

over-changing life of that great seaport were the crowds of convicts borne away by sea to remote lands, where not a word respecting faith or duty was likely ever to reach their ears.

Pastor Ray succeeded in gaining access to the transports, and a kind lady of Toulon furnished him with the means for distributing Testaments among the convicts at every visit. In this way he distributed that year a hundred copies. Yet he was often discouraged, and asked himself if all that he was doing was not in vain. "Of what use," he said, "are these Testaments to people who are too ignorant to read them understandingly, and too hardened by sin to understand if they could read?" Coming home one day from one of these visits, he sat down in his chair overcome with discouragement, and broke out with the lamentation, "Again a day lost, and Bibles thrown away!" But his wife cheered him with the words: "You are doing the very service God requires of you. Let that be enough, and leave it to Him to make such use of your work as He will."

Ten years later, in 1874, Pastor Ray had himself gone to New Caledonia, in response to an appeal from a Protestant committee in Paris, for volunteers to cross the ocean and look after the spiritual concerns of the convicts. He succeeded in gaining their confidence, and wherever he went they received him with joy. In order to distinguish him from the Catholic *père*, they called him, half in earnest, half in fun, "Papa, the good Papa Ray." He did them many a kindly service, bringing them from the town letter-paper, tobacco, ink, etc. Whenever a sceptical Communist would say, "Papa Ray, I don't want either a Catholic or a Protestant priest," he would reply, "Very well: while I am with you I will put the pastor in my pocket, but you will surely allow me to bring you anything you need from the city."

In making a journey he happened one day to stop at an inn for dinner. The waiter, a middle-aged man, paid him marked attention, and, when he rose to leave the table, addressed him with great respect: "Sir, am I mistaken, or are you the person who, ten years ago, gave some Testaments to galley convicts on board a transport ship at Toulon?" "Yes, I am the man; why do you ask?" "Why, I was one of those convicts! I have served out my time, and am now free, but have chosen to remain in the country. At the time you gave me the Testament you said, 'Take this book and read it; you will find your Saviour in it.' I *did* read it; I found my Saviour, and I am a happy man. Let me take your hand and thank you!"

Pastor Ray was astonished. So his work of Bible distribution had not been in vain! The two men joined hands, and, with tears in their eyes, stood speechless.

CHEAP SALES BETTER THAN PROMISCUOUS FREE DISTRIBUTION.

So long ago as the year 1824, the Rev. Dr. Steinkopff, one of the Secretaries, in reply to an application from Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, for a grant of Scriptures for free distribution, wrote to that lady in these terms: "In general, we have found cheap sale preferable to gratuitous distribution, but if, in consideration of all the peculiar circumstances of the above mentioned men [of the coast-guard], you should judge it most desirable to present the copies as a donation to them, you are at liberty so to do."

Nor have the Committee seen any good reason, in the sixty-two years which have since elapsed, to alter their views on this subject. All subsequent experience, and the united opinion of the Society's District Secretaries, its Foreign Agents, and its oldest friends, point in the same direction.

The Rev. Dr. Thomson, writing from Constantinople, on October 30, states, with right discrimination, the general desirableness of cheap sales rather than unrestricted free gifts, in these words—