

and healthy, but several of them have broken down, for a time at least. One of the oldest, whose health has been failing for some time, will, I fear, never fully recover, if he recovers at all.

"Besides three men from Mr. Watt's staff, I have the full number of Roumanian men at work; and, with the consent of our valued Constantinople agency, I have, so long as the war lasts, taken charge of the four men Dr. Thomson had in Bulgaria, three of whom had to flee from their ordinary dwelling places in that province. Besides these, two new men were lately put on to fill up gaps, so that we have now thirteen men regularly employed. Of most, indeed of all, making equitable and charitable allowance for imperfections, from which probably none of us are quite free, I believe I can truthfully say that they have been active and zealous 'in season and out of season.'

"But when we hear of the resolute courage and determined hardness with which common soldiers on either side of the battle-field follow the call of their generals, plunging headlong into almost certain death, band after band rushing onward as they that go before are mown down like grass, truly all boasting is excluded, and we deeply feel the necessity of wrapping ourselves in the garment of humility, confessing that we are at best but unprofitable servants!

"The Russian soldiers—it is almost exclusively of these that I have anything to say—have availed themselves to an extraordinary degree of the facilities afforded them by the Bible Society to procure the Scriptures, and especially the New Testament, at a price much below the ordinary selling price, and it may in a sense be said, they have richly deserved the other great boon conferred on them by the Society in supplying the sick and the wounded *gratuitously*. Repeatedly the men have said they would part with anything rather than not find room for a Testament, and they have been as good as their word, for hundreds have come back from the battle, wounded and sick, without knapsack and canteen, without rifle and cloak, but they have clung to their book as to the most precious treasure of all.

"One of our colporteurs that has lately come into the field, a man of good and sober judgment, says of the Russians, they are only very partially acquainted with the Scriptures; they cling to many superstitious notions and customs, but generally they are *very devout*, and a scold is very rarely to be found among them.

"The question is repeatedly arising: 'Why buy, when perhaps to-morrow we shall be dead?' But the prompt and practical response has constantly been suggested by the men themselves: 'If dead, then what use will our money be to us?' and the reasonable deduction has been: 'Better buy and read the Word of God whilst we can.' On such occasions resort has frequently been had to an arrangement which, whilst it shows the solemnity of the position in which the men are placed, and their full consciousness thereof, at the same time displays some curious ingenuity. This arrangement is for two to go shares in the purchase of the book, with the understanding that it is for the time being to be joint property, and that in the case one should fall it is finally to be the property of the survivor.

"On one occasion an officer in one of the camps encouraged his men to buy, telling them they were beautiful and useful books. The soldiers complained they had no money: 'I will tell you what,' the officer said, 'Let seven men in each company pay ten kopeks each; that will suffice for each company to have its own Bible. The book shall be the property of the company; it shall rest with us, and march with us; we will all take care of it, and we will read it together.' The advice was joyfully accepted and carried out.

"In several cases both officers and soldiers have bought in order to send the books home to their distant relatives. 'If we perish,' they say, 'this will be our best parting-gift.'

"On one occasion a lieutenant-colonel bought a number of books; he then