

FRENCH EVANGELIZATION.

MONTREAL, 13th December, 1892.

To the Friends of the Work :

DURING the current year thirty-six mission fields with ninety-six preaching stations have been supplied, twenty-four mission schools carried on, and twelve colporteurs employed.

A few incidents and extracts from missionaries' reports may best indicate some of the conditions and peculiar features of the work. For years, work in the town of Sorel was found to be most difficult, and apparently without success. Last spring a colporteur was sent there who six years before had left it completely discouraged. He had, however, placed a New Testament in a Roman Catholic family. On his return, this family and two others welcomed him and were glad to have him explain the Scriptures and pray with them. He opened a small hall in the town, which night after night for most of the summer was filled with people willing to listen to and learn the truth. This important place has to be left vacant during the winter for want of a suitable missionary.

A colporteur who spent several months in Glengarry last summer, was well received almost everywhere by the Roman Catholics, who frequently asked him to preach to them. He found about forty Roman Catholic families reading the Scriptures and willing to receive a missionary, and twenty French Protestant families connected with English congregations. A missionary is greatly needed to work in such places as Cornwall and Lancaster where there is a large French population.

An ever increasing number of children from Roman Catholic homes has been attending the mission schools. In some of these almost the total attendance is Roman Catholic. For example, in one school fourteen out of seventeen are Roman Catholic; in another, fifteen out of sixteen; in another, twenty-three out of twenty-eight. In fact, except in one or two schools, the Roman Catholic attendance is not less than one-third and often more than one-half. To the Pointe-aux-Trembles Schools this session, there have been admitted eighty-seven pupils from Roman Catholic homes, over sixty-four from the homes of converts, and five Protestants.

A few weeks ago one of our missionary-colporteurs was permitted to hold a service in the Roman Catholic chapel at St. Germain de Kamouraska. He had an audience of fifty Roman Catholics, two of whom were women, and all expressed themselves as greatly pleased with the service. There is a wonderful movement going on, and the priests and bishop are making strenuous efforts to control it. The missionary is still on the ground, and in the district has discovered six families who call themselves Protestant, and

were evangelized by former missionaries of our Board.

The following are from two reports just received from the Ottawa district: "In spite of cruel and bitter persecution, the Roman Catholics come to our meeting. Three different persons came to me during the month asking me to read the Bible to them and explain our belief on confession, &c. Six Roman Catholics were present one Sabbath. I spoke to them and wanted to know their reasons for attending our meetings. They answered, "We must understand more about salvation; we are all troubled about death and cannot get peace in our church. Yes, we must come to you when you come here, and we want you to come to our homes."

"I held revival meetings which were very successful. The young people are taking a great interest in religious matters. I am glad of this because there is so little hope of making perfect Christians of the old people, especially of the old France people who will not give up their habits. I am trying to prepare an army of young people to help me on with my work. On the whole I am encouraged, although I meet with many a difficulty, for I feel the Lord is with us."

That a great movement is on the way is evident not only from the changed attitude on the part of the people towards our missionaries, but also on the part of men nominally Roman Catholic towards the highest authorities of their church. The two journals recently put under the ban have determined to continue their existence, the one it is claimed with a largely increased subscription list and the other under a new name.

Are these indications of awakening not a call to the church of God to bestir herself as she has never done to evangelize our French-Canadian Roman Catholic fellow-citizens while she may?

We have been greatly indebted in the past to the generous liberality of warm hearted friends, and confidently bespeak the cordial co-operation of all who desire the best interests of our French speaking fellow-countrymen.

The ordinary receipts are about four thousand dollars less than at this date last year.

Yours sincerely,

D. H. MACVICAR, D.D., LL.D.,
Chairman.

S. J. TAYLOR,
Secretary.

All contributions to be sent direct to the Treasurer and addressed,

REV. ROBT. I. WARDEN, D.D.,
Dominion Square, Montreal.

The Presbyterians of London had, in 1891, 87 congregations, and 63 of them have been organized since 1861.