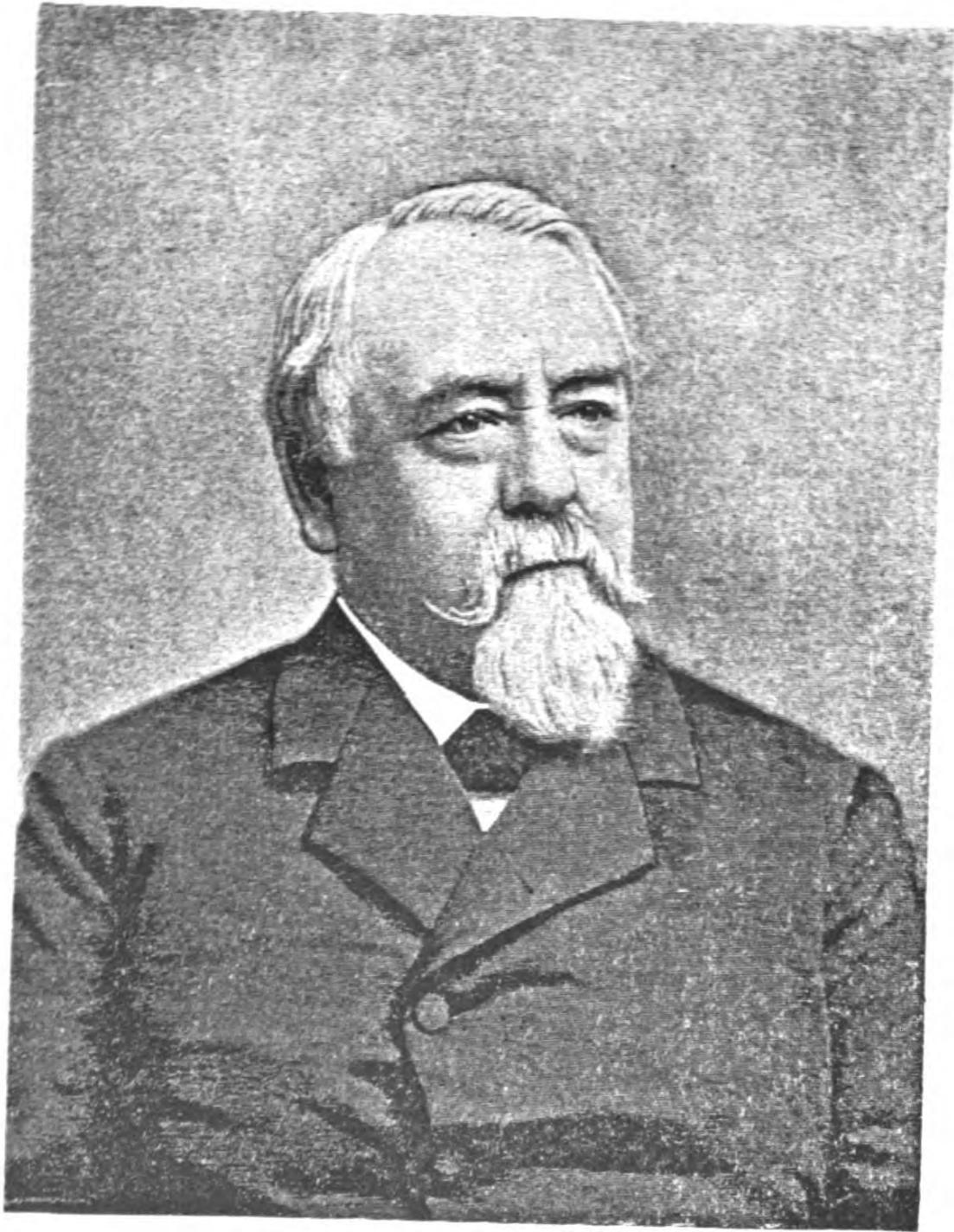




Christ in the Camp

John William Jones



Very fraternally
"Go. to Court on"
J. W. Jones

CHRIST
IN THE CAMP

OR

RELIGION
IN LEE'S ARMY

John
BY REV. J. WM. JONES, D.D.,

Formerly Chaplain in Arm^y of Northern Virginia; Secretary Southern
Historical Society; Author "Personal Reminiscences, Anecdotes
and Letters of K. E. Lee," "Army of Northern
Virginia Memorial Volume," etc.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTION

BY REV. J. C. GRANBERRY, D. D.,

Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; formerly Chaplain
in Army of Northern Virginia.

RICHMOND, VA. :

B. F. JOHNSON & CO.

1887.

CHAPTER V.

BIBLE AND COLPORTAGE WORK.

THE world's history has never presented a wider field of usefulness to the humble colporter who tries to do his duty than the camps and hospitals of the Confederate armies, and rarely have Christian workers more fully improved their golden opportunities.

When the war broke out, nearly all of the great publishing houses were located at the North, our people generally did their Bible and tract work in connection with societies whose headquarters were in Northern cities, and our facilities for publishing were very scant. The great societies at the North generally declared Bibles and Testaments "contraband of war," and we had at once to face the problem of securing supplies through the blockade, or manufacturing them with our poor facilities.

The first Confederate Bible printed, so far as I can ascertain, was from the presses of the South-western Publishing House, at Nashville, 1861. A copy of this edition was sent to President Davis, who replied: "The Bible is a beautiful specimen of Southern workmanship, and if I live to be inaugurated the first President of the Confederacy, on the 22d of February, my lips shall press the sacred volume which your kindness has bestowed upon me."

The British and Foreign Bible Society gave to the Confederate Bible Society unlimited credit in the purchase of supplies, and made liberal donations of Bibles and Testaments for our soldiers, as the following statement of Dr. Bennett will show:

"Finding that for the main supply they must rely on importations from abroad, the Confederate Bible Society directed its corresponding secretary, Rev. Dr. E. H. Myers, to communicate with the British and Foreign Bible Society, with the view of securing such occasional supplies as might be lucky enough to escape the dangers of the blockade and reach our ports.

"Dr. Myers, after detailing the operations of the society, said:

'The proposition is simply that we be allowed a credit with your society for the Scriptures we need—say to the value of £1,000—until such time as sterling exchange is reduced to about its usual cost—we paying *interest* on our purchase until the debt is liquidated.'

"To this letter the following noble response was sent, granting the society three times the amount they asked, free of interest:

"LONDON, 10 Earl Street, Blackfriars, October 10, 1862.

"THE REV. DR. MYERS:

"*Dear Sir:* I beg leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th of August, which did not, however, reach us until the 3d of this month. The request which it contains was immediately submitted to our committee for their consideration and decision, and I have much pleasure in informing you that it was unanimously agreed that your request should be complied with, and that the Scriptures should be sent as directed, to Messrs. Fraser, Trenholm & Co. The only portion of your letter to which the committee demurred was that in which you proposed that interest should be paid upon the debt until it was liquidated. We could not, for a moment, entertain such a proposition. We are only too thankful that God has in his Providence put in our hands the means of supplying your wants. Into the political question which now agitates the States of America it is not our province to enter. We hear of multitudes wounded and bleeding, and we cannot pass by on the other side, when it is in our power to do something towards staunching the wounds and to pour into them some few drops of the Balm of Gilead. May He who sitteth above the water-floods speedily command peace, and as Jesus in the days of His flesh trod the boisterous waves of the Sea of Galilee into stillness, so may He walk upon the rough waters of political strife and fierce contention, which now desolate your country, with such majesty and mercy that immediately there may be a great calm.

"You will, then, understand, my dear sir, that a credit has been granted by our society to the Bible Society of the Confederate States to the amount of £3,000, free of interest, and that the books will be forwarded as directed to Messrs. Fraser, Trenholm & Co. The first order, which has already reached us, will be executed with as little delay as possible. It will be gratify-

ing to our committee to receive any account of the work of God within the district which your society embraces with which you may be pleased to favor us.

“ I am, my dear sir, yours very sincerely,

“ CHARLES JACKSON, Secretary.’

“ This venerable institution gave another illustration of the principles on which it is founded by granting to Rev. Dr. M. D. Hoge, of Virginia, who went abroad during the war to procure religious reading-matter for our soldiers, 10,000 Bibles, 50,000 New Testaments, and 250,000 portions of the Scriptures, ‘ mainly for distribution among the soldiers of the Confederate army.’

“ With the portion of these grants that passed in to us through the blockade, the New Testaments printed within our limits, and, we are happy to say, several donations from the American Bible Society—one of 20,000 Testaments to the Baptist Sunday-school Board, and others through the Bible Society of the city of Memphis—our camps were kept partially supplied with the Divine word. We say partially, for often the distribution would be limited to a single copy of the Bible or Testament for a mess of five or six men.”

The visit of Rev. Dr. Moses D. Hoge, of Richmond, to England was not only very useful in securing the large donations of Bibles and Testaments noted above, but his eloquent statement of the religious work in the Confederate armies, in which he was so able and efficient a helper, elicited the sympathies and prayers of many Christians in Great Britain.

He brought over also many very valuable books and tracts, some of which were republished for use in our armies.

One of my most cherished mementos of the war is a portable Bible, commentary and concordance, which were brought over by Dr. Hoge, and copies of which were presented to many of the chaplains by that accomplished Christian woman and noble worker, Mrs. E. H. Brown (of the *Central Presbyterian*), who was appropriately called “ The chaplains’ friend,” and whose untiring labors in the hospitals won her the warm love of the soldiers, and doubtless many “ stars ” in the “ crown of rejoicing ” she now wears.

Unfortunately, however, only a part of the Bibles and other supplies secured by Dr. Hoge succeeded in “ running the blockade,” and many copies of God’s word intended for our suffering

soldiers were captured and scattered through the North as "souvenirs."

I must not forget to say that the "American Bible Society" made liberal donations of their publications, and did it with a Christian courtesy and charity which arose above the passions of the hour, and which our Southern people should gratefully remember, even if they had not continued, after the war, to make grants, amounting to considerably over \$100,000, to circulate God's word among the needy of our Southern land.

I find this item in a file of the *Religious Herald* for 1864:

"On an application by Rev. Levi Thorne, of North Carolina, approved by Governor Vance, 100,000 Bibles and Testaments, principally for North Carolina troops in the Confederate service, were granted by the American Bible Society, New York, at its meeting in December. For the South-west 50,000 were granted at the same time."

If other societies at the North made any such donations, I am not aware of it, and should be glad to be informed that I may give them due credit.

But with all the copies we could import or print, there was a great scarcity of Bibles and Testaments, and we appealed through the papers for extra copies that might be in the homes of the people or in the Sunday-schools. Some of the responses to these appeals were very touching.

One lady wrote: "This Bible was the property of my dear son H——, who died three years ago; it was given him by his only sister, about the time he was taken sick. For this reason I have kept it back, but seeing the earnest request in the papers, and as I can no longer read its sacred pages, after dropping a tear at parting with it, I send it for the use of the soldiers. I had given away long since all I could find about the house, and now send you this, hoping that, with God's blessing, it may save some soul."

In response to one of my appeals, I received from Miss Chapin, his aunt, the pocket-Bible which E. Garland Sydnor (son of our honored brother, Rev. Dr. T. W. Sydnor) carried in his pocket when he gave his noble young life to "the land he loved." It was stained with the blood of the patriot-soldier, and his aunt wrote that while she prized it above all price, she could not withhold it from some poor soldier who needed it, and sent it bedewed with her tears and carrying with it her prayers. I

wrote on a fly-leaf a statement of these circumstances, and requested its return to me if it should survive the war. I carried it for a noble fellow in Wright's Georgia Brigade, who had recently found Christ in the camp, and to whom I had promised a Bible, but found that he had been killed on the skirmish-line that morning, and had gone to study God's truth with clearer vision and in the clearer light of heaven.

