

BOARD OF FRENCH EVANGELIZATION.

The annual collection for French Evangelization was appointed by the Assembly to be taken up in all the congregations and mission stations of the Church, on Sabbath, 21st July. The following are extracts from the Report of the Board as presented to the Assembly. Copies of the Report can be had on application to the Sec.-Treasurer, Rev. R. H. Warden, 210 St. James St., Montreal:

Perhaps no department of the Church's work is encompassed with greater difficulties, and assuredly none requires more thorough supervision than that committed to the Board of French Evangelization. Carried on in the interests of a people who speak a different language and of a temperament widely different from those under the care of the Home Mission Committee, a people as superstitious and at least as firmly wedded to a corrupted form of faith as those ministered to by the Foreign Mission Committee, it needs great prudence as well as great faith on the part of those whom the Church has honoured with its administration.

The Board are painfully sensible how far short they have come in the discharge of their important trust, yet they cannot fail to acknowledge the hand of a merciful God in the marked success which has crowned their efforts during the past year, not only in the providential opening up of many new fields of labour and the gathering in of new converts in those heretofore occupied, but in drawing out in an increasing measure the liberality and sympathy of the congregations and Christian people of our Church in the Dominion and elsewhere on behalf of this most important scheme.

INCREASE OF STAFF.

One gratifying feature of the work has reference to the increased number of missionaries whose services have been placed at the disposal of the Board. The Rev. Messrs. B. Ouriere and R. P. Duclos,—the former a gentleman of marked ability and with special qualifications for the work, and the latter an honoured missionary for many years of the French Canadian Missionary Society, and, more recently, President of the late "Synode des Eglises Evangeliques,"—were received by the General Assembly last June as Ministers of the Church, and have since rendered efficient service in the work. The Rev. Messrs. M. F. Boudreau and R. Hamilton, graduates of the Montreal Presbyterian College last spring, have, during the year, been ordained in French fields. The Revs. L. Dionne and Jos. Vessott, both tried men and with considerable experience of French Evangelistic work, have since last meeting of Assembly connected themselves with the Board, while more recently Messrs. L. Le-Claine, A. Internoscia, and O. Camerle, have been added to the staff of labourers, and an application is at present on the table of the Montreal Presbytery from a French Missionary, a graduate of Knox College, Toronto,—Rev. W. Groulx—who desires to be received as a Minister of the Church with a view to labour in connection with the Board.

EX-PRIESTS.

During the year applications were received from a number of ex-Priests of the Church of Rome, and much time and anxious thought were given to the consideration of these cases. A Committee of the Board met frequently with several of the applicants and carefully examined them as to their doctrinal views and their religious convictions, and recommended the Senate of the Montreal Presbyterian College to permit three of them—Messrs. Camerle, Internoscia, and Tanguay, the last named an ex-Ecclesiastic from Quebec City,—to attend lectures during the College Session. This they did, and at the close of the Session they appeared before the Presbytery of Montreal, by whom they were examined, and to two of their number employment has been given by the Board during the present summer. The standing of these three gentlemen comes before the General Assembly in another connection. One great difficulty the Board felt in regard to them was how to provide a maintenance for them during their period of probation. Taking all the circumstances into consideration, it was resolved to issue a special appeal on their behalf. This the Convener did, and most generously has the appeal thus far been responded to, as the accompanying financial statement of the Treasurer will show. Among other applications from ex-Priests, was one from a gentleman in Messina, Sicily, who, for many years, has been a Protestant Missionary, and

concerning whose Christian character and peculiar adaptation for the work, the highest testimony was borne by well-known Ministers of the Church of Scotland. The Board, owing to the state of the funds and the large sum necessary to bring this gentleman and his family to Canada, were most reluctantly compelled to decline the application. Were some of the wealthy friends of the mission to provide the amount required—about \$1,000—the Board would at once secure his services, believing that in this ex-Priest they would have a valuable acquisition to their Staff of Missionaries.

MEN AND MONEY WANTED.

Notwithstanding the additions made during the year to the number of labourers, and the increased contributions of the Church, the Board urgently require for the furtherance and extension of the work, more men and more money. There are at present many doors of entrance open, into which, without delay, missionaries, teachers, and colporteurs, should be sent. The Board have reason to believe that, were the requisite means provided, the men would be forthcoming,—men baptized with the Spirit of Christ, men with earnest zeal combined with knowledge,—for only such can hope for success in this work.

Instead of \$23,500, the revenue of the past year, at least \$40,000 are required to take possession of fields now known to be open and to carry on the work with vigor and efficiency throughout the ensuing year. When it is borne in mind that within our own Dominion, and in some of the most densely peopled districts of the land, there are not only townships and counties, but vast stretches of country extending in some instances upwards of a hundred miles, where the voice of a Protestant missionary is never heard,—when this fact is borne in mind it surely is not necessary to urge the ministers and office-bearers and members of our Church, liberally to support by their contributions and their prayers, that scheme whose object it is to plant the missionary, and to scatter broadcast the Seed of the Kingdom in these priest-ridden districts of the land.

