In his estimation that was absolutely necessary. Mr. Saito being a man of one book—a Bible man—furnished every member of the institution with a copy of the New Testament, and the result has been simply wonderful. In December one-third of the men had accepted Christ and were baptized. By this writing (middle of February, 1920), more of them are being baptized. The prospects are that the day is very near when all those employees have become Christians. Beside this happy result it has been discovered that all those who made the Bible an ever-present friend, have become 40 per cent. more efficient and faithful in the work.

### **{“ Bible Crazy ”**

“Mr. Saito says that he does not go around among the men to see that they are diligently at work, etc., but simply to inquire how they are getting on in their newfound faith. If there is anything that

troubles their hearts, he instructs and advises them on the basis of New Testament religion, and the result is most gratifying. Every day's work is begun with Bible reading and prayer. Sunday is observed. A church has been organized. Sunday worship is regularly held. 'The next thing,' said Mr. Saito, 'is to get the families of these men into the fold.' Splendid efforts have been begun with this end in view. Mr. Saito also said that he was what many people might call 'Bible crazy.' In younger days he had tried every thing under the sun in Japan, but never obtained what he hungered for until the Bible fell into his hands. 'When I got the Bible,' he said, 'I did not let go of it for days and days, not even for a single moment. I went into the mountain to be entirely alone in order to read and reread it. I took it to bed with me, to the table, to my work. In these days when people are face to face with labor problems, etc., not knowing what to do, I tell them there is no solution to it all outside of what the New Testament teaches. I know it is effectual, for I have tried it out in my factory. There is no use discussing the difficulties, but take God's Word, live it, and practically pour it into the minds and hearts of the people.'"

### Conclusion

Truly we may say with the old Christian who, in an out-of-the-way village, recently found Scriptures in all the houses of his village, as a result of a colporteur's work: "You are engaged in a very hard work, but in my estimation *it is a great work.*" And well may we follow his example as he says, "I am praying daily that you may succeed in reaching every home of this prefecture."

# Korea

*Last Agency Secretary, REV. S. A. BECK*

Circulation in 1919, 42,922 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1907, 2,422,665 volumes.

From 1882 when the American Bible Society first begun its work in Korea, until January 1, 1904, the work was directed from the Japan Agency. During the four years, 1904-1907, it was conducted under an arrangement of a joint Agency with the British and Foreign Bible Society and the National Bible Society of Scotland. From January 1, 1908, to the early months of 1919, the joint Agency gave place to an independent Agency, the Rev. S. A. Beck being last in charge of the American Bible Society's work. This year, as already announced, the British and Foreign Bible Society have taken entire charge of the work in Korea, themselves withdrawing from the Philippines, which has passed under the charge of the American Bible Society.

## **The Last Months**

Mr. Beck writes with deep feeling of the closing months of his experience and service in Korea because of the political events and hardships of the Koreans whom he had learned to love. While later developments give rays of hope for the future, as a record of the year quotations are made from the report as given by Mr. Beck:

## **The Emperor's Sudden Death**

"It may be best here to recall some other important events taking place in Korea. Since 1906 the Korean Emperor had been a prisoner in his own palace, and for about twelve years his youngest son had been in training in Japan, with permission to return to Korea but once during that time, and was now to be married on the 25th of January, 1919, to

a Japanese princess. It is reported that the ex-Emperor was greatly opposed to this union, and that he was also endeavoring to communicate with the Peace Conference at Paris. On the 20th of January, five days before the date for the wedding in Japan, the Emperor of Korea was found dead, when he was known to have been in his usual good health two hours prior to the announcement of his death.

"Immediately there were reports of foul play. Some said the Japanese were responsible, because they could not secure the signature of the Emperor to a paper to be sent to Paris, stating that all was well in Korea under the Japanese régime; others said the Emperor had killed himself as a protest against the forced marriage of his son to a Japanese; and still others said this was the supreme act of sacrifice on the part of the Emperor in behalf of his people and his country, and that he proved his love and devotion by giving his life. The official announcement was that a clot of blood had formed on the brain."

### **Secret Unrest**

Without entering fully into the completer details presented by Mr. Beck, let it be said briefly that the country was in a great state of secret unrest. The Japanese police made it their business to follow col-porteurs from house to house, questioning the inmates as to why they purchased the Scriptures, and making it very plain that they would have a better chance with the authorities if they did not purchase Scriptures.

