

obtained permission from the Committee to distribute among them the Scriptures, either gratuitously, or at a reduced price, as circumstances might require. The result, to which he directs attention in the following letter, recalls the reflection of the Psalmist, 'Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.'

"You may remember my applying to the Committee for leave to give away, as opportunity offered, New Testaments and portions of Scripture among the poor people in the villages on the banks of the Po and Ticino, who had suffered from the inundations of last winter. Not wishing to entrust the work entirely to colporteurs, with the leave of Rev. H. J. Piggott, I secured, last April, the services of a young man at Cremona, who was preparing for his examination in order to obtain a teacher's certificate, and he, with the colporteur Lazza, engaged heartily in the work. They found much to do, not only among the inhabitants of the villages, but also among the working men, who were in large numbers employed in repairing the damage done by the overflowing of the waters. Their first brief tour of a fortnight was so satisfactory, that I asked Signor Barbieri to return in May, which he willingly did, and I sent at the same time three good colporteurs to assist him. The gracious Lord seems to have looked with favour on this effort to spread His Word—to advance His glory.

"They met with a great variety of character and opinion, and, as was to be expected, were not always courteously treated, for the disciple is not above his master. The following extracts from Signor Barbieri's diary will give you some idea of the work done, and of the spirit in which they engaged in it:—

"During my missionary tour of nearly a month, among those who had suffered from the inundations last winter, I have had once more occasion to observe with joy this truth, that "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." The waters of the Po overflowed their banks, and from the evil He has brought forth good; from the bitter, sweet. I am not referring to the numbers who have found profitable employment in repairing the dykes, nor yet to the considerable material help given to the poor sufferers, but to the fact that God has made the calamity a means, through our weak instrumentality, of rousing many to concern for their spiritual welfare, who before were living without hope, and without God in the world.

"On the way from Ostiglia to Massa, we met a pleasant-looking old man, who, after he had listened to me with great attention, said, "You are quite right. It is needful to repent, and be born again, in order to have eternal life. I have never seriously considered this, and the thought of it frightens me. Who knows if God will have mercy on me?" "Fear not, my good old man," I said, "for God's goodness and mercy are infinite. 'Him that cometh to me, I will in no ways cast out.' As a poor sinner, lift your eyes to the throne of grace, and say like the Prodigal, 'Father, I have sinned.' The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." The old man regretted that we could not talk more of these matters, and concluded by asking me to sell him a Testament, which I exhorted him to read, but not without prayer. He took the Book in his horny hands, kissed it, and assured me he would read it daily, and I pray that he might be taught how precious the Saviour was. Many of the bystanders ridiculed us, but others were moved and bought some New Testaments, and others portions of it.

"One day, when passing before a house where on a former occasion I had sold some Gospels, a poor man stopped me and said, "Sir, the book you sold me is beautiful, for I like to read the words of our Saviour; but it contains what I do not understand: for instance, Romans v. 1; 2 Corinthians v. 17. Having explained to him the meaning of these passages, I told him to read the Book thoughtfully, and ask God to teach him to understand it. "I know," he said, "that I must read it with prayer, but I am so ignorant that I am afraid of making mistakes." "My dear friend," I replied, "never