I gave it to another, and ten days after his messmate brought me back the Bible, saying that his comrade had fallen in the forefront of the battle, and had died in the hospital in the full assurance of the Christian faith, and with warm expressions concerning the comfort and joy which that Bible had given him. I then gave it to my old university friend and brother, Edwin Bowie, of Westmoreland county, who was badly wounded, but survived the war, and only last year the book, around which so many hallowed associations and precious memories cluster, was returned to Dr. Sydnor.

Garland Sydnor was a cousin of Captain Hugh A. White, whose death has been described in the previous chapter, and there are some interesting coincidences in their lives, and the circumstances attending their death, which seem worthy of record:

1. They were near the same age—Hugh born in September, 1840, and Garland in March, 1843.
2. They were sons of ministers of the Gospel.
3. Like Timothy, they knew the Scriptures from childhood, each having been taught by a pious mother and a pious grandmother.
4. Each made a public profession of religion when about fifteen years of age.
5. Each decided shortly after his conversion to devote himself to the ministry, and had entered upon a course of study preparatory to that great work—Hugh at Union Theological Seminary, and Garland at Columbian College.
6. Their studies were interrupted by the war, and each returned to his home and volunteered as a soldier in the Confederate army.
7. They proved themselves brave and patriotic soldiers, and through all their military career maintained an elevated and consistent Christian character.
8. Both lost their lives in battle—Hugh in the second battle

of Manassas, and Garland just two weeks after, in the battle of Sharpsburg.

9. Each was slain while bearing aloft the flag of his regiment.

Reared in different parts of the State, these young men were never brought together except on the field of battle, and had no personal acquaintance with each other. They were taught to know and to love each other by their fathers, who were very intimate. "Their hopes, their fears, their aims were one." "Lovely and pleasant in their lives, in their death they were not divided."

As showing the desire of the men to procure Bibles, and the expedients to which we resorted to supply them, I give the following clippings from the newspapers of the day:

March 17, 1864.

"Last summer," says a letter in a Southern Baptist paper, "a chaplain arrived in Staunton with several large packages of Testaments and tracts, which he was anxious to get to Winchester, but had despaired of doing so as he had to walk, when a party of several soldiers volunteered to lug them the whole distance—ninety-two miles—so anxious were they that their comrades should have the precious messengers of salvation."

Rev. B. T. Lacy, in the *Central Presbyterian*, says: "The New Testament is the most popular book, the Scriptures of Divine truth the most acceptable reading, in our army."

Rev. W. R. Gaultney writes to the *Biblical Recorder*, that, during the battle at Fredericksburg, he saw a large number of soldiers reading their Testaments with the deepest interest, while lying in the entrenchments awaiting orders. He witnesses the same every day in camp.

"We were present not long since," says the *Soldier's Visitor*, "when a chaplain, at the close of a public service, announced that he had a prospect of being able to get a supply of Testaments for the portion of the men still destitute, and that those who wished a copy could give him their names after the benediction was pronounced. Scarcely had the 'Amen' died on the minister's lips before the war-worn heroes charged on the chaplain almost as furiously as if storming the enemy's breastworks."

Another narrates the following: "As some of the Confederate troops were marching through Fredericksburg, Virginia, with bristling bayonets and rumbling artillery, a fair lady appeared

on the steps of a dark brown mansion, her arms filled with Testaments, which with gracious kindness and gentle courtesy she distributed to the passing soldiers. The eagerness with which they were received, the pressing throng, the outstretched hands, the earnest thanks, the unspoken blessings upon the giver, thus dispensing the word of life to the armed multitude, to whom death might come at any moment, all made up a picture as beautiful as any that ever shone out amid the dark scenes of war. As a rough Texan said, 'If it was not for the ladies, God bless them, there would be no use of fighting this war.'"

During a skirmish some of our men were ordered to the front as sharp-shooters, and directed to lie on the ground and load and fire as rapidly as possible. After a short time the ammunition of one of these men was expended, and though his position was very dangerous as it was, it would have been certain death to procure a fresh supply. "In this condition," says an eyewitness, "this soldier drew from his pocket his Bible, and while the balls were whizzing about him and cutting the grass at his side, quietly read its precious pages for a few minutes, and then closed his eyes as if engaged in prayer."

CAMP NEAR PETERSBURG, November 10.

There is a general demand in the army for small Bibles. I have daily applications from soldiers so eager to get them that they frequently say they will give several months' wages for one. But the supply at all of the depositories and book-stores has long since been exhausted and there seems little prospect of a replenishment. Our brave boys must beg in vain for Bibles, unless the good people at home, who have hitherto contributed so liberally to the spiritual and temporal welfare of the army, will also come to the rescue in this matter. Almost every family might (by a little sacrifice) spare one or more small Bibles. A lady sent me the other day a Bible, owned by her nephew, a noble Christian soldier, who carried it in nine battles, and had it in his pocket when he fell at Sharpsburg. It was to her a precious relic, and yet she was willing to give it up, that its glorious light might illumine the pathway of some other soldier. I have given it to a gallant fellow, who says that he has been trying for twelve months to procure a Bible. Are there not others who will and can aid in this way?

J. WM. JONES, Army Evangelist.

I have an old memorandum-book filled with names of soldiers from every State of the Confederacy who had applied to me for Bibles and Testaments, and some of the scenes I witnessed in my work of Bible and tract distribution are as fresh in my memory as if they had occurred on yesterday. I had a pair of large "saddle-bags" which I used to pack with tracts and religious newspapers, and with Bibles and Testaments when I had them, and besides this I would strap packages behind my saddle and on the pommel. Thus equipped I would sally forth, and as I drew near the camp some one would raise the cry, "Yonder comes the Bible and tract man," and such crowds would rush out to meet me, that frequently I would sit on my horse and distribute my supply before I could even get into the camp. But if I had Bibles or Testaments to distribute, the poor fellows would crowd around and beg for them as earnestly as if they were golden guineas for free distribution. Yes, the word of God seemed to these brave men "more precious than gold—yea than much fine gold." The men were accustomed to form "reading clubs," not to read the light literature of the day, but to read God's word, and not unfrequently have I seen groups of twenty-five or thirty gather around some good reader, who for several hours would read with clear voice selected portions of the Scriptures.

I have never seen more diligent Bible-readers than we had in the Army of Northern Virginia.

The efforts made by our Confederate people to supply our armies with Bibles and religious reading were worthy of all praise, and a whole volume would not suffice to give even a meagre record of the labors of the different societies formed for the purpose.

Dr. W. W. Bennett, who was himself Superintendent of the Soldiers' Tract Association, and a most efficient chaplain, has given in his "Great Revival" so admirable a summary of the work of these agencies, that I quote him, as follows :

"So important was the work of colportage in promoting religion among the soldiers, that we feel constrained to devote to it a separate chapter. And the pious laborers in this department are eminently worthy of a place by the side of the most devoted chaplains and missionaries that toiled in the army revival. Receiving but a pittance from the societies that employed them, subsisting on the coarse and scanty fare of the soldiers,

often sleeping on the wet ground, following the march of the armies through cold or heat, through dust or mud, everywhere were these devoted men to be seen scattering the leaves of the Tree of Life. Among the sick, the wounded, and the dying, on the battle-fields, and in the hospitals they moved, consoling them with tender words, and pointing their drooping spirits to the hopes of the Gospel. The record of their labors is the record of the army revival; they fanned its flame and spread it on every side by their prayers, their conversations, their books, and their preaching. They went out from all the churches, and labored together in a spirit worthy of the purest days of our holy religion. The aim of them all was to turn the thoughts of the soldiers not to a sect, but to Christ, to bring them into the great spiritual temple, and to show them the wonders of salvation. If any man among us can look back with pleasure on his labors in the army, it is the Christian colporter.

“The number of religious tracts and books distributed by the colporters, chaplains, and missionaries in the army, we can never know. But as all the churches were engaged in the work of printing and circulating, it is not an overestimate to say that hundreds of millions of pages were sent out by the different societies. And, considering the facilities for printing in the South during the war, we may safely assert that never were the soldiers of a Christian nation better supplied with such reading as maketh wise unto salvation; and certainly, never amidst circumstances so unpropitious to human view, did fruits so ripe, so rich, so abundant, spring up so quickly from the labors of God’s servants.

“Earliest in the important work of colportage was the Baptist Church, one of the most powerful denominations in the South. In May, 1861, at the General Association of the Baptist Churches in Virginia, vigorous measures were adopted for supplying the religious wants of the army.

“The Sunday-school and Publication Board, in their report on colportage, said: ‘The presence of large armies in our State affords a fine opportunity for colportage effort among the soldiers. These are exposed to peculiar temptations, and in no way can we better aid them in resisting these than by affording them good books. To this department of our operations we ask the special, earnest attention of the General Association. Shall we enter this wide and inviting field, place good books in the hands of our soldiers, and surround them by pious influences? or shall

we remain indifferent to the spiritual dangers and temptations of those who are flocking hither to defend all we hold dear?'

"The association cordially responded, and 'recommended to the board to appoint at once, if practicable, a sufficient number of colporters to occupy all the important points of rendezvous, and promptly to reach all the soldiers in service in the State; that during the war as many colporters as could be profitably employed, and as the means of the board would admit, be kept in service; that special contributions to colportage should be raised from the Baptist Churches, from the community, and even from such persons in other of the Confederate States as may feel interested in the welfare of the soldiers who are gathered from the various Southern States to fight their common battles on the soil of Virginia; that steps should be taken to secure the issue of a tract or tracts specially adapted to general circulation among the soldiers.'

"The work was put in charge of Rev. A. E. Dickinson, who had already acquired a valuable experience and a high reputation as the Superintendent of Colportage under the direction of the General Association. He sent forth his well-trained band of colporters into this new field, which they cultivated with the happiest results, and with a zeal and self-denial worthy of the cause of Christ.

"One year after these labors were commenced, Mr. Dickinson said, in his annual report:

"'We have collected \$24,000, with which forty tracts have been published, 6,187,000 pages of which have been distributed, besides 6,095 Testaments, 13,845 copies of the little volume called "Camp Hymns," and a large number of religious books. Our policy has been to seek the co-operation of chaplains and other pious men in the army, and, as far as possible, to work through them. How pleasant to think of the thousands who, far from their loved ones, are, every hour in the day, in the loneliness and gloom of the hospital, and in the bustle and mirth of the camp, reading some of these millions of pages which have been distributed, and thus have been led to turn unto the Lord.'

"In his report for 1863, in the midst of the war, he says:

"'Modern history presents no example of armies so nearly converted into churches as the armies of Southern defence. On the crest of this flood of war, which threatens to engulf our freedom, rides a pure Christianity; the Gospel of the grace of

God shines through the smoke of battle with the light that leads to heaven; and the camp becomes a school of Christ. From the very first day of the unhappy contest to the present time, religious influences have been spreading among the soldiers, until now, in camp and hospital, throughout every portion of the army, revivals display their precious, saving power. In one of these revivals over three hundred are known as having professed conversion, while, doubtless, there are hundreds of others equally blessed, whose names, unrecorded here, find a place in the "Lamb's book of life."