### **"Mansei"**

Two days before the date fixed for the funeral of the ex-Emperor, March 3rd, nearly forty days after the announcement of his death, there was a demonstration of "the passive resistance" order in which a crowd, gathered at Pagoda Park, shouted "Mansei,"

the equivalent of "Hurrah for Korea." This was the signal for vigorous and rather cruel action on the part of the Japanese authorities, which culminated in further disturbances.

### **March 5th**

"The next noteworthy demonstration in Seoul occurred the morning of the 5th, at which time I witnessed the arrest of many, including women, and saw unarmed Koreans unmercifully beaten with clubs, cut with swords in the hands of the police and gendarmes, and also saw many Japanese civilians rush in, sometimes as many as ten Japanese attacking one defenceless Korean, beating, kicking, and browbeating, with total disregard of sex, guilt, or innocence.

### **Pitiful Beyond Description**

"I personally visited four villages which had been burned by the Japanese authorities, and in two of the villages there had been churches, which were consumed by the flames. At one place the men had been called to the church in the afternoon, and all were killed in the church either by bullets or bayonets, and then the church was burned with these dead bodies in it. The whole scene was pitiful beyond description."

### **Conclusion**

Mr. Beck, having turned over all the work and property of the American Bible Society to Mr. Miller, the representative of the British and Foreign Bible Society, finally left for America, where he landed on the 21st of May. He has since resigned from the service of the Society.

# Philippines

*Agency Secretary:* REV. J. L. McLAUGHLIN  
Box 755, Manila, P. I.

Established 1899. Field: The whole archipelago of about 3,000 islands.  
Circulation in 1919, 77,259 volumes. Aggregate circulation since 1899, 1,713,002 volumes.

Progress and co-operation have been characteristics of the year. This has been so despite the handicap of delayed stock and active opposition, this latter being from Roman Catholic influences. The organized activity of church members in intensive campaigns for the circulation of the Scriptures continues to be fruitful. From his long and wide acquaintance with the conditions in the Islands, Mr. McLaughlin draws a contrast between the past and present, which shows a marked improvement in moral, intellectual, and spiritual conditions, and which gives good promise for the future.

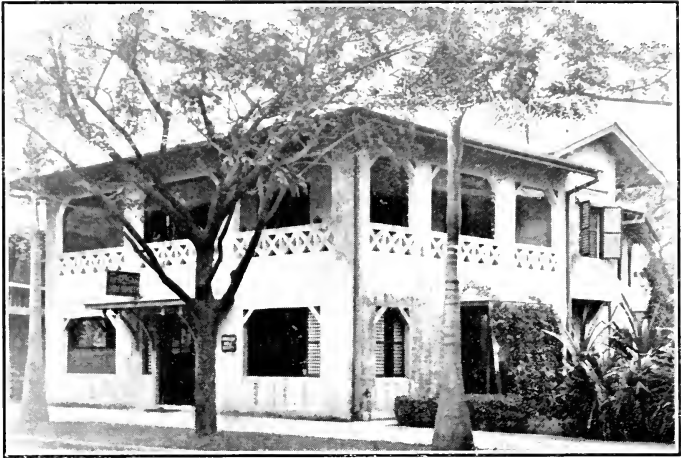
## General Facts

The circulation of 3,960 Bibles, 8,700 Testaments, and 64,599 portions made a total of 77,259 volumes, which is still below the average of pre-war years. "Owing to lack of supplies, most of our sellers had been compelled to cease work and to seek employment elsewhere." Unusual conditions also hampered the work. The mobilization of the National Guard caused a scarcity of supplies, of labor, and of shipping facilities for transportation. "Owing to an unusual drought followed by an almost unprecedented rainfall, in which some 110 inches of water came down in one month, the crops were materially shortened and a famine almost ensued, but was averted by prompt and strenuous efforts on the part of the government."

## Filipinization

"The Filipinization of the public service goes on apace. Wherever it is possible, American govern-





BIBLE HOUSE, MANILA

Purchased from the British and Foreign Bible Society.

ment employees are being supplanted by Filipinos, and many of these are making excellent records in their chosen departments." The fact that these young men have been educated largely in the Philippine University or in the United States, and other causes, have led to a re-action more favorable to American mentors and American influence. One of the young members of the Assembly recently insisted on addressing it in the English language, and the objection to the teaching of English in the schools is not so virulent. More American teachers are being employed.

