

REPORT
OF THE
BOARD OF FRENCH EVANGELIZATION
OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA

In presenting its annual report the Board would call special attention to the fact that recent and current events show the urgent necessity of prosecuting the work of French Evangelization on a much larger scale, and with much greater faith and courage than heretofore. Romanism is undeniably strengthening itself in many ways, and becoming alarmingly aggressive on this continent. Its wealth and various sources of revenue are being greatly augmented, and its organization perfected by the appointment of Bishops, Archbishops, and Cardinals to direct the efforts of a vast army of priests, nuns, and friars, so that its ecclesiastical and political power can scarcely be estimated. The restoration, by the reigning Pontiff, of the Society of Jesus to its original status in the Church, and its incorporation for religious and educational purposes by the Legislature of Quebec, are steps full of peril to the morality and the civil and religious liberties of the Dominion. It is matter of history that this order was suppressed in Canada, and their property taken possession of by the Crown; but since their return in 1842 they have steadily increased in numbers and influence. In 1847 they established the College of St. Mary's, in Montreal, which has now about 450 students, and they have since extended their labors to the cities of Quebec, Three Rivers and Guelph; to the shores of Lake Superior and Lake Huron, the Island of Manitoulin and the region of Temiscamingue. The power conferred upon them for acquiring and holding property in various forms is practically unlimited, and is sure to be used with the utmost energy and skill so as to absorb in a larger degree than ever the resources of the country. It is well known that their mission is chiefly educational; and no one conversant with their standard theological and ethical writings can hesitate to pronounce these impure and corrupting; and yet such principles are not only assiduously inculcated in Colleges and Seminaries but also made to permeate the whole system of elementary education in the Province of Quebec. And to such a degree is the influence of their teachings already felt that eminent advocates do not hesitate to ascribe to it the great and increasing difficulty in getting witnesses to speak the truth and to regard the sacred obligation of a judicial oath. Hence the recent attempt to give it additional solemnity by an Act of Parliament enforcing the use of crucifixes in court houses and elsewhere. It is to be regretted that the aggressive movements of Rome are greatly facilitated by the incessant endeavors of political parties to secure and retain the support of Romanists, and by the course followed by a large section of the nominally Protestant press in being scrupulously silent regarding all that makes against the tactics of the Hierarchy, while outspoken in commending certain of its doings and in denouncing as narrow bigotry the efforts of those who oppose them. It must be acknowledged that owing to ignorance of what Romanism is, and always has been, and through self-interest in various forms, Protestant sentiment has in some instances become so weak that not a few contribute funds to the support of popish institutions and openly or secretly countenance raffles and lotteries for the same purpose. Some even go the length of frankly avowing their opposition to French Evangelization, ostensibly upon three grounds, namely: first, that it breeds strife and bitterness between the French and English nationalities; second, that it hinders a great reformation movement from within the Romish Church; and third, that it is an insult which we ourselves would resent were colporteurs and missionaries from Rome sent among our people.