

# BRITISH AMERICAN

## Book and Tract Society Reporter.

VOL. I.

HALIFAX, N. S., JULY, 1873.

NO. 4.

### To the Friends of Colportage in the Lower Provinces.

The Executive Committee of the British American Book and Tract Society beg leave to lay the following statement of the work and wants of this Institution before the Christian Public.

The Society was organized in Halifax, Aug. 2, 1867. Its object, as defined in the Constitution, is, "to diffuse a knowledge of Our Lord Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of sinners, and to promote the interests of vital godliness and sound morality, by the circulation, through Colportage and other means, of Religious Books and Tracts, calculated to receive the approbation of all Evangelical Christians."

Actuated in some humble measure by the spirit of the work, and of Him who came to seek and save the lost, the Committee have endeavored faithfully to prosecute it, and extend its benefits as widely as possible, so far as, in their judgment, the wisest and most economical use of means entrusted to them would permit.

By the Divine favor the work has been greatly prospered. A large amount of the best Religious Publications has been placed in the hands of the people. The poor and the destitute have been sought out. The hearts of multitudes ready to perish have been made glad with the Bread of Life carried to their homes and firesides. Many who were once careless and impenitent have been awakened and led to Christ. The desponding have been cheered and the Christian strengthened in the Divine life. The labourer, toiling in the Master's service, has been furnished with improved weapons of warfare, and incited to renewed earnestness. Parents, Sabbath School Teachers and Ministers of the Gospel have been aided in educating and training for service here, and a glorious immortality hereafter, those committed to their care. Christians have been instructed and stimulated to more liberal and systematic giving in support of the Gospel, by the circulation of Tracts on that subject. Hundreds of thousands of Publications have been placed in the hands of the youth of our land, calculated to instil into their hearts and minds moral and religious principles. The seed of the Gospel, God's own truth, has been sown beside all waters; and though much of it doubtless will be lost, much of it will spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God,—some thirty, some sixty and some an hundred fold. Its influence will be extending deeper and wider as long as time shall last.



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culated through various channels, including Colportage, \$120,000 worth of Religious Publications, comprising over 60,000 Bibles and Testaments; 200,000 bound volumes of Religious Books; 160,000 smaller Books; 1,000,000 Tracts and other small publications, and 1,000,000 Sabbath School and cheap family Religious Periodicals. There have been distributed gratuitously to the destitute, and in Books at reduced prices to Sabbath Schools to the value of \$8,000.

Colportage is now extended to the four Lower Provinces, there being 13 men employed in Nova Scotia; 3 in New Brunswick; 2 in Prince Edward Island, and 2 in Newfoundland.

There are now greatly needed 10 additional Colporteurs for New Brunswick and 3 for Nova Scotia. Several applicants are offering their services. But we cannot commission any more for lack of funds. Not only so, but it will be necessary to decrease the present number, unless in the kind Providence of God means shall be provided more in accordance with the wants of the work. It is become too great for the present resources of the Society. The Committee therefore present this statement and an appeal to the Christian Public of these Provinces,—whose servant the Society is. Trusting in the Lord, to whom the silver and the gold belong, and whose are the cattle upon a thousand hills, we hopefully spread out the wants of this great work, believing that He in whose hands are the hearts

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Colportage has been proved to be an invaluable means of Home Evangelization. In order to reach the destitute masses, to supply our whole population with saving truth, and prevent the wide circulation of a pernicious, demoralizing and soul-destroying literature, Colportage, as conducted by this Society, is believed to be an absolute necessity for these Provinces. It must be union,—combining the resources and energies of Christians of every name. It must be missionary,—going forth into the “highways and hedges,” reaching the lowest and the poorest, the careless and ungodly, the ignorant and superstitious, the errorist of every class and degree in the most remotest corner of the land, and with singleness of aim, constrained by the love of Christ, presenting to them the truth as it is in Jesus, strive to lead them to Christ.

The Committee believe, inasmuch as this work has been carried on in some measure, in this spirit, and with these aims, that therefore the Great King and Head of the Church has prospered and blessed it far beyond the expectation of its friends.

Up to this date 49 Colporteurs have been employed, the aggregate of whose services are equal to those of one man for more than 50 years. They have made over 115,000 family visits. They had personal religious conversation, reading the Scriptures or Prayer in 50,000 of those visits, and took part in or conducted upwards of 3,000 Prayer and other Religious Meetings.