### **The Exchange of Fields**

The exchange of fields in Korea and the Philippines has been effected, and the American Bible Society is now the only Bible Society responsible

for work in this large archipelago. The American Bible Society purchased the Bible House of the British and Foreign Bible Society, situated in the educational section of Manila.

### **Two Decades of Protestantism**

**vs.**

### **Two Centuries of Romanism**

The unification of Scripture distribution under the charge of one Bible Society is found to work for efficiency and harmony. In the earlier years there seemed to have been sufficient work for two Societies, especially in connection with the great task of translation and publication of the Scriptures in the principal dialects, and the covering of the large, untouched field. For, be it remembered that not until the United States took control from Spain, was the Bible translated into a single Filipino language. During its centuries in the Philippines the Roman Catholic Church had kept the Bible from the people. But now that the bulk of the translation work is completed and the first sowing has been made pretty well throughout the Islands, one Society can perhaps best meet present conditions.

### **Translation and Revision**

Translation work has been going forward in the Samareno dialect, but in the main there seems to be less need of pushing translation. The children are learning English, and the need of translations into minor dialects which have not yet had the Scriptures seems to decrease, with the increasing probability of their disappearance. But there is room and need for revision, although the Societies and missionary translators have the honor of having produced the best literature in the various languages and dialects.

### **An Official Tribute**

Mr. McLaughlin says that only a few days before he wrote, he heard the "Assistant Director of Education, at a great mass-meeting, recommend as a patriotic measure the veneration of their own traditions, customs, languages, etc.; and he recommended the Bible in its different translations as the very best preservation of their native tongues, the purest and the most perfect of anything in print. When we consider the haste with which these translations were made by men as yet scarcely acquainted with the native tongue, we marvel at the results. So from a literary and historical standpoint, there is an ever-increasing call for the Bible on the part of the students."

### **"The Station Man"**

Turning to the work of distribution, mention is made, first, of the "station man" at the Central Railway Station in Manila, who is, by the authorities, accorded the privilege of entering all platforms and coaches, where many persons, who have never before seen a copy of the Word, are given opportunity to take one of the little volumes of Scripture as a trip companion. "Only last week a pastor in a town 150 miles distant told me of an intelligent fellow-townsmen who came into his services for the first time. His interest had been aroused by reading on his homeward journey the Gospel of John, which he had secured from the Bible man in the Manila Railway Station."

### **"Anything but Spectacular"**

"So I might go through the list—Candido Bundang among the students in the university town of Los Baños; Felix Nicolas, Pablo Baladad, Pio Fajardo, and the rest. Their stories are the same. Some of them anything but spectacular, being stories of faithful and untiring services rendered. Stories of hot

days and dusty roads, of floods and hardships by day and by night. One of these men was for nearly two months in a town where the streets were nearly all under water, some to a depth of from four to five feet. For days he visited the market, going in a row boat or removing his shoes and wading, carrying his stock of Scriptures on his head. Truly, when I see what these men endure in the way of hardships, I am oftentimes put to shame, for I feel that in the total we bear by far the easier part."

### **Volunteer House-to-house Canvasses**

Much stress has been laid on, and much success has resulted from, the stimulation of church members to the conducting of definite campaigns of Scripture circulation. "Where there are organized churches we have been able to enlist the co-operation of these volunteer workers; and they have put on a house-to-house canvass, selling Scriptures wherever possible and, where no sale could be effected, making a present of one penny Gospel, usually the Gospel of John, or Mark. This has opened the way into hundreds of homes and paved the way for sales of Testaments and complete Bibles. Even with these more liberal discounts, the entire cost of circulation has been less than when done by the salaried colporteur, and the moral value has been infinitely better as the public recognize them as doing the work for the love of it as over against the commercial services of a professional seller.

### **But Salaried Colporteurs Still Needed**

"But this class of work is adapted only to those localities where there are well-organized churches; our paid men must stand responsible for, and visit, the 'regions beyond,' and, despite these years of energetic missionary activities, there are still many of these places beyond the reach of the influence of the workers or their helpers. The Bible Society colporteur is

the only gospel agent these multitudes have ever yet seen, or will be able to see for some time to come."

