

gregations and 18 missions including those received from the Church of Scotland. There are about 140 missions under our charge now in the Synod; it will take but a few years with God's blessing to make them congregations.

### WORK AMONG THE FRENCH IN MONTREAL.

BY REV. R. P. DUCLOS.

*To the Editor of THE RECORD:—*

**A**BOUT two years ago I asked and received from many of your readers in Ontario and Québec, contributions in aid of a work of evangelization in the east end of Montreal. I wish to say a word about the work carried on in this new and growing district.

Up to ten or fifteen years ago, Montreal was growing steadily westward. Of late the growth of shipping and other interests, have drawn towards the east the attention of capitalists. Millions of Protestant capital are now invested in sugar refining, cotton, shoe, rolling mills, glass, oil cloth, iron bridge works, tobacco, rubber and wall paper industries; besides the machine and car shops of the C. P. R., giving employment to some twelve or fifteen thousand working men.

But every day nuns and priests cry at the door of the poor workers "give—give," and thus Protestant money honestly earned goes to enrich the Romish hierarchy. Some part with their offerings with pleasure thinking it will pave the way to heaven, others are weary of their church and losing the hope of ever improving their condition, say to themselves, "Let us drink and be merry."

That district, about three-fourths of a mile wide and two miles long, where some 40,000 souls work and live, is the field where I have been called to labor. How to get admission to the homes; how to get access to their intelligence; how to secure the confidence of their hearts; these were the problems.

The first step was to secure a room. A few families recently arrived from France and Belgium, pleased at the attention shown them as strangers in the land, and two French Canadian converts furnished the nucleus of our first meetings, and their children the first Sunday school class. And what a class! Ten, fifteen, twenty children, coming in and going out, uncontrollable, unable to sing, staring at Mrs. Duclos and understanding little or nothing of what was said, walking out and peeping through the windows! What a work to awaken in such a gathering, some spiritual interest and then what a struggle on their part to shake off old habits; old superstitions, old creed and old associations; and what courage to face a whole public, which do not, and doesn't want to, understand.

For quite a while attendance was very irregular and very changeable—children would come one Sunday and stop away—then come again bringing another.

After a time preaching of the word was begun. Light penetrated their minds—interest grew—children and parents began to be more regular in their attendance. I remember one evening when at the close of the service the first nineteen rose and expressed the desire to renounce formally the errors of Rome.

It was found desirable to open a day school—which proved an effective stimulus to the work to awake all the faculties of the mind, that is the great secret—when the mind is set thinking the work is half done. Some larger accommodation where to carry on the work became necessary.

Thanks to the recommendation of the Presbytery and the liberality of friends, a brick church with accommodation for 250 and a school room for 50 were erected and opened for public services in March, 1890, under the name of "Eglise de la Croix"—church of the cross. Our people liked the name and chose it, because the congregation traces its existence to the doctrine of the cross, to their faith in the cross and because also in our time of special difficulties they grow, work and live under the cross.

But growth is difficult, when confessing Christ means loss of friends, loss of work, exclusion from manufactures; when will the Christian capitalists, christian manufacturers, christian firms, understand that they wield one of the strongest powers ever used for the promotion of morality and truth! Will the fire that burns in the hearts of some christians in other lands ever animate our public here? Still the work is growing in the east end of Montreal—some 90 to 100 adults meet in the Eglise de la Croix at either of the Sunday services to worship God. Seventy-six young people including a Bible class, have attended the Sunday school during the year. Seventy have attended the day school. There are at present 58 children on the roll of the day school, though there is virtually room for only 48. While some of our children acquire a taste for English and attend our public schools of the Protestant Board of Commissioners, a large number of R. C. children attend our mission school.

The annual festival was enjoyed by 110 grown up members of the congregation and 104 young people.

As fishers of men we have so far drawn but one here and another there. But minds are being prepared, opinion is slowly being modified and the time is coming when nets will be required and become in use—that is the hope of the work and of the country.

R. P. DUCLOS.

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