"And in 1865, in reviewing the blessed work of saving souls amid the bloody scenes of four gloomy years, the board said:

"Millions of pages of tracts have been put in circulation, and thousands of sermons delivered by the sixty missionaries whom we have sent to our brave armies. If it could be known by us here and now how many souls have been saved by this agency, doubtless the announcement would fill us with surprise and rejoicing. Hundreds and thousands, we verily believe, have in this way obtained the Christian's hope, and are now occupying some place in the great vineyard of the Lord, or have gone up from the strife and sorrow of earth to the peaceful enjoyments of the heavenly home."

"The Evangelical Tract Society, organized in the city of Petersburg, Virginia, in July, 1861, by Christians of the different denominations, was a most efficient auxiliary in the great work of saving souls. It was ably officered, and worked with great success in the publication and circulation of some of the best tract-reading that appeared during the war. More than a hundred different tracts were issued; and in less than one year after the organization of the society, it had sent among the soldiers more than a million pages of these little messengers of truth. *The Army and Navy Messenger*, a most excellent religious paper, was also published by this society, and circulated widely and with the best results among the soldiers. Holding a position similar to that of the American Tract Society, this association was liberally sustained by all denominations, and had ample means for supplying the armies with every form of religious reading, from the Holy Scriptures to the smallest one-page tract. Its officers, editors, agents, and colporters were among the most faithful, zealous, and successful laborers in all departments of the army.

During the period of its operations, it has been estimated that 50,000,000 pages of tracts were put in circulation by it.

"The Presbyterian Board of Publication, under the direction of Rev. Dr. Leyburn and other ministers of that Church, entered the field and did faithful service in the good cause. The regular journals of that denomination, a monthly paper—*The Soldier's Visitor*—specially adapted to the wants of the army, Bibles, Testaments, and most excellent tracts in vast numbers, were freely sent forth to all the camps and hospitals from their centre of operations.

"The Virginia Episcopal Mission Committee heartily united in the work, and spent thousands of dollars per annum in sending missionaries to the army, and in printing and circulating tracts. Rev. Messrs. Gatewood and Kepler, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, were the zealous directors of operations in Virginia, while in other States such men as Bishop Elliott, of Georgia, Doctor, now Bishop, Quintard, of Tennessee, and the lamented General Polk gave the weight of their influence and the power of their eloquence, written and oral, to promote the cause of religion among our soldiers.

"At Raleigh, North Carolina, early in the war, Rev. W. J. W. Crowder commenced the publication of tracts, encouraged and assisted by contributions from all classes of persons. In less than a year he reported: 'We have published, of thirty different tracts, over 5,000,000 pages, more than half of which we have given away, and the other half we have sold at about the cost of publication—1,500 pages for one dollar.' This gentleman continued his labors in this good work throughout the war, and furnished millions of pages of the best tracts for army circulation.

"The 'Soldiers' Tract Association' of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was organized and went into operation in March, 1862, and became a valuable auxiliary in the work of colportage and tract distribution. By midsummer it had put in circulation nearly 800,000 pages of tracts, and had ten efficient colporters in the field. Its operations steadily increased to the close of the war; and besides the dissemination of millions of pages of excellent religious reading, with thousands of Bibles and Testaments, two semi-monthly papers were issued, *The Soldier's Paper*, at Richmond, Virginia, and *The Army and Navy Herald*, at Macon, Georgia, 40,000 copies of which were circulated every month throughout the armies.

"In addition to these, there were other associations of a like character successfully at work in this wide and inviting field.

"The Georgia Bible and Colportage Society, Rev. F. M. Haygood, agent, was actively engaged in the work of printing and circulating tracts in the armies of the South-west.

"The South Carolina Tract Society was an earnest ally in the holy cause, and sent out its share of tracts to swell the vast number scattered like leaves of the Tree of Life all over the land.

"The presses in every great commercial centre were busy in throwing off religious reading of every description, and yet so great was the demand that the supply was unequal to it during the whole of the war. At Richmond, Raleigh, Columbia, Charleston, Augusta, Mobile, Macon, Atlanta, and other cities, good men labored day and night to give our gallant soldiers the bread of life; and still the cry from the army was, 'Send us more good books.' At one period of the war the Baptist Board alone circulated 200,000 pages of tracts weekly, besides Testaments and hymn-books; and, with the joint labors of other societies, we may estimate that when the work was at its height not less than 1,000,000 pages a week were put into the hands of our soldiers."

Rev. Dr. C. H. Ryland, who was a colporter in the army during the first year (sustained by his own church, Bruington, King and Queen county), and afterwards depository, agent and treasurer of the army colportage work of the Virginia Baptist Sunday-school and Publication Board, has kindly furnished me the following additional facts and figures.

The Bible Board, in its report for 1861, said: "We earnestly suggest to the association the importance of making prompt and adequate provision for supplying our soldiery with the Bible. While in aid of what we all esteem a noble and sacred cause, the protection of our homes, our firesides, our altars, our mothers, sisters, wives and little ones from desecration and outrage by wicked and cruel invaders, we put into the hands of our brave defenders appropriate weapons; let us not fail to supply them with the means of waging an even higher and holier, because a spiritual and Divine, warfare. Let us give every man not already armed with it 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.'"

At the meeting of the same body in 1863, this board was "in-

structed to correspond with pastors suited to the work and endeavor to engage them to labor as voluntary evangelists in the army, and that the board defray their expenses."

"*Resolved*: That this board be instructed, in connection with other boards which may deem such a measure important for their interests, to inquire into the expediency of deputing some suitable brother to visit Europe, for the purpose of procuring Bibles, books, tracts and any other appliances that may aid the general usefulness of such boards; and, if deemed expedient, be authorized to make arrangements therefor."

During 1862 and 1863 alone this Sunday-school and Publication Board collected for army colportage \$84,000. It published and distributed in the army 30,187,000 pages of tracts, 31,000 Bibles and Testaments, 14,000 "Camp Hymns," and thousands upon thousands of religious books sent by the people from their homes, and religious papers without number.

During 1864 sixty colporters were kept at work in the army. These were kept supplied with tracts, Bibles and Testaments, but for this year the exact records have been lost.

I regret that I have been unable to obtain fuller and more exact reports of the other Bible and tract societies; but the following clippings from war files of the religious newspapers give the most interesting details of the spirit with which our people engaged in the work, and the wonderful success which crowned their efforts.

"The annual report of the Southern Methodist Episcopal Soldiers' Tract Association for 1863 shows a receipt during the year of \$95,456.71, and a disbursement of \$64,470.60. The association has issued for circulation 7,000,000 pages of tracts, 45,000 soldiers' hymn books, 15,000 soldiers' almanacs, 15,000 Bible readings for soldiers; and has circulated 15,000 copies of the Holy Scriptures—Bibles, Testaments and Gospels separately bound, 50,000 copies of *The Soldier's Paper* and 20,000 copies of *The Army and Navy Herald*."

The *Petersburg Express* says: "When the war commenced, the Baptists of Virginia were extensively engaged in the work of colportage. They were soon impressed with the importance of employing this powerful agency in circulating the Scriptures and religious books in the army. After a few months' labor it was found that the colporters were highly esteemed by the soldiers, and Rev. A. E. Dickinson was instructed by the General Associa-

tion of Virginia to appeal to the Christians of the South for means to publish and circulate Testaments and tracts. These appeals, made through secular and religious papers, were liberally responded to by men of all denominations. The board intrusted with the management of this immense work is composed of men of intelligence. They have sought distinction neither for themselves nor the society they represent. It has a history that will survive the present revolution—a place in the affections and a claim to the esteem of the public that time cannot shake. All of its numerous publications are said to be highly evangelical, and commend themselves to members of all denominations. We have no means at present of estimating the number of pages this society has printed and circulated. It has done much—and much remains to be done. The army is large and is daily growing larger. The demand for the Scriptures and tracts continues to be as great, if not greater than at any former period.”

Rev. A. E. Dickinson, the general superintendent of this board, gives the following incidents illustrating the feeling of our people generally at the beginning of this work :

“When in Augusta, Georgia, some months ago, I made a public appeal in behalf of the soldiers then in Virginia. After the services were concluded a bright and beautiful little girl of four summers came up with a dime, and said, ‘Tell my brother Johnnie howdie, and buy him some good little tracts with this.’ She thought, of course, everybody knew *her* brother, and that there would not be any difficulty in finding *him*. With a glad heart she went away smiling at the thought that she had given her all. The next morning an old negro man came through the drenching rain to my place of abode, and made the following remark: ‘My heart was so sorry when I heard you tell of dem poor soldiers in Virginia—how dey starving for de Gospel; and to think dat here I hab de preached word all de time, and there dey is fighting for me. My heart is monstrous ’flicted when I think of my young massa out in de army, and I wants to send him de Gospel.’ So saying, he placed a gold dollar in my hand and expressed his regret that it was ‘so little.’ Several persons gave large sums; but of all the hundreds thrown into the treasury it seemed to me that this little girl and this gray-haired African were the most liberal—they gave of their

poverty. God grant that 'brother Johnnie' and the 'young massa' may become savingly interested in the great salvation!
 "A. E. DICKINSON."

Mr. Dickinson wisely secured the influence and help of our best men, as the following will show. Hon. John Randolph Tucker has been for years a member of the Presbyterian Church, and one of those public men who never hesitates "to show his colors"—to speak out for Christ.

"*Messrs. Editors:* The following letter from John Randolph Tucker, Esq., Attorney-General of Virginia, will be of service to the cause I have the honor to represent. Mr. Tucker evinces the depth and sincerity of his conviction in this matter by his deeds, as, in addition to former gifts, this letter enclosed a handsome donation.

"A. E. DICKINSON."

"RICHMOND, June 19, 1862.

"*Dear Sir:* In compliance with your request I take great pleasure in expressing the conviction of my mind, that the scheme of colportage for the army under your charge is worthy of the support of every Christian and every patriot. Our cause, under God, is committed to the keeping of our noble army. That cause rises far above all secular objects; for it involves within it our religion in its purity and in its successful dissemination throughout our whole Southern country. The enemy has not only invaded our homes, but has desecrated our churches and stifled the voice of prayer in the temples of God, and seized His ministers clinging to the very horns of the altar. Freedom to worship God has ceased wherever the legions of the foe have advanced; and the conscience of an outraged people, forbidden to utter its voice in public devotion, can only breathe its prayers for the rescue of our land from the enemies of our country and the despisers of our religion. But shall the defenders of a free faith and of our hearthstones be without the word of God and the means of personal salvation? The scheme of colportage answers the question. By it religion noiselessly walks through the camp, sowing the precious seed among the soldiers of the South. It enters the hospitals and speaks peace to the sick and the dying, and lifts the broken and wounded spirit to the hope

which anchors the soul in the haven of eternal rest. What may we not hope to accomplish in filling the ranks of our host with the true soldiers of the Lord of battles? Shall we not rob war of much of its horror, when thousands of men, loyal to their country, but in disloyal opposition to the King of kings, shall be brought to acknowledge the sceptre of His power and yield obedience to His law?

"The word of God—the tract which conveys little by little portions of that word to the mind of the soldier on duty; the book, or paper or pamphlet, which leads him to the fountain of all truth—these are the means you use to make the citizen-in-arms a better, because a Christian patriot. The labors of the colporter, however humble and simple, thus become the instruments of the largest benefit to the army, to the country and to the kingdom of the Redeemer. To the sick, the wounded and the dying, stilling the noise and tumult of the battle with the gentle whispers of a Saviour's love, his presence is an incalculable blessing. The fruits of his toil are presented in a rich harvest already perceptible all through our army. Let him go on in the discharge of his duty; let men everywhere sustain him by counsel and contribution, and we will see the work crowned with temporal benefits, which can scarcely be estimated, and with eternal blessings, which shall be full of glory.