They distributed by sale over \$50,000 worth of Bibles, Religious Books and Tracts; and by grants to the needy more than \$3,000 worth.

From the Depository established in Halifax, there have been circulated through various channels, including Colportage, \$126,000 worth of Religious Publications, comprising over 60,000 Bibles and Testaments; 200,000 bound volumes of Religious Books; 160,000 smaller Books; 1,000,000 Tracts and other small publications, and 1,000,000 Sabbath School and cheap family Religious Periodicals. There have been distributed gratuitously to the destitute, and in Books at reduced prices to Sabbath Schools to the value of \$8,000.

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of all men will incline and enable his people to give to this cause as much as shall be needed.

The work is sustained by Donations and Annual Subscriptions—

1. For the "Publication Fund."
  2. For Colportage and gratuitous distribution among the destitute.
- The "Publication Fund" constitutes the capital for keeping up the necessary stock of Books, Bibles, &c., the Depository and in the hands of Colporteurs.

The contributions to these objects has not increased year by year by any means in proportion to the enlargement of the work. For example, the second year 4 Colporteurs on an average were employed during the year, and \$1,470 were received in donations for Colportage and gratuitous distribution. Last year 15 Colporteurs were employed on an average during the year, and the gratuitous distribution was largely increased, but only \$1,835 were received for these objects, in addition to what was contributed for the "Publication Fund."

The Society need, to meet the want of the work in the four Provinces,—

For Colportage and Gratuitous Distribution for 1873..... \$5,000  
 For the "Publication Fund"..... 7,000

Donations and Subscriptions to these objects are respectfully solicited. A subscription of \$1 or upwards paid annually, makes a member of the Society; \$20 paid at one time constitutes a Life Member; \$50 a Life Director.

Contributions may be sent to GEO. H. STARR, ESQ., TREASURER, HALIFAX; to Thos. McLellan, Esq., Bank of B. N. A., St. John, or to the Secretary at Halifax. On behalf of the Committee,

THOS. A. BROWN, *President.*

A. McBEAN, *Secretary.*



MONTHLY TRACT DISTRIBUTION.

To any neighborhood, church or association, making a collection for the schemes of the Society, we will send tracts for distribution,—one for each family every month.

*Annual Subscription for Colportage,* - - - \$.....  
 (or any who do not wish to make an Annual Subscription may give a)  
*Donation for Colportage,* - - - - - .....  
*Donation for Publication Fund,* - - - - - .....

*Name,*.....

*Address,*.....

*When payable,*..... 187

Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.—II. Cor. 9: 7.

The agencies adapted for every department of service are known and approved. The visitor, the Colporteur, the city and the foreign missionary, with numerous other tried laborers, have already obtained the manifest sanction and blessing of Heaven, each in his own department.

The one grand deficiency everywhere realized is money. Every institution languishes for want of sufficient funds. Is it that the treasures at the command of the Church of Christ are inadequate?

Nothing short of sacrifice will meet the necessities of the case, and nothing short of sacrifice is worthy of the object. An oppressed and dying world cries aloud for relief and salvation. The infinite God "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all," to reproach, agony, and death. The Saviour and the Holy Spirit fully sympathize in this stupendous benefaction. Compassion, consistency, gratitude, love, happiness, every gracious consideration, demand corresponding sacrifice of those who live through a Redeemer's death.

Shall the claims of the glory of Christ and of the world's eternal redemption plead for this in vain?

Every Christian, however poor, should resolutely devote a portion of his income to the glory of God and the good of mankind, as the first claim of his stewardship, prior to ordinary expenditure.

The amount should be determined according to his means and their increase.

As the New Testament suggests a plan of weekly storing, in the proportion of realized blessings, for one gracious purpose, and as this plan is proved, where wisely and faithfully practised, advantageous alike to the resources and piety of Churches, the reader will do well to employ it himself. He will find it promotive both of his liberality and happiness, while ever furnishing with means in hand for every urgent demand.

Will friends who may desire to help the Society, and who are not prepared to contribute immediately as they would like, fill up the blank on the other side, with the sum they propose to give to one or both objects, giving their address and the date at which they can pay, or forward the same.