

OUR FRENCH MISSION SCHOOL AT POINTE-AUX- TREMBLES.

The annual meeting of the Board of French Evangelization was held recently in the city of Montreal. As I was present on the occasion I took the opportunity of visiting for the first time our French Mission Schools at Pointe-aux-Trembles in the neighborhood of that city. And now on my return home my mind inclines me to give my impressions of these Schools to the readers of the MARITIME PRESBYTERIAN.

Several of our congregations in the Maritime Provinces are supporting pupils in these Mission Schools, and others of them I have no doubt will be disposed to follow their good example when they become better acquainted with these interesting and hopeful institutions.

Our ministers, it is true, receive an admirable annual Report of these Schools signed by the learned chairman and indefatigable secretary-treasurer of the Board of French Evangelization—Principal MacVicar and the Rev. R. H. Warden. But in many instances these Reports are never heard of outside of the ministers study room. As a consequence many of our good people in the Maritime Provinces have only a very vague idea of of Pointe-aux-Trembles, and the schools that are there located. Hence the present impressions for general information.

Pointe-aux-Trembles, let me then say, is pleasantly situated on the island of Montreal about nine miles Eastward from the city of Montreal. The French name Pointe-aux-Trembles signifies in plain English the point of the poplars, or poplar point, reminding us of Poplar Grove Church in the city of Halifax. *Tremble* is the French name of a species of poplar noted for the trembling or tremulous motion of its leaves. The place is so called because the point of land which here projects into the river St. Lawrence was originally covered with this species of poplar tree. The old poplars that originally grew on the point have been destroyed by the ice carried down in successive springs by the great St. Lawrence. But I noticed some of the trees still standing around the Schools when I visited them. The two buildings, one for the boys and the other for the girls are situated quite near each other. They command a fine view of the noble St. Lawrence, and connected with them there are seven acres of fertile level land

which are cultivated by the teachers and pupils for their own benefit.

There are five teachers in the institution, Mr. Bourgoin, (principal) Mr. Watier, Miss Blair, Miss Cairns, and Miss Bouchard. In addition to this regular staff of teachers Miss Wales gives lessons in music to some of the female pupils. Mr. Bourgoin and Mr. Watier are natives of France. All the lady teachers are Canadians. The branches taught are reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, history, Latin, Greek, mathematics. I found 88 pupils present, 42 girls and 46 boys. Their ages varied from 11 to 30. They belong principally to the province of Quebec, but some of them come from other parts of the Dominion. Two of them—Francois Chaplon and Ninnie Bardet are from Stellarton. About one third of them are the children of Roman Catholic parents.

In stating as briefly as possible my impressions of the Institution I must notice particularly the *order and regularity with which every thing connected with it is conducted*. One of our English bards has said that order is Heaven's first law. And certainly order is a prominent feature in the working of this Institution. From dawn when the morning bell calls to prepare for the duties of the day till a little after nine in the evening when all retire to rest, every thing is conducted with the regularity of clock work.

The following is the order of business. Breakfast at seven o'clock; from half past seven till a quarter to nine housework, in which boys as well as girls take part; family prayers at nine; nine to ten Bible Class at which all are present; ten to twelve, lessons; dinner at twelve; recreation after dinner till half-past one; from half-past one to four, lessons again; four to five recreation or work; tea at six; recreation to seven; seven to nine study lessons; family prayers at nine and then *couche* in clean well ventilated dormitories. This order of proceedings is strictly adhered to. I was very favourably impressed with it. It must certainly be conducive to health and the formation of regular habits, and the acquisition of a large amount of useful knowledge.

The religious atmosphere of the Institution made an equally favorable impression upon me. According to the present Educational law of old France the Bible and all religious emblems are strictly excluded from the public schools of that country. And our good brethren in Ontario are just now strenuously con-