

REPORT, &c.

As this Report may be perused by some who have never read the previous annual communications of this Society to the public, it may be proper to repeat a brief preliminary survey of the condition of the Province and the history of this Society.

The Province of Lower Canada was settled originally by emigrants from France, who of course brought with them the religion and language of their father land. Consequently the great mass of the population still profess the Roman Catholic Religion, and speak the French language. Since the year 1763, when this country was ceded to England there has been a slow but constant addition of inhabitants who use the English language and are attached to some form of Protestant faith. The number of the latter class, probably amounts at the present time to one hundred and twenty thousand out of an aggregate population of six hundred and twenty thousand.

These two classes are to some extent intermingled both in the country parishes, and in the large towns. But the mass of the French inhabitants reside on a narrow strip of territory, skirting the great rivers of the Province, and with a very trifling intermixture of persons of a different language and religion. Indeed whole parishes are found in which the population is exclusively of Canadian origin. A considerable portion of the Protestants reside in the Cities of Quebec and Montreal. Another portion are sprinkled over the parishes and townships inhabited principally by the French. A very large number of them are settled in the Eastern Townships, a tract of country lying just north of Vermont, and inhabited by very few of the French population.

Religious Denominations in Lower Canada, Roman Catholic.—The members of this sect constitute the great majority of the inhabitants. Taking the census of 1831, as the basis of our estimate, it is probable that their members at the present time amount to nearly five hundred thousand. Their ecclesiastical establishment according to the Register of 1831, is as follows:

Bishop of Quebec,	Bishop of Telmesse,
Bishop of Fussale,	Vicars General, 8
Curates and Missionaries, 195	Nunneries, 7
Colleges, 7.	

It is impossible here not to advert to one or two facts illustrative of the influence which this system of religion is calculated to exert upon the prosperity and character of a people. It is well known that an immense proportion of the French Catholics are unable to read and of course can receive none but oral instruction. It is equally well known that owing to early prejudices, they will seldom or never listen to religious instruction except from their own priests. They have thus been effectually secured