"I am, dear sir, yours, very truly,
"J. R. TUCKER."

And the following report of a grand mass-meeting held in Richmond in the same interest will show the general co-operation of our people.

"*Messrs. Editors:* Will you be kind enough to transfer to your columns, from the *Richmond Whig*, the enclosed account of the meeting held in the First Baptist Church on Sunday night, February 23?

"A. E. D."

— "Last Sabbath evening, at the First Baptist Church of this city, an unusually enthusiastic meeting was held, in behalf of army colportage. Every seat was occupied, while many went away unable to find admission. After singing and prayer, Rev. A. E. Dickinson made some statements, giving an account of

what had been effected by colportage labors among the soldiers.

“ Rev. Robert Ryland, D. D., colporter for the hospitals of this city gave a deeply interesting narrative of his labors. He had found the inmates of our hospitals eager to receive instruction. Sometimes they had professed to be greatly benefited by the tracts, and often sent for him to come again. An invalid remarked to him, that prior to his entering the army he had enjoyed religion, and had been a member of the Presbyterian Church ; but, surrounded by the vices of the camp, he had become a backslider and lost all religious enjoyment. After frequent conversations he became much interested in his soul's salvation, sent for the colporter again and again, and before his death expressed himself perfectly resigned to the will of God. Other facts and incidents of much interest were narrated.

“ He was followed by John Randolph Tucker, Esq., in a speech of great power and eloquence. Mr. Tucker thought it augured well for the country that such an immense audience had assembled, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather; to consider the spiritual wants of our army. We are passing through the most momentous era in the history of this country. The year 1861 was filled with victories and covered Southern arms with imperishable glory ; but from the beginning of this year we have met with nothing but disaster. Every message brought over the telegraph but tells of some new defeat. Why is this ? Up to the battle of Manassas our whole people were prostrate before God in prayer. The speaker had met with many on the street with prayer trembling on their lips, while tears of penitence filled their eyes. Now, those men have upon their lips blasphemous oaths, and their eyes are never turned to God for His blessing. After the great victory of Manassas we ceased to realize our dependence on heaven ; and nothing was more common than to hear such expressions as, ‘ We can whip the Yankees any way.’ Greed and avarice have taken possession of the hearts of many, while in every portion of the Confederacy distilleries have been springing up, until now the whole land groans under the liquid poison which is sweeping so many of our soldiers into the grave. Our streets are blocked up with men made drunk by the distilleries. How dare we expect the blessing of God when such things are tolerated ? It is the decree of heaven that ‘ righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a re-

proach to any people.' It is vain to speak of the justice of our cause, unless we seek upon that cause the blessing of heaven, and use the instrumentality which Providence places in our hands. The speaker believed that piety will make a man a truer patriot and a braver soldier. It assures him that God is his friend; that 'all things work together for his good,' and that when he falls into the icy grasp of death, his soul will rise up to the unfading bliss of heaven. It is not necessary to refer to Cromwell, Havelock and other pious generals, to illustrate this great principle. We have illustrations in every division of our own army. Where can we look for a braver soldier than Stonewall Jackson; and yet never had the speaker known a more humble and earnest Christian than this noble man. What will become of these hundreds of thousands of soldiers when they return? If religious influences are not now brought to bear upon them, we may expect at the close of this war to have the country overrun with the most desperate, lawless men ever known in the South. In view of all these considerations, the speaker argued that this work has the most weighty claims upon all classes of the community. Mr. Tucker closed with an eloquent tribute to President Davis. In all his reading he had never known of a state paper closing, as the President's inaugural address, with an earnest prayer to the God of heaven, for His blessing upon himself and his country.

"Colonel Wright, member of Congress from Georgia, followed in an able speech. Nothing is more powerful than words, and the pen is mightier than the sword. From experience in command, he was prepared to commend this work. There is no better way to insure success in this great struggle than by surrounding our men with religious influences. It is difficult to get the soldier to attend regular preaching, but he will read a tract, and in the tedium of camp-life nothing is more acceptable. Colonel Wright closed with an eloquent appeal in behalf of the soldiers' spiritual culture.

"Hon. J. L. M. Curry said that he had made no promise to speak, but his love for the cause would not permit him to be silent when called out, if any words of his would advance its interests. He had no hope of success in establishing a free government unless Christian principle permeates all classes. There must be in high and low station a Christian conscience. We need a conservative element. This point was elaborated with

power, and with that high order of eloquence so characteristic of this distinguished gentleman. Mr. Curry narrated some thrilling incidents in illustration of the good that may be done by circulating Testaments and tracts among the soldiers.

"Judge Chilton, representative of the Montgomery District (Alabama) in Congress, said it was too late for him to enter upon any lengthy remarks, but that with all his heart he endorsed the cause. He believed it one of the holiest and most glorious to which a good man can aspire. He had given to it the previous Sabbath, but was willing to give again, and to *continue* to give as long as he had a dollar and as any soldier's soul needed to be cared for. While the devil's colporters are going from camp to camp destroying the souls of our dear boys, he felt that the Christian community must do all in their power to counteract their ruinous influence. A collection was made, amounting to \$1,250, after which the congregation was dismissed, all feeling that the entertainment was an "over-pay" for going out on such an inclement evening."

Rev. Dr. A. E. Dickinson, of Richmond, now editor of the *Religious Herald*, has had a career of great usefulness in the varied stations he has occupied, but the assertion is ventured that he never had four years of more abundant evidence of God's richest blessing upon his labors than during the years he superintended the grand work of his board in the camps and hospitals of the Confederacy, and pushed it forward with a zeal and consecrated tact which entitles him to a high place on the record of our army work.

The same may be said also of Dr. Bennett and others who had charge of army colportage.

Dr. Dickinson, however, kept his work constantly and so prominently before the public, through both the religious and secular press, that our newspaper-files abound with most interesting details of the labors of his colporters, 100 of whom he turned into the camps and hospitals at the very beginning of the war, and it is a very easy task to cull from his reports all the material necessary to further illustrate this chapter. I only regret that the material for a sketch of the labors of the other boards and societies is not so accessible. But none of these evangelical societies published sectarian tracts or engaged in sectarian labors during the war, and in giving, therefore, the work of one, I really give but a specimen of that of them all.

I quote, then, *in extenso*, from the reports of Dr. Dickinson, and along with these such reports of others as I have been able to find.

“A few weeks ago a soldier in the service of the Confederate States professed faith in Christ, united with a Baptist Church, and went on his way rejoicing. I have now before me a letter which this young soldier of the Cross has addressed to a member of the Sunday-school and Publication Board. ‘Please find enclosed,’ he writes, ‘ten dollars, in return for which please send me some good religious tracts, such as you may think best to distribute among the unconverted soldiers. I do hope and trust that the Lord is with us.’ It is said that the angels of the Lord encamp round about those who love Him and hope in His mercy. Who will not aid in supplying this dear disciple with books and tracts, that he may distribute hundreds of dollars’ worth of these silent preachers to his comrades? There are scores of pious men in the army who will become voluntary colporters if we can supply them with books. What a field of usefulness this war has opened! May it not be that this is one of the ways in which God makes the wrath of men to praise Him? Let all who can imitate the example of this pious soldier, and very soon the tree of life will be placed within reach of the tens of thousands of brave men who are now congregated within the limits of our State.

“A. E. D.”

Brother J. W. Williams, Mathews county: “Our soldiers are all well. I have morning and evening services, weekly prayer-meetings, and preaching every Sunday. I have no tracts. Do send me some, that I may be placing them in the hands of the soldiers.”

Brother H. Madison, Richmond: “I have been laboring three weeks in the various encampments around Richmond, and so much have I been prospered that I feel like thanking God and taking courage. I find that, almost without exception, the soldiers are religiously inclined, and hundreds of times have those who are not members of any church said to me that their only hope of success in this struggle is in God—that from their cradles they have been taught to believe in the Bible and to trust in the Saviour it reveals. There are many Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians here, and some of them have public

prayers morning and night, as they have been accustomed to do at home around the family altar. One young man looked over my books and selected 'Attractions of Heaven' and 'The Gift of Mourners' to send as a present to his sister in Mississippi. A few days ago a pious soldier said to me, as I entered an encampment: 'Your labors have not been in vain here, for two of the young men have professed to be converted.' I have circulated a great many copies of sermons which were given to me, and they have been read with unusual interest, so much so that numbers inquire of me as soon as I go among them: 'Have you any more of those sermons?' My sales have been considerable; they buy Bibles, Testaments, hymn-books, and books on almost every religious subject, though my grants are much larger than my sales."

Rev. R. Lewis, Smyth county: "Though my sales have been small, I have been constantly at work visiting encampments, conversing with our soldiers, holding prayer-meetings and distributing books. I sell 'Baxter's Call,' 'Alliene's Alarm,' 'Anxious Inquirer,' and many such books to soldiers. I was much pressed to stay with the companies I have visited, but am now about to start for the Abingdon encampment. I believe I can do more good among the volunteers than anywhere else."

Rev. R. W. Cridlin, Matthias Point: "I have disposed of all my Testaments. You can hardly conceive of the anxiety of soldiers for books. One said to me: 'If I am spared to return to my home, I shall ever love the colportage cause, since it has done so much for me.' I could distribute 1,000 Testaments to great advantage. I have begged a goodly number from the families around, but you must send me a large number. While urging the importance of Divine things on a company the other day, some wept freely, thus evincing their concern. Oh, let us labor for these dear souls! Many of them may be won to Christ."

Brother C. F. Fry, Winchester: "I have been laboring in this place nearly two weeks. The most of my time has been spent in visiting the sick. Last Sunday I visited the hospital, talked with the inmates about the great salvation, and distributed among them tracts and Testaments. Two young men asked me to pray for them, and never can I forget how they wept and thanked me for searching them out. How I rejoice at being allowed to labor for the souls of these dear soldiers."

“Last Thursday evening the Sunday-school and Publication Board of the Baptist General Association determined to have 10,000 copies of the New Testament printed in Richmond. This, if we mistake not, is the first time the New Testament has ever been published south of Mason and Dixon's line. It is surely an important move, and should be encouraged by all who feel interested in the effort to secure Southern independence. . . .

“A. E. DICKINSON,

“General Superintendent.”

“Several young men in the Alabama regiments have been converted by reading the tract, ‘Come to Jesus,’ and the works, ‘Persuasives to Early Piety’ and ‘Baxter's Call.’ On another occasion I gave books and tracts to a young man who had been in several engagements since he left home, though he had up to that time escaped injury, speaking to him at the same time of the importance of being prepared to die. Shortly after I had a letter from him, stating that my advice had caused him to reflect on his past life; that he had exercised faith in Christ, and now felt himself prepared for death. I often visit the sick in the hospitals with books. Among others, I conversed several times with the son of a Baptist minister, and on one visit was rejoiced to hear from him that he intended soon to write to his father (being, of seven, the only child not a member of the church) that he had taken Christ for his Captain, and felt better prepared for the great responsibilities before him. In one room, of five who were sick, two died. I embraced the opportunity of urging on the survivors, who were much affected, the possibility of death and the necessity of being born again. One of them then and there resolved to trifle no longer, and on the Sunday following I found him rejoicing in the Lord. I could multiply facts, but these may suffice for the present. My stock of Bibles and Testaments, which was unusually large, is nearly exhausted, and I therefore hail with pleasure the proposition of our board to print the latter. I trust that all friends of the Bible will respond liberally to the call made, and may the blessing of God attend the enterprise.