### **Roman Church Attitude**

"From all directions come in reports of more intense opposition on the part of the priests of the Roman Catholic Church. In Sinaít, Ilocos Norte, recently there was a 'Bible burning,' which created some considerable excitement. It followed a 'Bible revival' on the part of the members of the Christian mission in that place. A few days after the books had been distributed, the local Roman clergy offered in exchange some pictures and the so-gathered-up Bible portions were destroyed.

"Parochial schools are being established throughout the Island, and apparently a concerted attempt is being launched to undermine the solidarity of the public school system. As yet but little impression has been made upon that institution, but it shows the plans that are already well and carefully laid. The most pronounced application of this open hostility is manifested in the pressure brought to bear upon almost every young man and woman to withhold themselves from the influence of Evangelical teachings of whatever form.

### **Opposition Helps**

"All this propaganda and opposition scarcely hurts, rather it helps the circulation of the Scriptures; for, while it does frighten off many from openly countenancing personal religion and the open Bible, nevertheless the very same agitation incites many to want to see and know this proscribed Book, even if it has to be done secretly and covertly."

### **Bible Study**

Bible study is, happily, on the increase through various influences. The students in the public schools

and higher institutions of learning turn to the Bible as the highest standard of excellent English, and also recognize that the translations of the Scriptures are the best obtainable matter in their own languages and dialects. At the Y. M. C. A. Student Conference, more than 150 young men were gathered from all parts of the Islands for five days, devoting their attention to the careful study of the Bible and its application to the problems of Filipino life. These men go back to their homes, carrying the message of inspiration and helping to interest others in the Scriptures.

A city-wide Bible-study campaign is already planned for the city of Manila, when for six weeks it is hoped and expected that a large number of the students will devote careful study to this Book of books as covering some special phase of their lives.

### **A Secretary's Doings**

An excerpt illustrating the activities and experiences of the Secretary, and at the same time showing what developments have been taking place, must close this report:

“On this last trip I visited eight mission stations: three of the Methodist Episcopal Mission, one of the United Brethren, two of the Disciples of Christ Mission, and two of the Protestant Episcopal. This entailed traveling some 600 kilometers by train, 350 by automobile, 250 by auto-truck, 400 by motorcycle, 150 on horseback, and walking 300. A part of the time I traveled alongside the rippling swells of the open sea, practically on sea level, and a part of the time I was over 8,000 feet above sea level. A part of the time sweltering in the heat of the lowlands and a part of the time shivering under five blankets, trying to sleep but could not for the cold. It was a most interesting trip.

### **Growth all along the Line**

“However, the physical conditions and experiences soon fade away into forgetfulness, but the impressions of the growth and advancement of the churches and the stability of the work all along the line will long remain. I was most favorably impressed by what I saw among the churches. A dozen years ago I was held up in the town of Bangar, La Union, by bad roads and to rest our carabao, as I was in the very midst of a journey along that coast line which took seven days of arduous travel. Then I could find no place to rest, no friends nor acquaintances, no one who could understand, much less talk, English. Now what a difference! In place of the old mud and stone road with no bridges, now there is as fine an auto road as is to be found anywhere in the world; and instead of that seven days’ journey, one can now spin over the entire coast line road in five or six hours. In this town of Bangar there are now comfortable and pleasant hotels and congenial companions. But here I found a Sunday-school convention in full swing, and was most delightfully received and entertained. The programme was engineered by the Filipino members and would have done credit to any church anywhere. The young people were talking English, and I could scarcely believe that this was the same place where I had such unpleasant experiences so few years ago. At Candon I attended another Sunday-school convention, even larger in numbers and equally as enthusiastic and well directed. At all these points it was my earnest endeavor, and, I think, with some little degree of success, to encourage and inspire the local membership of the churches to assume the obligation and privilege of sowing down their home towns with the printed Word.

## **Beyond the Limits of the Agencies**

### **EUROPE**

None will be surprised that we can still record no work in several European countries where we have had correspondents in the past. The reasons are obvious. Only the countries and correspondents hereafter mentioned have been heard from. But from some of these, reports of earlier years are now coming.

