

have got between them and their shield, and perhaps you may reach their hearts.

Again, it is a very *cheap* agency. No one engages in it for the pecuniary compensation. The wages of Colporteurs are the extreme minimum. This is as it should be, for none who are not willing to make a personal sacrifice in this particular should undertake a work which calls for sacrifice in so many others. Moreover, the enterprise partly sustains itself by the sale of religious books.

At the same time, Colportage is *rapid in its operation*. Not unfrequently twenty or more families would be visited by one man in a single day, though he would have to travel ten or twelve miles on foot to reach them. In 4½ weeks, two of your Colporteurs visited nearly every accessible family in a district of country embracing 250 square miles.

Still, though cheap and rapid, this system is *permanent in its influence*. Books will speak when the living tongue is silent. If laid aside now, there will come times when some providence of God which leaves the heart sorrowing and bereaved, will cause the books to be read, and men must yield to their appeals. I met with a copy of "Boston's Fourfold State," which was more than a hundred years old. So it may be, that in many a house, long after the grass is rank upon our graves, Baxter will still *call to the unconverted*, Alleine will still *alarm* the careless sinner, and James will direct the *anxious inquirer* in the way of life.

But these books will be read. The influence of Colportage is *diffusive*. Where there are but few books, these few are well read. They are lent from house to house, and sometimes are much worn before the original owner can regain them. Indeed, this fact was a serious objection with many men against purchasing our books at all: "I am not going to supply the whole neighborhood with books," says one.

Another important consideration is, that the books which are circulated by means of Colportage contain religious truth in the *purest and most impressive forms*. The pious meditations of Baxter on the Saints' Everlasting Rest; Doddridge, from his own holy experience, developing the Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul; Bunyan, with his Pilgrim, making Progress toward the celestial city; the Practical Thoughts of the devout Nevins; the fervid Remains of Payson; the profound contemplations of Edwards on the Religious Affections,—these have furnished many pious hearts with Christian nutriment, and they will preach "very wisely" when the Colporteur is forgotten.

It also furnishes *peculiarly favorable opportunities for faithful religious conversation*. The Colporteur has always fewer reasons than the local preacher for restraining plainness of speech. But aside from this, a man, called unexpectedly from his work in the field to have a stranger talk to him of God and Christ, and the world to come, cannot soon forget what he has heard; Conscience will repeat it over and over again to him by night and by day. And a woman, interrupted amid her family duties, by a man who

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