

FORTY-FIRST
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

CONTAINING LISTS OF

AUXILIARIES, AND OF LIFE DIRECTORS AND MEMBERS

CONSTITUTED SUCH DURING THE YEAR.

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REV. JONATHAN CROSS.

I have always found it very difficult to make a speech, especially when the entertainment has been as great as it has been to-day. "Twenty-five years of colportage" is so large a subject that it will take a man twenty-five years to go round it; so I will confine you to one or two little spots.

I have been on the mountain range of which you have heard, and on one occasion was in my room there when a man came in dressed in hunter's clothes, and carrying a large knife in his hand. "Well," said he, "I live out at Blue creek, and we have no Sunday-school, and have only two New Testaments." I found the man had a great deal of common-sense, and I furnished him with fifty or sixty little volumes. He went home, called the neighbors together, and they established a Sunday-school. In six months they had a church organized; and it has grown into other churches since that time, and now there are schools and churches planted all along that valley.

In other parts of Western Virginia, after a great deal of labor you may find a few persons who can read; then they are furnished with books, and a Sunday-school is started by them, which becomes the means of the formation of a church. That is the work of the colporteurs. They go there and plant a little seed, and by the blessing of God it increases and prospers.

I could tell you many instances of such things. We generally found the people very ignorant, and in huts and cabins which the foot of a religious man had never entered. Here we scattered the seed; and the publications of this Society were placed in their hands.

In North Carolina, under my own supervision, one hundred thousand children were gathered into Sunday-schools; and I know of no other agency which is so well calculated to meet the wants of our destitute population as the Tract Society.