

French Evangelization.

THE following report concerning Namur, Quebec, one of the French Mission Stations of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, was read at a recent meeting of the Montreal Presbyterian Woman's Missionary Society. The writer is the wife of a respected elder of St. Gabriel Church, Montreal. Of French Roman Catholic descent she was many years ago brought to the knowledge of the truth, and spends a large portion of her time in seeking to advance the cause of French Canadian Evangelization. The report, in abbreviated form, is published at the request of many of the ladies of the Woman's Missionary Society:—

To the Ladies Missionary Association of the Presbyterian Church of Canada:—

Having been repeatedly asked to give a report of the French Presbyterian Mission in Namur, I will try here to do so. It will necessarily be a somewhat long report, covering as it does an interval of seven years.

I had no idea, when I undertook to help in this special work, how it would grow day by day. I fear that if I had realized the magnitude of the task, I would not have had courage enough to put my hand to it. Yet having promised myself, as a small token of gratitude to the God who turned my heart to Him, that if permitted, I would work as well as I was able in His vineyard, I could not turn back.

It is about eight years ago, that a few French Protestant families I had become acquainted with in the city, left it to take up land, in what was then a new colony. Several months elapsed without bringing me any news of them. I thought they were comfortably settled, and I was glad for them. Yes! they were settled, but not very comfortably, their slender resources having become exhausted in a very short time, and their clothing worn out, without any possibility to replace it. Mr. Mousseau, the French student, was then stationed at Namur. He came to town and told me that several families were in the greatest destitution. In consequence of this news, I went with him and bought some provisions, which he took to them when he returned. Some time later on, a woman of that place arrived here with a little boy, seven years old, and called upon me. She said she had left her other little ones in her husband's care, and intended to go out working by the day, if work could be found. She had brought the child to have him cared for, and, if possible, cured of a serious illness, brought on by hard work and poor fare. I am happy to state that the poor little one completely recovered. The brave mother also was rewarded for her efforts and

her courage. My husband and I decided to keep her with us, so that she would be under no expense during her stay in Montreal. She and her boy remained three months. She earned quite a little sum of money before she went back. But her success brought down several others, who expected the same advantages. At the same time I was receiving letters from the missionary, telling me of growing destitution and terrible hardships. The number of poor families requiring help was so great, that I had to plead their cause with a few charitable and liberal friends. They helped me to procure and send a lot of clothing and provisions. Still urgent requests for help kept coming, so that I did not know what to do. I decided I would go and visit the field myself, although my husband feared that the fatigue of doing so would be too much for me. I explained that it was indispensable, as much for my own satisfaction as for that of the kind friends who had assisted me. I could not undertake to help people that I knew nothing about. I must get acquainted with them first, and see for myself about the truth of their statements.

So I started with a supply of provisions, sure that whatever else might happen me, I would not starve. After reaching Papineauville, on the Ottawa, by train, I hired a conveyance of the most primitive kind, and with its help got over the thirty-two miles of country, between that town and Namur. The district is mountainous, the road climbs up steep hills, descends into deep gorges, and skirts beautiful lakes. The scenery is lovely. The lodgings however were not so. In the shanty where I had to reside, there was only one room for the whole family. They, however, improvised curtains for the bed they gave me. This primitive accommodation gave me a glimpse of a kind of life new to me, if not very refined.

Arriving at last in Namur I visited all the French Protestant families there. There were from twenty-five to thirty, scattered over several miles of forest land. None of these asked me for any help. Yet I could see their deep poverty. Their clothing was of the poorest description, though remarkably neat and clean. Want and hard toil had left their marks on the faces of young and old. It was painful in the extreme to see so much misery. It was inexplicable to me, how those brave settlers could endure such privation. They said they hoped another year to have better crops, but early frosts and tempests had until then been too much for them. Some lamented their folly in coming there, and talked of going away leaving all behind, land and improvements. They said they did not expect anything for themselves but the barest subsistence, it was to their children's future comfort they looked, and with this end in view they were content to suffer. I read encouraging promises of Scripture to them and prayed with them. I could see with pleasure how a few words of sympathy brought back fresh courage and new resignation. In one of the houses I vis-