

FIFTY-SEVENTH

## ANNUAL REPORT

OF

# The Grande-Ligne Mission.

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It is quite becoming that we as a Missionary Society, should have made the change for our Annual Meeting from February to October, for it was in the dreary end of that month that our missionaries landed in this country from St. Johns, in a vehicle almost ludicrously called a *Diligence*, it took them five hours to reach Laprairie, and there they hired a row-boat, which landed them on a muddy shore without a wharf, late in the afternoon, in Montreal.

There is a striking symbolism in this beginning ; the state of the country, the marvellous change that has been wrought and the progress of the mission work which has kept pace with it. After a few years a railway was built from St. Johns to Laprairie, it was a wonderful progress !—and still by good country roads running by the track, a fair trotting horse could easily keep pace with the iron steam puffing motor. Later on the terminus was made at St. Lamberts, a perfect desert place, opposite Montreal. Then the Victoria Bridge was erected, and the missionaries could come from St. Johns to Montreal in less than an hour. How grateful they were for this progress. I doubt very much, if in view of what has now been accomplished in this field, we are sufficiently appreciative and grateful for the great and varied obstacles overcome, for the success attained, and the comparative ease with which this work can now be carried on on a larger scale.

At the outset, missionary work in this country was as slow and difficult as travelling ; there were obstacles on all sides, and ignorance (which John Foster compares to a mud wall where all missiles ignominiously sink) was the greatest obstacle of all. The