“E. C.”

Rev. W. J. W. Crowder, who did so noble a work in printing and circulating tracts, gives the following statement concerning his work :

Messrs. Editors: I hope that a few facts about colportage among the soldiers will not be unacceptable to your readers. Though I have been acting as agent for the American Tract Society in Norfolk, Portsmouth and the vicinity seven years, my labors have never been so blessed as from the 19th of April to the present time. I have distributed \$300 worth of Bibles and tracts, and in all instances they have been gladly received by both religious and irreligious.

“Since June 1st, under the approval of all the pastors of this city, we have reprinted especially for the soldiers over 81,000 pages of each of the following appropriate tracts: ‘A Voice from Heaven;’ ‘Don’t Put it Off;’ ‘All-sufficiency of Christ;’ ‘Self-dedication to God;’ ‘Private Devotion;’ ‘The Act of Faith;’ ‘The Sentinel’ and ‘Motives to Early Piety’—in all of these over 618,000 pages; and of the excellent tract, ‘Come to Jesus,’ 17,280 copies, or 545,280 pages—making in all reprinted, 1,163,520 pages; in value, \$930.56. These we have got out at the prices heretofore paid to the American Tract Society, New York—1,500 pages for one dollar, and ‘Come to Jesus’ for three cents a copy. Nearly all of these have been sent to the soldiers, more or less, of all the Confederate States, most of whom receive them gladly, saying: ‘This is the kind of reading we want to help us fulfil the promises we made to our wives, parents, sisters, ministers and loved ones on leaving home, that we would seek the Lord.’ Such expressions I have frequently heard from a great many of the more than seven thousand soldiers with whom I have talked on personal religion.

“Recently a soldier of intelligence came to me in Richmond, Virginia, to express his thanks for the saving influence of the tracts he had received since being in camp. He believes they were sent to him in answer to a pious mother’s prayers. He stated that before leaving home he felt but little interest in religion, but now it is his delight and comfort. Another soldier in a Mississippi regiment writes that the tract ‘Come to Jesus’ has been the means of leading him to Christ since being in Virginia. A prominent officer in one of the regiments in Virginia writes: ‘I feel it my duty to say that the good influence exerted upon the minds and actions of our men by the Bibles, books and tracts you have sent us is incalculable; and to my knowledge they have been blessed of God in producing a spirit of religious inquiry with many of a most encouraging character. I trust you

and Christian friends at home will continue to supply all our soldiers with this means of grace, which is so well adapted to our spiritual wants, and can be diffused among us as perhaps no other can so effectually.'

"An efficient colporter, who has been laboring as such many years about Charlottesville, Virginia, writes: 'I am devoting almost my whole time to the soldiers, and especially to the hospitals, in which there is a large number of sick and wounded here, and about as many at Culpeper Court House. This is one of the best fields for usefulness, as they have so much time for reading and thought. Over half of them are well enough to read, and most of them are very thankful for religious reading. I furnish many of them with Bibles and larger books to use while here, and tracts and smaller books to take with them when they leave. Yesterday I was conversing with quite a sick soldier, who told me he embraced religion since being in camp at Harper's Ferry, while engaged in prayer alone with his cousin. I want 1,000 copies of 'Come to Jesus,' and a great many more of the other kinds you publish.' As Christians, we ought to improve every means possible for doing good to the souls and bodies of these soldiers; and this is one of the most effective religious instrumentalities. The colporter should be kept well supplied with religious reading to distribute in his labors of mercy and love. . . .

"W. J. W. CROWDER, Tract Agent.

"RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA,
"September, 1861."

"A pious lady who has been for some time acting as nurse among the sick soldiers at Culpeper Court House, writes to us as follows: 'I would be very much obliged to you if you could send a package of tracts. The poor soldiers are really begging for something good to read. This is true especially of the wounded. I hope that you will pray that the divine blessing may be bestowed on these afflicted ones who are so far from their loved ones, and that I may be a blessing to them. There is nothing I desire so much as, by nursing, to do good to those who have given up all for their country. There is great room for usefulness open to pious females now in ministering to the temporal and spiritual wants of our sick soldiers. I have lost four of my patients; three died rejoicing in Jesus. They were

intelligent, noble, godly young men. One from Virginia said to me as he was dying, "Sing me a hymn;" I repeated, "Jesus lover of my soul." He remarked, "Where else but in Jesus can a poor sinner trust?" Just as he passed away, he looked up to heaven and said, "*Heaven is so sweet to me,*" and to the presence of Jesus he went. Another from South Carolina sang with joy, "Happy day, when Jesus washed my sins away." Young B——, of Virginia, was resigned and even rejoiced at the near prospect of death. He repeated the lines, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord." His end was peace. One of these young men had determined to enter the Christian ministry. I close by asking that you will send the tracts as soon as possible.' . . .

"A. E. DICKINSON."

"LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA, September.

"The tracts and Testaments and small Bibles I have given to the sick in the hospitals and in private families, a few to soldiers in camp, and to others passing through the city. There have been at times as many as 10,000 soldiers in the encampment here. There have been, and are now, a large number of sick soldiers here. Many soldiers have the Bible or Testament, and love to read it. A good many are members of churches. Far away from home and kindred, they are delighted to receive the visits of a brother-Christian, and to get something to read. So also on the part of the unconverted there is a strong desire for something to read. All receive the tracts and read them with delight. The Lord has blessed the work. I believe He has poured out His Spirit upon many. They have been awakened and have been led to hope in the Saviour; so they seem to give evidence. One soldier who died a week ago said, in a whisper, a short time before he breathed his last, when his nurse held up the tract, 'Come to Jesus,' and pointing to the heading, 'I can't see.' He was told it was the tract 'Come to Jesus,' and that Jesus says, 'Him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out.' 'Thank the Lord for that,' he replied. 'Have you come to Him, and do you find Him precious?' 'Precious, thank the Lord.' And so he would say of all the promises quoted. On the same day I visited, in two different hospitals, two young men sick of typhoid fever. They both seemed concerned about their souls, and listened with apparent interest to invitations of the Saviour to come to Him. After a few days I

visited them again; both were improving and rejoicing in the Saviour. Now they say they love Him more and more. Several tell me they delight to read the Bible now, and that since they became soldiers they have been led to seek the Saviour, and some hope they have found Him. Yesterday one told me, to whom I had given a tract, that at home he was a steady man, never swore, but that, becoming a soldier, he did as many others do—threw off restraint and did wickedly; 'but now,' said he, 'I have done swearing; I will seek the salvation of my soul.' . . .

• "A lieutenant in the Southern Army writes from Monterey to Rev. A. M. Poindexter:

"The soldiers here are *starving* for reading matter. They will read anything. I frequently see a piece of newspaper no larger than my hand going the rounds among them. If the bread of life were now offered them through the printed page, how readily they might be led to Christ. I have never seen a more appropriate and effective means of doing good than the distribution of tracts among the soldiers of the Confederate army.'

"Such appeals as the above are almost daily placed in our hands, and frequently they are accompanied with funds from the meagre earnings of our soldiers. Our soldiers are literally *starving* for the bread of life. If we believe the teaching of the Word of God, how eagerly ought we to strive to aid in a work which proposes to seek out all the starving souls, and tell them of the things pertaining to salvation.

"A. E. DICKINSON, General Superintendent."

"ROCKBRIDGE ALUM SPRINGS HOSPITAL.

". . . Imagine 600 men, used at home to comforts, many of them well educated and piously trained, cut off for nearly four months from preaching, books and newspapers; and then remember that many of them have languished for weeks in their tents, lonely and depressed, having no way to pass the time; and remember too that these deprivations still exist in this hospital, and you can form some idea of the eagerness with which I am welcomed into every room. 'Yes, and thank you for it; I haven't had any good reading for a long time,' is the almost invariable reply when I ask a man to receive a tract. In the absence of a better supply I preached for the men yesterday morn-

ing. For the want of a better place the services were held on the lawn, and in spite of the cold wind quite a good number attended. Their interest plainly told that they enjoyed the opportunity to hear the truth, and several told me it was the first sermon they had heard for several months. There should by all means be a regular chaplain here. I gave away several pocket-Testaments and all the 'Hymns for Camp' I had with me, and as I walked out about sunset I found the men gathered in squads for the delightful exercise. Many are very tender about their souls, and seek rather than avoid conversation. On Saturday night I went to a room in which there were five men, all just rallying from the fever, and while there read, sung and prayed with them. None of them were Christians, but all seemed deeply affected, and during prayer one man sobbed aloud.

"These little incidents greatly encourage me, and give promise of speedy and lasting good. . . .

"C. H. RYLAND."

The following is from Rev. J. C. Hiden, who was laboring as chaplain in the Wise Legion: "Can't you send me some Testaments and tracts? They are greatly needed in the army. Vast numbers of our soldiers have none. I was walking along near camp the other day, with some tracts under my arm, when a man on horseback said to me: 'Give me one of those to read, so as to keep me out of devilment.' 'Twas a rough way of expressing a good idea, I thought. Of course I gave him one, and immediately the soldiers were swarming around me, desiring to be furnished, and were sadly disappointed when they saw that my supply was exhausted. I turned away with a sad heart to see so many hungering in vain for that which was able to make them wise unto salvation."

A chaplain—Rev. W. B. Owen—thus writes from Leesburg, Virginia: "A package of tracts sent to Captain Ivey, Seventeenth Mississippi Regiment, came to hand, and I am glad of the opportunity to thank you for them. I assure you, had you been present as I passed up and down every company in our regiment distributing them, and seen how eagerly they were read by the soldiers, you would be stimulated to put forth every exertion to scatter such blessings continually among the soldiers. We have had considerable religious interest in our regi-

ment; some have been converted, and others are seeking Jesus. If you can, do send us more tracts of different kinds, and 100 copies or more of that excellent tract, 'Come to Jesus.'"

A surgeon writes:

"Several interesting cases of conversion among the soldiers had occurred before the arrival of Brother Clopton at this post (Rockbridge Alum Springs). One of those cases it may be interesting to relate. A young man, who, from his own account, had been very ungodly, was brought to the hospital in a very enfeebled condition. He was confined to his bed for several weeks, gradually declining. I frequently conversed with him upon the great subject of his soul's salvation, and urged him to seek, by diligent and importunate prayer, the mercy of God and the pardon of sins. Some days before his death he told me, with a joyful expression of countenance, that he had found peace in believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. His evidences of pardon and acceptance with God were Scriptural, clear and satisfactory. Said he: 'Doctor, I bless God that you ever taught me the way of life and salvation. I have been a poor blind sinner all my life; but now I feel an assurance of happiness in heaven through Christ my Redeemer. Oh, I hope to meet you in heaven, and bless you there for the interest you have taken in my soul's salvation!' He died in full assurance of a blessed immortality. Other cases of interest might be related; but let this suffice to show that it is not in vain in the Lord to labor for the conversion of the most reckless soldier. I will just add, that I accepted the appointment of assistant surgeon in the hospital at this post that I might have an opportunity of preaching the Gospel to our soldiers, and I bless God that he permits me to labor in such a field of usefulness.

" N. W. CALHOUN."

Brother J. C. Clopton, one of our colporters, writes:

"During my stay among the forces under General Jackson I heard little profanity. There are many pious, Christian men in this division of the army, and among others the general himself. I am told that he keeps on hand a supply of tracts, and occasionally goes among his men as a tract distributor. One of his aids inquired of me where tracts could be obtained, and gave me \$5 to help on the cause."

