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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Editor and Proprietor.

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Letters and articles intended for the next issue should be in the hands of the Editor not later than Tuesday morning.



TORONTO, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1879.

FRENCH EVANGELIZATION.

OUR readers will rejoice to learn that there is at the present time quite a movement towards Protestantism among many of the priests and ecclesiastics of the Church of Rome in the Province of Quebec. We learn that the office of the Board of French Evangelization in Montreal has recently been visited by a number of such, inquiring concerning the teachings of the Bible, and that within the past few weeks one priest, two Christian brothers and a friar, have abjured Romanism and placed themselves under the care of the Board. In addition to these, others are studying the Bible, and will, we trust, soon be led by the Spirit of God to embrace the faith of the Gospel. There are not wanting evidences that very many of the Romish clergy, especially among the younger men, are dissatisfied with the teachings of Rome, and were it not the fear of persecution and uncertainty as to the welcome they will receive from Protestants not a few of them, it is believed, would at once break the chains that bind them and cast in their lot with the churches of the Reformation. It is impossible for those who are not personally cognizant of the circumstances to realize the overwhelming difficulties and obstacles in the way of a priest or ecclesiastic severing his connection with Romanism. Apart altogether from the relentless persecution of the Romish hierarchy and the terribly bitter opposition of relatives and friends, they have to face the question, how to obtain the means of support on becoming Protestants? Driven from the society of former friends, where are they to find a home? Penniless, with no clothing even but their priestly robes, where are they to find food and raiment? Persecuted by those of their former faith, to whom are they to turn for sympathy and for that Christian nurture and care they so much need? Can it be wondered at that many of them hesitate to take the decisive step? Is the wonder not rather that any should take it with the almost absolute certainty of the trials and obstacles they must encounter and the sacrifices they must make?

We believe that the time has come when either our own Church, to whom these men seem chiefly to look for sympathy and counsel, or the Protestant community in the Dominion generally, should establish, under the supervision of a prudent, loving, earnest Christian gentleman, a home for ex-priests, where they would be warmly welcomed and protected, and surrounded by a healthy Christian influence. The establishment of such a home would, we believe, be productive of great good, and would tend very much to advance the cause of French Evangelization. Those ecclesiastics who within the past few weeks have placed themselves under the care of the Assembly's Board must of necessity involve the Board in considerable expense, though we are glad to learn that positions have been obtained for some of them as teachers in the French Mission Schools of the Church. The Board reported to the last Assembly that they had adopted the policy of keeping free from debt, only expending the money which the Church provided. We earnestly hope that funds will be forthcoming to enable them not only to carry on the regular part of their work, but also to lend a helping hand to those Friars and Christian Brothers and Priests who place themselves under their care. Those congregations that have not yet forwarded contributions for the current year should do so without delay, and all the friends of French Evangelization, to whom the Lord has given the ability, should regard it a duty, as many we know will, and a privilege too, to help the French Board in their efforts to provide a home and protection and instruction for those ex-ecclesiastics who come to them from Rome.

We trust that the propriety of establishing a "Home" such as we have referred to will ere long engage the attention of the Board of French Evangelization, feeling assured, as we do, that it will tend greatly to encourage those Priests who are convinced of the errors of Rome, but who hesitate to throw themselves adrift from old associations, not knowing whither to turn for sympathy and religious instruction.

MINUTES OF ASSEMBLY.

THE large and respectable annual volume containing the proceedings of the General Assembly has for this year just appeared. It is looked for with interest by the ministers and other office-bearers, and is a constant book of reference during the year. The minutes proper are but a small volume, only sixty pages, but the appendix, with reports and statistics, swells out to two hundred and sixty-two pages, more than four times the size of the minutes. However, it is not called minutes; it is styled "Acts and Proceedings," and that title will cover the contents of the whole, whether in the appendix or otherwise.

As to attendance on the Assembly that met in Ottawa, there are 360 commissioners enrolled, but of these there were only 269 present. At least 269 are marked as present, but the marking is not absolutely correct. Professor Hart of Manitoba, was present for one, yet he is marked absent. The commissioners who were absent belong to the Synods as fol-

lows: Of the Synod of the Maritime Provinces there were thirteen ministers and twenty-five elders absent; of the Synod of Montreal and Ottawa, there were two ministers and eleven elders absent; of the Synod of Toronto and Kingston, there were four ministers and eleven elders absent; and of the Synod of Hamilton and London, there were seven ministers and twenty elders absent. In all there were twenty-six ministers absent—the half of them exactly belonging to the Maritime Provinces—and sixty-seven elders.

The financial and statistical returns will bear to be carefully studied by the members as well as by the office-bearers of the Church. It is a pity that the people do not have a good opportunity of seeing the tables, they appear only in the minutes, and these are furnished to ministers and elders alone. It is a matter of regret that copies could not be thrown off for more general circulation. The ministerial incomes of \$600 and upwards may be classified as follows:

3	get	\$1,000	each or thereabouts	\$ 12,000
4	"	3,000	"	12,000
9	"	2,500	"	22,500
13	"	2,000	"	26,000
5	"	1,800	"	9,000
10	"	1,600	"	16,000
19	"	1,400	"	26,600
33	"	1,200	"	39,600
5	"	1,100	"	5,500
48	"	1,000	"	48,000
44	"	900	"	39,600
108	"	800	"	86,400
122	"	700	"	85,400
110	"	600	"	66,000
533				\$494,600

These figures give an average income of \$978, nearly, to 533 ministers. But there are 70 others who receive less than \$600 each and so the average is decreased very much. According to the report of the Committee on statistics the revenue promised from all sources averages \$850, while that paid by congregations alone reaches \$755 only. It is not to be inferred from this that what is promised is not paid, though there are, doubtless, cases not a few where such is the case. What is to be inferred is that there are often sources of income besides what the congregations give. There is the Temporalities Fund of the branch of the Church known as the Kirk before the Union, and there are the grants made by the Home Mission Board or that of supplements. It is a state of things very much to be lamented that as many as seventy of our ministers are compelled to live on less than \$600 each. In this a strong argument for the establishment of a Sustentation Fund is furnished. If the labourer be worthy of his hire, it is clear that some who break the bread of life do not get enough to live upon.

The measure of growth which is manifest all along the line is gratifying. The Presbyteries are growing at the rate of about one each year. Last year Lanark and Renfrew was formed, this year that of Maitland. The ministers have increased 19, the pastoral charges 110, during the year. The families reported are 3,416 more than the previous year, and the communicants 8,885. The increase in the amount given to all purposes over the previous year was \$79,994.65.

To enter into further particulars so as to contrast the different Synods or parts of the