

THE PRESBYTERIAN.

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COMPARATIVELY few are aware of the success which has attended the French Mission of our Church for some years past. To those who merely look at the small congregation worshipping in St. John's Church, Montreal, it may appear even to be a failure. It is not to be wondered at should this impression prevail, and there is no doubt that it does prevail to a very considerable extent. Hence, in some degree, the small amount of contributions received, much increased latterly, it is true, but still insufficient to conduct operations on so extended a scale as is necessary in view of the magnitude of the work to be accomplished. What has actually been done it is difficult to estimate. This much can be confidently affirmed, that the number of those who remain in Montreal after conversion bears no proportion to those who have left, owing to the great difficulty of obtaining employment, so soon as it is known that they have left the communion of the Church of Rome. On the one hand, there is the persistent persecution of those who have left Rome, no longer conducted in the open and undisguised manner usual a few years ago, but none the less effectual because concealed; on the other, is the indifference, and even something worse, shown by Protestants themselves towards converts. For, owing to the misrepresentations of the priests and their lay assistants, it has come to be believed, even among those who would deny the existence of such a feeling, that these converts are not to be trusted; some even go so far as to say that no man is to be relied on who has left the religion in whose belief he was educated, to join another Church. Many have, therefore, been obliged to go to the United States, and some to Upper Canada, to obtain the employment denied to them here, so that the paucity of adherents in St. John's Church

may be satisfactorily explained. There has been no failure in the Mission. On the contrary there is every reason to go forward vigorously and energetically; to thank God and take courage.

The dissensions existing amongst the members of the Romish Hierarchy in the Province of Quebec, a very striking evidence of which was afforded previous to and during the elections for the Local Legislature, by the contradictory circulars of the Bishops to their clergy, in regard to what was known as the *Programme Politique*, gave a rude shock to the minds of the "faithful" who had believed that the Church was one and indivisible, and that all the chief shepherds were directed by the one Infallible Head, sitting at Rome and from thence radiating his infallible teachings. Nor was the shock confined to men of culture. In spite of every effort to stifle discussion and to prevent the influence of journalistic controversies from reaching the more illiterate, the electioneering struggles and the speeches delivered by opposing candidates spread the knowledge of these differences of opinion, which existed between the two opposing parties in the Church, among the electors, and excited a feeling of wonder, succeeded by a spirit of enquiry. For years past a process of preparing the minds of the French Canadian population for the reception of the truth has been going on. Like all great works destined to bring about an important change, the work has been going on silently and almost imperceptibly. In spite of a few exceptional attacks on colporteurs and missionaries, instigated by blind adherents to the Church of Rome, a great and marked improvement has been shown in places where not many years ago a *Suisse* could not offer his Bibles for sale except at the probable risk of his life, with the certainty of being roughly used. Now this is changed,