"RICHMOND.

" Though there are interesting letters from several gentlemen who are employed at this post, we will give extracts from but one. Rev. Mr. C—— says: ' I have been a month laboring in this city, during which I have distributed 41,000 pages of tracts, besides many copies of God's inspired word. I preach frequently (almost daily) in the hospitals or camps. A notice of a few minutes will suffice to bring together a large congregation, and never in my life have I witnessed such earnest, solemn attention to the preached word. Oftentimes I meet with soldiers who tell me that they have become Christians since they entered the army, and not unfrequently I am asked by anxious inquirers what they must do to be saved. The soldiers, almost without exception, have received me with great kindness, and have appeared very thankful for reading matter. " Oh, how encouraging to a soldier is a word of sympathy!" said one of these sick men to me.' We have been enabled to bring out some 10,000 copies of the New Testament, and to publish over 5,000,000 pages of tracts; and to-day have not less than twelve depositories in the different States and 150 tract distributors at work.

"A. E. DICKINSON."

"LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA, May 8.

" There are about 3,000 in the hospitals of this city, and others are being brought here from more exposed points. It is the purpose of the authorities to establish hospitals at Liberty and Farmville. Several hundred sick soldiers are already in these two towns. The hospitals afford a most inviting field for religious effort. The solemn quiet and the serious reflections which pervade the soul of the sick soldier, who, far away from home and friends, spends so many hours in communing with his own heart, is very conducive to religious improvement. An invalid remarked that during the month he had been in the hospital he had read through the New Testament and the Psalms, though he was not a professor of religion. Last Monday, at an early hour, I walked through the hospital at Staunton, and found not a few of the inmates reading diligently their Bibles. There is, without doubt, considerable religious feeling in the *camps*. Take the following as one of many facts corroborative of this statement. After several days of long, weary marches, General Jackson's command came into Staunton Sunday and Monday.

The first regiments which arrived were literally overcome with fatigue and hunger; and yet, when marched into the yard of the Blind and Deaf Asylum, though it was nearly sunset, and they had not had their dinner, as they fell down upon the green grass to rest their wearied limbs, many took from their pockets copies of God's word, which, with the utmost eagerness and solemnity, they perused. A soldier said of his Testament: 'I would not take anything in the world for this book. It was given me by a pious lady.' In hundreds of instances the reading of *tracts* has been blessed to the spiritual good of our men. Major-General Jackson is a pious deacon in the Presbyterian Church, and Major Dabney, one of his aids, is a Presbyterian Doctor of Divinity. 'I wish, instead of two, you had a dozen colporters in my army,' said General Jackson; 'and I am ready to do anything I can to aid you in so good a work.' There is reason to hope that in a few weeks fully a dozen colporters will be operating among the soldiers in the valley. General Edward Johnson, though not a professor of religion, encourages colporters to visit his command. On one occasion, when orders had been given that no one was to be permitted to enter the lines, a colporter came, and no sooner was the object of his mission made known than the general gave him a cordial welcome. 'We are always glad to see you; stay with us, and do all the good you can.' He then took the good man to his own tent, and shared with him his blankets. We have now more than 100 engaged in these labors of love among the soldiers, and hope that the day is not distant when the number shall be more than doubled. The fields are white unto the harvest.

"A. E. DICKINSON."

"A few days since a colporter was distributing tracts among a number of soldiers. He gave to an officer of high grade a tract, entitled, 'A Mother's Parting Words to her Soldier Boy.' Turning to the colporter, he said: 'Oh, sir, I can never thank you enough for this tract! The title itself is a most affecting sermon to me. My mother spoke words of tenderness and love to me as I was about to leave her for the army, and everything that reminds me of those words affects my heart.' Tears rolled down his cheeks while he spoke, so that a bystander afterwards remarked that he had never seen a man more perfectly subdued.

"Thus it is that a mere sentence is often blessed of God to

the good of souls. A one-page tract, headed 'Eternity,' was handed to a wild young man, and the word eternity filled him with alarm and was instrumental in leading him to Christ. 'God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world and things that are despised, yea, and things that are not, to bring to nought the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.' 'A Mother's Parting Words,' etc., is a most interesting and touching tract of eight pages, written by one of the best writers in the Southern Confederacy. Let every mother buy a copy (price one cent) and send it to her 'soldier boy.'

Brother M. D. Anderson, Richmond, Virginia: "A short time ago I met a young man from one of the upper counties of this State, who had been wounded. When I commenced talking with him on the subject of religion, he said, 'Oh, sir, don't you remember that at the camp-meeting in — you spoke with me on this subject? Do pray for me.' He has since been converted and raised up from his bed of suffering, and is actively engaged distributing tracts in the army, and in many other ways seeking to glorify his Saviour. An old marine, who had weathered many a storm, who was lying sick in the hospital, seemed astonished that I should urge upon his attention the claims of the Gospel. 'How is it that you, a young man, should be so concerned about me, a poor sailor?' He said that rarely, if ever before in his life, had any one spoken to him about his soul. From day to day I visited him, and his interest in Divine things grew until, I think, he became a true Christian. He certainly died a most happy death. To-day a soldier, after receiving from me a few tracts and a book, handed me five dollars as a donation to the board."

Rev. W. L. Fitcher, Petersburg, Virginia: "The work of the Lord is progressing in Petersburg. We scarcely ever go to the hospital without finding some one concerned about the salvation of his soul. The tracts are very kindly received and read with soul-saving interest by many."

"The following report of Dr. R. Ryland's labors will be read with interest.—A. E. D."

"With an interruption of ten days' sickness, and a short trip to Lynchburg with a view to restore my strength, I have labored regularly in the hospitals for the last eight months. Wherever

I found the most destitution there I made the most frequent visits. I have usually conversed with each patient, or made an address and prayer in the hearing of all the inmates of the ward. I have distributed thousands of tracts, hymn-books, spelling-books and religious newspapers. These last have been particularly acceptable to the soldiers. The proprietors of the *Religious Herald*, *Central Presbyterian*, *Southern Churchman* and *Christian Observer* have shown a cheerful liberality in furnishing me with their papers for distribution; and, as they all conduct their journals with ability and with a catholic spirit, I have thankfully received them and distributed them widely among the soldiers. They are more appreciated than tracts, because they afford more variety of matter. I take this method of suggesting to those subscribers to all these papers who have been within the enemy's line during part of the year, and who consequently have not received all their numbers, that they would do well to pay for the *whole year*, inasmuch as all the copies which failed to find them—and many more—were generously circulated among the convalescents in the hospitals, and among the several camps.

“The *result* of my labors I must leave to the final day to disclose. Many cases of deep and thrilling interest have come under my observation. Some were fervent disciples of Jesus, who, during the war, having maintained their integrity, gave me a cordial welcome to their bedside. Others were rejoicing in a recent hope of eternal life. And many others exhibited marked anxiety about their salvation, and received with a docile spirit every suggestion made for their benefit. I cannot begin to particularize. Suffice it to say, that since the battle of Seven Pines I have conversed with probably 500, who, having passed through the recent bloody scenes either unhurt or wounded, have told me, with different degrees of emphasis, that they have resolved to lead a better life. They ascribe their deliverance to the special providence of God, and felt obliged to requite Him with love and obedience. I shall be disappointed if very many soldiers do not seek fellowship with the churches of Christ immediately after their return home. Let pastors look out for them. All these battles, with their hair-breadth escapes and their terrible sufferings, have produced a softened state of mind which harmonizes well with our efforts to evangelize.

“If all the colporters and chaplains of posts in and near Richmond could have a meeting and agree on some plan of *distribut-*

ing their labors, the benefits of those labors would be more equalized. By the present arrangement some hospitals may be visited by several brethren during the same week, while others might not be visited by any one for several weeks. It seems to me that *you* would be a suitable person to attend to this matter.

“Yours, etc.,

“R. RYLAND.”

At the late anniversary meeting of one of our district associations Dr. R. Ryland made the following remarks: “I have, from almost the beginning of the war, been laboring as colporter in the hospitals of Richmond, and my impression is that the results of this work are infinitely greater and more glorious than many believe. As to myself, every week's observation would have enabled me to write out facts and incidents of the most cheering character, enough to fill up half of the *Religious Herald*, and yet I have written but a few lines, leaving unpublished this great mass of facts, illustrative of the good this work is doing.”

Rev. Wm. M. Young said, as chaplain in the field as well as in the hospital, he had seen scores of instances in which the reading of tracts had been instrumental in the conversion of souls. The following is one of the incidents he relates: “Yesterday, going up Main street, I was hailed by a soldier sitting on the pavement: ‘Parson, don't you know me? Under God I owe everything to you. While languishing in the hospital you gave me a tract which has brought joy and peace to my soul. If God spares me to go home, I expect to devote my life to the public proclamation of the Gospel.’”

“At present a revival of religion is in progress at Camp Winder, near this city, and thirty-five have professed conversion. At Chimborazo a meeting of equal interest is in progress. Rev. R. W. Cridlin informs me that frequently from thirty to forty come up for prayer. Many have professed conversion. An old man, who happened to be present a few evenings ago at these meetings, professed conversion, and said: ‘Thank God, to-morrow I leave for Georgia to meet my wife and children, to tell them what great things the Lord hath done for me.’”

“Brother McVeigh, post chaplain at Farmville, writes me that a good work is going on in the hospitals in that town, and several have obtained ‘a good hope’ through Christ. For two

months there has been unusual religious interest among the soldiers in the hospitals at Lynchburg, and many have made the good profession.

“Rev. J. B. Hardwick, post chaplain, favors us with a deeply interesting account of a work of grace among the hospitals of Petersburg, where 100 profess to have found the Saviour since they have been brought to that city. . . .

“A. E. D.”

“‘A Mother’s Parting Words,’ etc. This is the title of one of the most popular tracts ever published on this continent. It has been but a year since the first edition of 50,000 copies was issued. Recently we have been induced, by the frequent applications for this tract, to issue the third edition of 50,000. Thus, within one year, 150,000 copies have been issued. But this is not all. The tract has been reprinted by the Methodist Tract Society located in Petersburg, and it may be by others. I suppose, in all, at least 250,000 copies have been issued. Hundreds have professed conversion from the reading of this tract, while thousands have felt their hearts moved to noble resolve by its appeals. ‘Do you know anything about my personal history,’ inquired a soldier of a colporter, ‘that you should give me *this* tract? Had you seen me part with my loving mother, and heard those “parting words” which she uttered, *then* it would not seem strange that you should select this tract for me. I thank you, sir; the mere title has done me good. I expect a rich treat from reading it.’ An anxious mother, after many days of fatiguing travel, reached one of our Virginia hospitals just in time to witness the death of her noble soldier boy. All the sad, long days she had spent coming from her home in the far South, her heart was bleeding at the thought that her son was unprepared to die. ‘Oh, if he were only a Christian, then I could give him up,’ and then tears, such as none but loving mothers ever shed, would tell how deeply the heart was wrung with crushing sorrow. She reached the couch of her sick boy just in time to hear one sentence, but that was enough: ‘Mother, I have found the Saviour. Oh, that dear tract, “A Mother’s Parting Words.”’ God only knows how many such sons have passed from the hospitals and battle-fields of the South to the peaceful mansions above. I think it highly probable that never, in the history of tract literature, has as much been accomplished in so short a period by one tract.