#### **Sweden, Belgium, Germany**

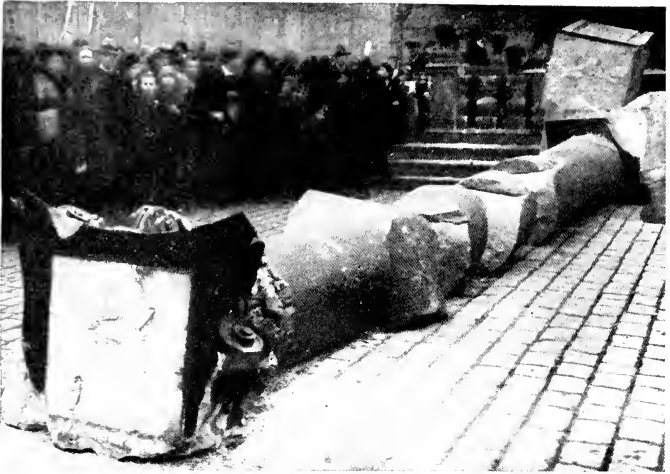
From *Sweden* only a brief statistical report has been received, with no details. The *Belgian Bible Society* reports resumption of activity during 1919 and a circulation of 28,664 volumes, of which 2,425 were distributed to soldiers, many wounded. From *Germany* comes a plea for renewed assistance, from our foreign correspondent, the Rev. C. H. Burkhardt. For two and a half years no appropriation had been made and no work could be done.

#### **Czechoslovakia**

The first real report to be presented is from Czechoslovakia, a caption appearing for the first time in the *STORY*. The work, however, is the same which has been previously recorded under the name of Austria, and is being resumed by our same correspondent, the Rev. J. S. Porter.

Writing in January, 1920, Mr. Porter stated that he had returned to Prague on June 15, 1919, after two years' absence in America; that communication with Vienna was very difficult; that stocks of Scriptures in Prague had been exhausted; and that while there was some at the British and Foreign Bible Society's depository in Vienna, money stringency was so great that one was allowed to take only the equivalent of \$20 when going from Prague to Vienna, and





“THE SHATTERED AND FALLEN MONUMENT

erected on the old historic public square in Prague to celebrate the triumph of Austria and the Jesuits over Bohemia and the Protestants in 1621. This monument had stood for nearly 300 years. Soon after the return of Bohemian independence, in October, 1918, a crowd demolished the monument. Now the new Huss Monument alone adorns this square.”

as the journey cost nearly that sum, it was very difficult to purchase a supply of Scriptures. He continues:

#### **A Freedom Unknown Before**

“And yet there is a real joy in working here, such as we did not have in the old days of Austrian misrule. There is a longing for the truth, and a freedom in selling the Scriptures unknown before. We are hoping for the same freedom in selling the Scriptures that obtains in America. And while we have not such a law as yet, there is no apparent hindrance to the sale and distribution of the Word of God anywhere in the republic.

“We have services on the public squares of our

cities and villages, and afterwards give away tracts, sell Bibles, and other literature, in a way undreamed of in the old days. Surely it is good to be here.

### **Scriptures Save from Suicide**

"I know that many have been helped and encouraged to look away from themselves to Christ, by the services of our devoted workers. I heard of one nurse who was longing for death, and tended gypsies afflicted with the virulent black smallpox, hoping to take the disease and die. She was, however, led to read the Scriptures; and last Sunday I had the great privilege of telling her the good news. She goes often to our Christian people for help and comfort."

### **Conclusion**

An urgent appeal is made for Bibles on thin paper, such as had been available before the war. Now only thick Bibles, with small print, or large, heavy Bibles, are available; none suitable for pocket use. "And our Christians believe in carrying their Bibles with them to all church services and elsewhere. We are so thankful for what we now have, but we need so much some handy Bibles for use on our journeys and in church and Sunday-school services."

## **Switzerland**

From the Rev. Dr. E. Ernest Grob record comes of the circulation of 2,630 volumes, through the Methodist Episcopal Mission.

### **Bibles and Testaments in Demand**

"Never the applications for Bibles and New Testaments have been so numerous as this year. Many people who up to now cared very little for the Holy Scriptures are now seeking for the Book of Life. Only the other day a gentleman and his wife came

to my house and wanted a Bible. He said: 'I have now been married for a certain time, and we have lived without God and his Word. I feel we must have the Bible in our home, for without it, it looks so empty.' That gave me an occasion to speak to the gentleman about religious matter, and since then he and his wife are regular attendants at our church meetings. Letters from our pastors state that there is a strong application for the Holy Scriptures among the young people, and surely, when our young folks begin to care for the Bible the next generation will be better than this one."