"At the annual session of the Strawberry Association, a little more than a year ago, while the claims of colportage were before that body, Rev. J. C. Clopton, of Lynchburg, made some affecting remarks in reference to his son, who had recently entered the service, and spoke of the solicitude his wife felt, and of some of the efforts she had made in his behalf. Rev. J. B. Jeter publicly thanked Brother Clopton for his speech, and remarked that he had promised the superintendent of colportage a tract, and that Brother Clopton had furnished him with a theme, 'A Mother's Parting Words to her Soldier-Boy.' And in a few days the tract was written and printed.

"A. E. D."

Elder J. A. Doll writes :

"SCOTTSVILLE, October 2.

"We have a gracious revival here, going on among the soldiers and citizens. One service is held during the day in one of our hospitals, and another at night in the church. A goodly number of soldiers and citizens have already professed conversion, and the prospect is cheering."

A private letter from a soldier who was in the Maryland campaign, published in the *South-western Baptist*, says: "I had my Bible in my right breast-pocket, and a ball struck it and bounced back. It would have made a severe wound but for the Bible."

Brother H. Madison writes: "I have seen much of the goodness of God since coming to the army. Many and warm thanks I receive from the soldier. Oh, it is a sad and yet glorious thing to see a Christian soldier. They are so happy, so powerfully sustained of the Lord as, far from home, they go through the dark valley. I might tell you the particulars of two such cases."

Rev. M. D. Anderson: "I met with a young man some time ago, who said to me: 'Parson, you gave me a book ("Baxter's Call"), which I have been reading, and it has made me very unhappy; I feel that my condition is awful, and desire to find peace.' I pointed him to the Lord Jesus. His regiment was ordered off, and therefore I have not seen him of late, but have written to him. While in a hospital with my tracts, one poor afflicted soldier wept piteously and said: 'Sir, I cannot read; will you be good enough to read some of those tracts to me?' I read several, and among them, 'A Mother's Parting Words to her Soldier Boy.' 'Oh,' said

he, 'that reminds me so much of my poor old mother, who has faded from earth since I joined the army.' He wept and seemed greatly affected."

Rev. J. B. Hardwick: "God is blessing the distribution of tracts and the labors of chaplains and colporters here (Petersburg). More than a hundred soldiers have been converted since April. I never knew a work of grace so powerful, quiet, and deep. It seems at times that the hospital is a Bethel. But we need more assistance—I call for reinforcements, and you must furnish them immediately, if possible. Send us at least two colporters, one for the hospitals and the other for the camps."

Rev. J. C. Hiden: "Can't you send us a colporter here (Charlottesville). There is a most encouraging state of things at present. I am holding a protracted meeting. Crowds attend the preaching, and some have professed a change of heart, while others are interested. It is an interesting sight to see men, wounded in every variety of way, sitting attentive to the story of the Cross."

Rev. T. J. McVeigh, chaplain at Farmville: "My supply of tracts has been distributed, and the soldiers ask for more. I administered the ordinance of baptism (for the first time) a few Sabbaths since, in the Appomattox river, to a young soldier from Alabama. It was the most deeply interesting and beautiful scene I ever witnessed. All of the soldiers who were able to leave their rooms gathered upon the banks of the river, and seemed to have a high appreciation of the ordinance."

Rev. Wm. Huff, Marion, Virginia: "Our colporters now in the Western army are laboring with encouraging prospects. Rev. J. H. Harris is visiting General Marshall's command. He finds them destitute, and anxious for something to read. He says: 'After the labors of the day it is truly gratifying to see them grouped together, reading aloud to each other such portions of their tracts as interest them most, and speaking in the highest praise of the little camp hymn-books.'"

Rev. M. D. Anderson: "I formed the acquaintance of a noble young man, the nephew of a most useful Baptist minister. Found him interested in reference to his soul, and endeavored to explain to him the Gospel. He urged me to come to see him again, as he was quite sick. When I went again and found him sinking, on being asked how he was he replied, 'I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I

have committed unto Him.' At my next visit I found him unable to speak above a whisper. I stooped down to his ear and inquired how it was with him. He replied, 'I had rather depart and be with Christ, which is far better;' and in this delightful frame of mind he passed to his heavenly home."

Rev. A. L. Strough, chaplain Thirty-seventh North Carolina Regiment: "In our retreat from Newberne, North Carolina, when overpowered by the superior force of the enemy, we lost nearly all the Testaments, etc., we had, and have not since been able to secure anything to read except fifteen small volumes presented to us by Kingston Baptist Church. Our regiment is now in four different directions, hence the chaplain cannot be with them all. Before we left North Carolina there were 137 in the regiment penitently inquiring after the Saviour."

Rev. W. G. Margrave: "Besides laboring here and there in the camps and hospitals, I have paid special attention to the sick in Lewisburg. Just before I left home, I visited a sick soldier and read to him the fourteenth chapter of the Gospel of John. He said, 'I have but one more step to take, and I shall be over the Jordan of death,' and soon, in perfect peace, he passed away. I commit all into the hands of my Father in Heaven, and go forth to tell of Jesus' dying love. We must return to God and restore that of which we are robbing Him, if we would be blessed. Say to our Congress, restore to God His Sabbath by stopping the transportation and opening of the mails on the day of the Lord."

Rev. A. M. Grimsley writes, from Culpeper county: "God is blessing us up here. Many of our brave boys have professed conversion. God grant that the work may spread."

Rev. C. F. Fry: "The past month I have spent in Winchester, Woodstock, and Staunton. Several have expressed themselves as being anxiously concerned about the great salvation. It was, of course, a delightful work to point them to the sinner's Friend. I also found many truly devoted Christians, who seemed rejoiced to have a colporter come among them. They are eager to secure reading matter. An officer remarked to me that he believed that the men would read more of a religious character now than during all their former lives, from the fact that they cannot obtain any other reading than that which the colporter carries them, and they are compelled to read to relieve the tedium of the camp and hospital."

Brother Henry Madison, near Winchester: "Every night, for some time, I have had prayer-meetings in the tent of Captain S——, which is filled even to overflowing. My own heart has been made to rejoice at seeing how gladly the word is received, and how deep and sincere the interest seems to be. I have been kindly received by officers and privates. I visited a wounded soldier, who told me that before the war he enjoyed the presence and blessing of God, but that the temptations and vices of the camp had swept him on in sin. Since the wound was received he has had time to repent of his backslidings, and seems now to have returned to his first love. 'Oh,' said he, 'it was a great mercy in God to send upon me this affliction, and I can truly say, with the apostle, that these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are working out for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'"

Rev. J. M. B. Roach, chaplain of Tenth Alabama Regiment, writes; "Just before the battle of Williamsburg, a lieutenant asked me for a copy of each of my tracts. He compressed them into as small a space as possible, and placed them in his pocket. During the battle he was struck by a ball which, in all probability, would have deprived him of life had it not lodged in the tracts, which were just over his heart. He seems solemnly affected, and I trust will soon be at the feet of Jesus."

Brother J. C. Clopton: "Passing along to the hospital and handing tracts to numbers of soldiers on the way, as I was approaching a man the evil one tempted me, suggesting that it was hardly worth while to give *him* one; but, going up to him and inquiring whether he was a Christian, I found instantly that he was under deep conviction of sin. 'Can you stop awhile with me? I wish to speak with you,' he said. Then, as we sat together, with tears and sobbings he told me of his sin-burdened heart, and asked to be directed to Jesus. Another, nigh unto death, said to me, 'I am nearly to my journey's end, and, oh, sir, I would give worlds if I had them for the Christian's hope.' He seemed deeply moved, and I tried to explain to him the way. He has since passed to the spirit land."

Rev. G. C. Trevillian: "The revival is still progressing among the soldiers at this place (Lynchburg), and many are inquiring after the Saviour. I go from one to another, distributing tracts in the day, and at night we have a prayer-meeting. About fifty have professed conversion in connection with the meetings at the

Baptist Church. I have also spent a week at Liberty, where I found a deep interest as to religious matters among the soldiers. Many of them begged me to hold a protracted meeting there."

" RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, December 19.

" *Messrs. Editors* : It was my privilege to attend a meeting for soldiers on last Sabbath, in one of the hospitals in Staunton, at which some twenty-five asked for the prayers of God's people, and all seemed to be serious in regard to the things which make for their peace. I was assured by the post chaplain (Rev. G. B. Taylor), that a great and blessed reformation had been effected in the hospitals. He said that in the early stages of the war it was very difficult to secure the attention of the men to the preached word. Many would sit with hats on during religious services, engage in conversation, smoke, walk about, etc. But now the room is filled with earnest, solemn, and often weeping listeners, while multitudes eagerly embrace any and every opportunity for securing the prayers of God's people. What is stated by this chaplain of his hospitals is substantially true of almost every hospital (and of many camps) throughout the Confederacy. Brother Taylor, with the aid of the Sunday-school and Publication Board, has established two large libraries for the soldiers at Staunton. The books are loaned out to such as will appreciate and return them. You would be surprised to see how admirably this plan is working. As I walked through the hospital, I found almost every man poring over a book, presenting very much the appearance of a college or university. Among the books selected for one of the libraries were "Bunyan's Practical Works;" and in a day or so after the enterprise began nine volumes of Bunyan had been taken out.

"A. E. D."

Rev. W. L. Fitcher, Petersburg: "There is still much religious interest here among the soldiers. I handed, this morning, to an aged soldier, the tract, 'The Sick and the Physician.' 'That means the Saviour,' said he; 'Oh, that he were my Saviour!' 'Many of my company have become Christians,' said another, 'and I too wish to learn what I must do to be saved.' He requested me to visit him, and aid him in securing life everlasting."

"February 17, 1863.

"After getting my tracts, hymn-books, etc., I supplied the Sixty-third, Fifty-first and Fifty-eighth Regiments, and also Derrick's and Clarke's Battalions and Brian's Battery. The brave men received the tracts eagerly and thankfully, and were always pleased with an appointment for preaching or prayer. We held meetings in Monroe, and at the narrows of New river, and at Thorn Spring, near Dublin, where four artillery companies are now in camp. Never have I met with more patient and attentive audiences. One and another would inquire for Testaments, and express a resolution to lead a new life. With the batteries we held repeated meetings, and there is evidently an increasing interest in religion. Wherever I have gone among our troops, I have found a cheering proportion of pious men—soldiers of Christ. I have found young brethren who stand firm in their Christian integrity despite of temptation. Among these there are many who boldly advocate the cause of truth.

"I have distributed 30,000 pages of religious matter, and humbly trust the Divine blessing has accompanied this labor of love.

"J. T. TABLER."

March 5, 1863.

"Our Sunday-school and Publication Board has brought out recently a number of tracts, which will add not a little to the usefulness and reputation of its issues. We give their names: 'The Evils of Gaming; a Letter to a Friend in the Army,' by Rev. J. B. Jeter, D. D.—'Swearing,' by Hon. J. L. M. Curry—'God's Providence, a Source of Comfort and Courage to Christians,' by Rev. A. M. Poindexter, D. D.—'For the Confederate Army,' by Hon. M. J. Wellborn.—'David,' by Professor Geo. E. Dabney—and 'We Pray for You at Home,' by Rev. John A. Broadus, D. D. Besides these, the board has issued, in conjunction with the Georgia Bible and Colportage Society, editions of the following excellent new tracts:

"'Woman's Words to the Soldiers,' by Mrs. L. N. Boykin—'To Arms! To Arms!' by Rev. C. D. Mallory—'The Mourner,' by Mrs. M. M. M'Crimmon—and 'A Proclamation of Peace,' by Rev. J. L. Dagg, D. D. The board has also succeeded at last in getting through the press 'The Soldiers' Almanac for 1863,' prepared by Rev. George B. Taylor. In its selections,

this bears the marks of the editor's usual piety, judgment and taste."