Another correspondent in Switzerland is the *Evangelical Society of Geneva*. We shared in their circulation in proportion to our contributions. From their report, the following is taken:

#### **Belgian Refugees in Holland**

"The activity of the Evangelical Society during the war has been brought to the attention of the public many times, and the sympathy with which it was received was very encouraging. A complete account has been rendered of the work accomplished among the 30,000 Belgian refugees during the five years Holland sheltered them. The Evangelical Society delegated there, by turns, four pastors, who sustained the faith of the exiles, shared their sad existence, and showed to many the way of salvation. Special attention was paid to the great camps of Zeist and Harderwyck, and also to certain villages occupied by the Belgians. Many testimonies of the good work of these pastors have been given: 'Ah! if our Belgium only knew the gospel,' said one, 'what a beautiful country it would be! When I get back to my home my whole family must be brought in contact with the Word of God.' A dying man said, 'Nothing else matters, now that I am going away, except that I know the Saviour.'

### **The Interned in Switzerland**

“Our Society undertook also a work of evangelization among the French and Belgian soldiers interned in central Switzerland. A chaplain sent there by the Society presided at a large number of religious services, held conferences, and made visits; he gave out very many Scriptures and other religious publications at Interlaken, Meiringen, Grindelwald, etc.

### **2,000,000 Gospels in France**

“The distribution of Scriptures and tracts to the soldiers in France was continued last year as during the first years of the war. Almost 2,000,000 Gospels have been given out to the soldiers in camps, barracks, and hospitals. Similar work has been carried on among the natives of Madagascar stationed in the south of France, and some of these have been baptized by one of our pastors.

### **Returning Refugees in the North**

“The general work of colportage, which was interrupted in the invaded sections of the north, has been taken up again in the desolate regions where the populations are commencing to return to set up their homes again. These afflicted people, numerous in the north as everywhere, receive the colporteurs kindly and confide to them their sorrows. Of the New Testament, particularly, a great many have been sold. Many of the refugees returning from Switzerland are particularly happy to be able to procure the Gospels, of which they now have knowledge, in the country that they love. One colporteur from the north, who was put in prison by the Germans for having presided over a group of worshipers, gives testimony of the good he was able to do to his fellow-prisoners to whom he sold the sacred books.

### Algeria Also

“In Algeria, also, the work of the colporteurs has been blessed, both among the French soldiers and among prisoners. One woman testifies as follows: ‘I said I would never again pray to God, but I know now it is better to return and bow down before him.’ Another declared that she wanted to embrace the religion of President Wilson, whose portraits have been sold with great success. A soldier wrote: ‘To me you have been a guardian angel. I read every day a portion of the Bible, and I put my confidence in God; if God preserves me, after the war I shall consecrate myself to his service.’”

### France

The Rev. Dr. Ernest Bertrand, the devoted and active director of the Bible Society of France, reports that with the donations of the American Bible Society 1,532 Bibles, 2,848 New Testaments, and 2,866 portions—a total of 7,246 volumes—were distributed, which had “a great success among not only Protestants, but among Roman Catholics.”

In an address made at the Centenary of the Protestant Bible Society of Paris, Dr. Bertrand stated that the Bible Society of France had given out nearly 150,000 volumes of Scriptures among French and Belgian soldiers, and the colonial troops from Africa, Asia, and Oceania. Among letters and testimonies he presents are these:

“An underofficer of artillery wrote us: ‘I cannot thank you too much for the privilege of spending some hours each day with the Bible, and the change it made in my life, for such moments of moral solitude and reading brighten the dull monotony of the life of a soldier.’ A mobilized pastor, Mr. Jalaguier, sent us the following extracts from letters he received from the front from ‘poilus’ to whom he had sent

copies of the Scriptures: 'I always carry my New Testament with me,' said one, 'and it is a great help to me, especially at this time when I am assailed by temptation. I can say that it often prevents my becoming discouraged and inclined to evil deeds. What is there of more good than this Book? There is no other testament that survives like the Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ.' 'This is the only book that revives and solaces me; for, since three years ago, I am isolated here, with no letter from my mother—not even a word!'