The following is from one of the most useful ministers we ever had in Virginia :

"PETERSBURG, February, 1863.

"Dear Brother Dickinson: I do not know whether regular reports are required of your colporters, but I have thought it would be well to forward to you a brief statement concerning my labors here during the past month. There are several hospitals in this place, all, except one, capable of accommodating a large number of patients. They are generally well filled, but at this time the number of patients is considerably reduced. The officers and patients have warmly welcomed me in my visits among them. Tracts and other religious publications are eagerly received, and seem to be read with great interest. 'Come again, soon, with your tracts and papers,' is the repeated request, as I have been about to leave them. I have aimed to engage every man in the hospitals in special conversation on the subject of religion. Frequently, these have been very profitable seasons to me, and I trust have been beneficial in many cases. Often I find a tract a valuable help in conversation, suggesting some important train of thought, and affording me the opportunity to urge the reading of it with a serious and prayerful spirit. A day or two since an instance occurred which I trust betokens a good connection with such a course. I gave a young man Brother Shaver's tract, 'You Must Labor for Salvation,' telling him there were many things in it he would not receive unless God should influence his heart, and urging him, while he read it, to pray that he might be made willing to believe and receive whatever is true in reference to his soul's salvation. At the period above referred to I saw him, and inquired of him if he had read the tract as I requested. He could only answer with his tears, while I felt encouraged to press on him the claims of the Gospel, and commend to him its preciousness. Some conversation then ensued which gave me hope that he had been graciously enlightened through the instrumentality of the printed message placed in his hands. There are many 'refugees' here from the country below, to whom I have felt it my duty to direct my labors. Such of these as appear to be strangers I have given particular attention to, especially if they

were in needy circumstances. On many accounts, this has been arduous service; but I have felt in my soul a recompense, as these have generally evinced great interest in my visits among them. The three chaplains on duty here are very attentive to the hospitals, and co-operate with me heartily. Another large hospital will be opened here very soon. There are also some regiments quartered around us, which I intend to visit. I feel that this is a great work in which I am engaged. Pray for me.

“Yours truly,
“T. HUME.”

March 12, 1863.

Brother M. D. Anderson: “I have for some time been aiding in a revival now in progress at Fredericksburg, at which upwards of *sixty* soldiers have professed conversion. Last night about *one hundred* asked for the prayers of Christians. A great work is going on.”

Brother G. C. Trevillian, Lynchburg, Virginia: “We have a soldiers’ reading room here, which is well supplied with religious papers. Our hospitals are very much thinned out. A few days since I was sent for to be with a dying man, who desired to see a minister of the Gospel. I found him rejoicing in a hope of strengthened faith. Our prayer-meetings continue with increasing interest. We have also an interesting Bible-class, which meets every Sunday morning.”

Brother Bagby, besides his labors as colporter, renders valuable service by occasionally taking an agency tour for us. He recently spent a few weeks in the Rappahannock Association, and returned with \$850. We would like to appoint a few more such laborers. Rev. J. H. Campbell writes, from Savannah: “Last Sunday, at a meeting held at this place, at least *three hundred* soldiers came forward for prayer.”

Brother Campbell writes most imploringly for reading matter, and says: “The soldiers manifest more anxiety for reading matter of late than ever before.”

Three of the most useful Baptist ministers in Georgia, Elders J. H. Campbell, S. Landrum and D. G. Daniel, are now acting as tract distributors for us at Savannah.

Rev. W. L. Fitcher writes, from Petersburg, Virginia: “I have enjoyed many interesting seasons among the soldiers since I’ve been in your employ. Have always been kindly received

by officers and men, and the kind thanks that I have received from them have fully repaid me for all my labors." Rev. John H. Taylor writes, from near Guinea's Depot, Caroline county: "A very interesting meeting is in progress here, conducted by the chaplains of the different regiments in this brigade. Oh that there may be an abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit! I find the men very anxious for something to read, and there is a prospect of effecting good among them."

Rev. J. N. Fox, Culpeper Court House: "I was greatly impressed, yesterday, with the magnitude and importance of my work, when for hours I was besieged by the soldiers for the Word of God, and saw, too, how ready they were to be advised with in regard to the great concerns of the soul. At my meetings there is good attention to the word spoken. Oh that the Lord will prepare me to be faithful to souls!" Rev. M. D. Anderson furnishes us with an interesting account of the great revival which for weeks has been progressing in Fredericksburg among the soldiers. Scores there have become "obedient to the faith."—A. E. D.

April 30, 1863.

Rev. Perry Hawkins, writing to the *Confederate Baptist*, gives the following account of a conversion among the soldiers at Pocotalio, as related by the subject of it: "When I entered the army, I was the chief of sinners. I did not love God, nor my own soul, but pursued the ways of unrighteousness with ardor, without ever counting the cost. I studiously shunned preaching and our faithful chaplain, lest he should reprove me; and when he was preaching in the camp I would be in my tent gambling with my wicked companions. One day he presented me a tract, entitled, 'The Wrath to Come,' and so politely requested me to read it that I promised him I would, and immediately went to my tent to give it a hasty perusal. I had not finished it before I felt that I was exposed to that 'wrath;' and that I deserved to be damned. It showed me so plainly where and what I was that I should have felt lost without remedy had it not pointed me to that glorious "Refuge," which I trust has indeed been a refuge to me from the storm; for I now feel that I can hope and trust in Christ."

Rev. W. G. Margrave, who is alluded to in the following letter, was spared to continue his work until some years after the war, when, full of labors and ripe for heaven, he "went up higher:"

“For more than forty years this venerable brother has been travelling the mountains and valleys of Western Virginia as a colporter. He is probably the oldest tract man in the South. Hardly a day for twoscore years, except when hindered by sickness, but has found him in the lowly cabin comforting the sad, arousing the careless, kneeling in prayer with those who scarcely ever before had heard the voice of prayer, distributing tracts, and directing all to the ‘sinner’s Friend.’ Hundreds, it may be thousands, have professed faith in Christ in connection with his labors. Some time since, when entering a public conveyance, Brother Margrave was embraced by one, a stranger to him, who, with the deepest emotion, remarked: ‘I thank God for the privilege of once more meeting with you. Thirty years ago, when I was a child, you gave me a book, which under God has made me all I am.’ Thus it is with many others who now occupy positions in Church and State. All they are, and all they hope to be, is traceable to the influence which this brother exerted upon them. From the very first of the war Brother Margrave has been following our armies in Western Virginia like a ministering angel, pointing to heaven and leading the way. Recently his aged companion was removed from earth to heaven; but, though greatly crushed in spirit, he falters not in his devotion to the great cause to which his life has been given. Mr. Samuel Price, of Greenbrier, so well known in Eastern as well as Western Virginia, and a Presbyterian, pays Brother Margrave a handsome tribute in a private letter just received. ‘I desire to say,’ writes Mr. Price, ‘that he has been indefatigable in his labors, in visiting the sick, attending the camps, distributing tracts, etc.; and, indeed, in doing everything that an industrious, pious Christian minister could do. We should feel his loss in this section most seriously. It would be positively irreparable. He is the most efficient colporter that I remember ever to have known.’ What an example have we here for those who have a heart to do good in the colportage work! If one will only *continue* at these labors, instead of growing weary of them, as so many do after a few months, he will, as the years pass away, see rich clusters of fruit ripening around him, and then, when called home to heaven, he will be ‘held in everlasting remembrance’ by those whom he has won for Christ.”—
A. E. D.

A few days since, a lady said to Elder William G. Margrave:

"My husband, before he became a soldier, rarely ever read the word of God, but now he delights in perusing its blessed pages. He hopes that his sins are forgiven, and that he is a child of God." Through what instrumentality was this soldier converted? A lady in Fincastle, who from the beginning of the war has been a tract distributor, furnished the printed page which, under God, brought about this change. Thus does the Divine Spirit honor those who seek to honor the Master by saving precious souls. We know not what word, what page, what sermon is thus to be honored, and hence, "Blessed are they that sow beside all waters." "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."—A. E. D.

The following from the *Christian Advocate*, communicated by a chaplain, is suggestive: "A young man in my company," said a lieutenant in one of our regiments, "came out before his comrades and openly embraced religion to the surprise of us all. One day he happened in my tent, and I inquired by what means his mind was awakened so suddenly to the subject of religion. He took from his pocket a letter from his mother, saying, 'There is something in that letter which affected me as it had never done before.' The letter said: 'We have sent you a box of nice clothes, and a fine variety of cakes and fruits, and other luxuries and comforts, and many good times we hope you will have enjoying those nice things with your friends.' Near the close of the letter were these words: '*We are praying for you, Charlie, that you may become a Christian.*' 'That's the sentence,' said the grateful boy, and the tears gushed from his eyes. 'When I was eating those dainties, I thought, mother is praying for me. I knew where she used to go to pray, and I could almost hear the words, "We are all praying for you, Charlie, that you may become a Christian." Now, I thank God for a praying mother, for her prayer is answered, and I am happy.'"

"The amount contributed during July and August for the Sunday-School and Publication Board will not fall short of *twenty thousand dollars*. Never have the churches responded more liberally to the claims of this board than of late. A church in Pittsylvania county (Shockoe) has this year given \$2,400—one member leading the list with \$900—a larger amount than a few years ago was contributed by all the churches in Virginia to

Baptist colportage. Berea Church, in Louisa county, instead of giving us about \$100 as formerly, has already raised in the neighborhood of \$1,000 as its contribution for this year. The churches of the James River Association sent up to their annual meeting an average of more than \$200 apiece without a word being said to any one of them by an agent." . . .—A. E. D.

"Brother E. Steadman, of Georgia, authorized Elder A. E. Dickinson to draw on him for \$25,000 for army colportage. This is in addition to the \$6,000 recently paid by him to our board for the same purpose."

"A wounded Confederate captain was recently baptized at Shelby, North Carolina, who was awakened and led to Jesus while in camp by a "fragment of a religious tract" which he picked up in an adjoining grove."

"A missionary in the Army of Northern Virginia mentions the case of a lady at home who attributed her conviction and subsequent conversion to a tract which her cousin in the army procured from our depository at Orange Court House, and sent to her last winter."

"ORANGE COURT HOUSE, VIRGINIA.

"I have conversed with soldiers daily since I have been stationed at this place, and have heard much to encourage me in my labors of love. A young man, a few days ago, gave me an account of the state of his company about a year ago. Brother M. D. Anderson visited them, commenced a series of meetings, a number professed conversion and now they have a company of praying men—a year ago they had a company of gamblers. In visiting the hospitals of this place, I have conversed with many who were anxious about their souls' salvation, and seemed much gratified at my visiting and praying for them. I have been very busy this week, receiving and sending books and tracts to chaplains, and to Christians in regiments where they have no chaplains. Please send all the books you can, Testaments, Bibles, etc.; the soldiers are anxious for something to read. I wish you could be here and see what a perfect rush there is for books and tracts. I could give many interesting incidents, as related to me, of the good results from reading your publications, but must close.

"C. F. FRY."

The above details might be almost indefinitely multiplied, and

the work of the colporters described up to the very close of the war; for they carried the "bread of life" to the trenches at Petersburg, and did not cease their labors until the dissolution of the army at Appomattox. But want of space forbids further details, and besides, the labors of the colporters soon mingled with those of the chaplains and missionaries, and will be further described as we tell the story of the great revivals which resulted from God's blessing on these combined labors.