"Listen to these terms in which a Belgian soldier speaks of the Bible we sent him: 'An accident has happened to my beloved Bible. I left it on my night-table and when I came back to get it it had disappeared. It is very unfortunate; but it must have been of interest to him who took it, is it not so? If you could send me another to replace it, it would give me much pleasure; for I would sooner go without butter on my bread in order to be able to obtain another!'

"Very many of the combatants found that such a volume was too bulky or heavy and asked us to place at their disposal portions of Scripture in as compact a form as possible. It was to respond to these requests that the Bible Society of France decided two years ago to publish 20,000 copies of a collection in suitable form, entitled 'The Gospel for the French Soldier,' containing the Gospel of Luke, with the Epistle to the Ephesians, twenty Psalms, and a liturgy for funeral services of soldiers who had died for the Fatherland. (NOTE: Printed with the gifts of the American Bible Society.) Also 20,000 others, containing the Gospel of John, were printed. These two editions have been completely exhausted. The 'Gospel for the French Soldier' was a very attractive little volume, light and portable, the cover of which was adorned with the picture of a 'poilu' reading his Gospel in the trenches."

## Italy

In Italy, as in Switzerland, two bodies received contributions and make report to our Society.

In behalf of the *Methodist Episcopal Conference*, report is made by Dr. Bertrand M. Tipple of the circulation of 475 Bibles, 275 Testaments, and 1,100 portions. He adds:

### Who and Where

“In addition to the mere statistics, let me add a bit of story of the Bible work. The two who have been distributing are Giuseppe La Scala, our pastor at Reggio, Calabria, and one of the Methodist chaplains in the Italian army during the war, and Mrs. Luisa Schiavi, an evangelical school teacher at Montaldo Scarampi, Province of Allessandria.

“Mrs. Schiavi, besides working in Montaldo and its immediate environs, went during vacations and over week-ends to the towns of Montegrosso d’Asti, Mombercelli, and Agliano, and through the country districts around them.

### First Stoned; Then Received

“Sig. La Scala visited Taormina, Brancaleone, Mandancini, Bruzzano, Ferruzzano, Caraffa d’Andria, and Ali Marina. In the latter town he met persecution of the olden times. Instigated by the priests, the villagers stoned him, and he was in such peril that the state police had to go to his rescue. As is so often the case, however, when the excitement had cooled down, the reaction in his favor set in, and many went to him with words of sympathy. These began to gather regularly to listen to his message, so that he formed a permanent congregation there, which gathers weekly in a salt and tobacco shop under the care of a local preacher. The number of those present increases from week to week.”

*The Waldensian Aid Society* reports a circulation of 3,568 volumes, largely at the harbors of Genoa and Naples, among those starting for America, many of whom had seen service in the Italian army as reservists.

### **They Had Been Welcomed**

“Some of those reservists, when returning to America, recognizing in our Agent the man who was first to welcome them with words of cheer and hope when they landed in Italy, literally kissed and hugged him, so happy they were to go back to America and see their pastors and friends again. Others did not know how rightly to express their gratitude for the little book they received on landing in Italy, which had been such a dear companion in the long years spent at the front.”

## **ASIA**

### **Arabia**

From the Arabian Mission of the Reformed Church in America comes word of 2,792 volumes circulated. The correspondent records a previously unmentioned cause of lack of colporteurs, a cause in which all will enter with sympathy:

“For the past year we have been shorthanded, and now we are without colporteurs, as they have gone back to Armenia to find what is left of their families. This is a loss, in a way, but it has put me on the road with the gospel, forcing me to relinquish the school work somewhat; and it has given me much information and experience in the matter of selling or donating the Bible.”

### **India**

A circulation of 3,905 volumes is reported by the Madura Mission of the American Board of Com-



missioners for Foreign Missions, while the Ceylon Mission of the same board reports no circulation, but asks for assistance through the late and greatly missed missionary leader, the Rev. Giles G. Brown, who states, "From my own experience and observation I know that through your generosity in the past the Bible is read and appreciated in many Hindu homes; for many of our students are Hindus who



KURDISH CHIEFS

The Gospels were first printed in Kurdish by the American Bible Society in 1919.

carry their Bibles home to their people, who learn to prize it and whose lives are influenced by it."

## AFRICA

From the Inhambane Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church in East Africa, through the Rev. W. C. Terrill, have appeared, in the *Bible Society*

*Record*, reports of the circulation and influence of Scriptures in the Sheetswa and Gitonga languages. Something further about their services has been recorded under war work on page 17.

In his report on the work of 1919, Mr. Terrill adds another chapter on donations, which might have been entered under "War Distribution":

### **"To-morrow"**

"First, I wish to say that the 55 Bibles marked in the report 'donated' were given to the native Christians who had served their country at the front in what was once German East Africa, and were fortunate enough to withstand some of the German onslaughts and the rigors of the climate, which killed more than the fighting did. Strange as it may seem, and without wishing to comment on the Portuguese use of the word 'to-morrow,' the natives who gave themselves for their country are still awaiting the compensation that was promised them. I mention this in order to say the next. Since these natives did not have money to pay for a copy of the Scriptures, and since the one they took with them, if they were fortunate enough to own one at that time, was completely worn out, because of its much service—one copy oftentimes having to do duty for at least fifty people—we felt that we could do nothing better than give them a copy, and we were sure that you would stand by us in the matter."

### **How a German Moslem Soldier Became a British Christian**

"An example of the real missionary work that was done by our native Christians while at the front will interest you, I am sure. Many of the German native soldiers were Mohammedans. One day, during a skirmish, some of the German native Mohammedan soldiers were taken prisoners by the Portuguese native

Protestant soldiers. These prisoners must have been treated kindly, for they were permitted to attend the evening and morning prayers that were held, whenever opportunity presented itself, by the native Protestant Christians. Very deep impressions were made on some of these prisoners. 'Providentially,' some would say, 'merely a coincidence,' others would say, but one of these prisoners was sent to Inhambane and put to work at one of the government headquarters close to one of our outstations. This prisoner had much liberty granted to him, and one day, in his wanderings, he chanced upon this outstation. He reported his experience to the pastor-teacher, and soon he began to attend morning and evening prayers at this station, the Sunday services, and also school. During his conversations he would mention the names of some whom he had met among the native Christians at the front, and, again, strange as it may seem, many were from that very community.

"The war is now over, and this native, once a German Mohammedan soldier, is set free. One day, not long ago, Muhammed—for that is his name—came to the missionary and wanted a church letter to take with him to Johannesburg, since he was going there to work in the mines and he wanted to join the Methodist Episcopal Mission there. Imagine the missionary and his surprise that Muhammed should wish a church letter from a Christian missionary! Before the letter was granted, the questions asked elicited from the applicant the foregoing story, which was confirmed by his pastor-teacher and many others who knew him. Muhammed is to-day a probationer in our church in the Transvaal, undergoing a training for baptism and membership."

The more normal work and opportunities of peace time are pictured in the following extracts:

### **Sheetswa and Gitonga on the Rand**

“Permit me a word also about the great opportunity to do colportage work by our mission here in the Transvaal, in the mine compounds, in the Sheetswa and Gitonga languages. Very much is being done in other languages. The Rand is a very cosmopolitan center. One hundred and one different languages are spoken here, many of them, of course, being native African. But the other day a copy of the Scriptures was called for in Icelandic by a native of Iceland, who works here.

“There are approximately 314,160 native Africans employed in the mines on the Rand. Mozambique, or Portuguese East Africa, furnishes 105,237 of that number. It sends to the Transvaal more natives than any other section of Africa. Inhambane and ChaiChai, the two ports of Mozambique from which the natives embark for the Transvaal, and which draw from the boundaries of our mission, send an average of 900 a week, or 46,800 a year to these mines. The personnel of the natives changes almost entirely every two years. Fully three-fourths of these 46,800 natives speak the Sheetswa and Gitonga languages, principally the former. Thus we should be making possible, for at least 35,000 natives, the Scriptures in their own languages: Sheetswa and Gitonga. Had we a supply of these Scriptures we could sell large quantities continually, providing that we had a white colporteur.”

### **Conclusion**

And now we end this sketch of the devotion and labors of the Agency Secretaries, Colporteurs, Volunteers, and Correspondents who have made the record possible. Has the American Bible Society fulfilled in 1919 the “sole object” prescribed in its Constitution? It believes that it has, with the blessing of Him whose Word shall not return unto Him void.



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\* In charge of the Arabic-speaking portion of the field.

† Acting Agency Secretary.