In many of the fields occupied by the missionaries of the Board there is no other Protestant Church for miles around, and, in some instances, the missionary toils on at his discouraging work from month to month separated by scores of miles from any fellow-labourer in the vineyard of his Master, as much isolated from the companionship and sympathy of kindred Christian spirits as many of the missionaries who labour in purely heathen lands. These men claim the sympathy and prayers, as well as the financial support, of the Church whose honoured servants they are.

MONTHLY REPORTS.

The Board are most desirous, as far as possible, to systematize the work, and to obtain the most accurate statistics from the respective fields. Each missionary is required to report monthly on forms provided for the purpose.

In addition to these Monthly Reports an *Annual* one is received from each field, containing a resumé of the year's work.

In the Annual Reports for the year just ended the name of every convert and of every family connected with the Mission, the circumstances of the family, the number of children, etc., etc., is given, so that the Board possess the most minute details connected with every one of the fields occupied.

No one can rise from the perusal of the Monthly and Annual Reports of the Missionaries of the Board for the past year without being impressed with a sense of the vastness and importance of the work, and the very marked success achieved by the blessing of God. From these Reports the following details are chiefly taken:

REPORTS CONCERNING FIELDS.

I.—PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

Under the direction of the Prince Edward Island Auxiliary Bible Society, one of the Colporteurs of the Board labored for four months last summer in several of the French Settlements of the Island. The French Catholic population is large, and very thoroughly under the control of the Priests. The Board hope as the number of their laborers increases, to have at least one energetic Colporteur permanently employed among the French speaking people of the Island.

II.—GRAND FALLS, NEW BRUNSWICK.

For the last four years the Rev. M. R. Paradis has labored here with untiring zeal and fidelity. Through

his instrumentality, a neat substantial church edifice, to accommodate 225, has been erected, free of cost, at a cost of \$3,000. Here services are conducted every Lord's Day, both in French and English. When Mr. Paradis entered the field there was not a single member of our Church in the District. During his ministry, seventeen English speaking persons have publicly professed their faith in Christ, and twenty-five French Catholics have severed their connection with the Church of Rome, all of whom, with three exceptions, have continued steadfast in the faith. One of the great drawbacks in connection with the Missionary's labors heretofore has arisen from the ignorance of the people, not more than one in ten being able to read. The new school law, however, promises to effect an improvement in this respect, there now being two public schools in the village of Grand Falls taught by Protestant teachers, and attended, among others, by upwards of twenty of the French children. Though the average attendance at Mr. Paradis' French service on the Lord's Day is small, the Roman Catholics fearing to be present, he yet finds many opportunities among this class to sow the seed of the Kingdom. A part of every day is devoted to visiting from house to house. In a recent report, Mr. Paradis says: "The Roman Catholics I sometimes visit merely as a friend without speaking on religion, in order not to excite their prejudices too much, but most frequently I read passages appropriate to their circumstances, or to the subject brought up in conversation. This generally leads to controversy, and I often spend two or three hours with the family reading and speaking on religious subjects. Twenty-two families are favorably disposed both towards me and my work; thirty-two receive me well, and there are a few others I can visit." The average attendance at the Sabbath School is thirty-five, and at the weekly prayer-meeting, seventeen. The average number of Protestant families visited per month is thirty-two, and of Roman Catholics, eighteen.

Twelve miles distant from Grand Falls, in one direction, is Limestone, and about the same distance in another direction is Van Buren, both of which places are supplied fortnightly by Mr. Paradis, on alternate Sabbaths. At the former there are about fifty families, of whom ten are French Catholics. Six of these ten are well disposed to Mr. Paradis. In the house of one of them he recently spent a whole week, being most warmly received and kindly treated. The attendance at the Sabbath service at Limestone is about fifty, including a number of Catholics, to whom the missionary gives a short address in French at the close of the English service. Thus frequently Mr. Paradis preaches four times, twice in English and twice in French, on the same Sabbath, besides driving the long distance between the stations. Though the people in Mr. Paradis' field generally are poor, they have contributed \$106.24 towards his salary during the past year.

III.—VIOLET BROOK, NEW BRUNSWICK.

This field, twelve miles distant from Grand Falls, is under the supervision of Rev. M. R. Paradis, assisted in the summer half-year by a French Student from the Presbyterian College of Montreal. The parish is thickly settled by Roman Catholics, a few of whom are Irish, but the vast majority French. In the village there are eight Protestant families, the average attendance at the Sabbath service being only fifteen. The work of the Missionary is chiefly that of Colportage. Mr. I. P. Bruneau, who labored in this field the last two summers, reports a favorable change in the disposition of the people to receive the Missionary's visits. An idea of his work may be had from the following extract from his report for September last: *Families visited*, one hundred and forty, of whom seventy-five were Roman Catholics; *Books, etc., distributed*, two Bibles, one New Testament, six portions of the Gospel, and about two hundred Tracts.

Mr. Joseph Allard is the Missionary there this summer. His last report is most hopeful, for while he speaks of great difficulties and discouragements, he expresses himself as strengthened and cheered by the favorable reception he meets from many. He writes: "Out of the last eight families visited, only two insulted me; the others seemed delighted to hear the Gospel read and explained, and one man named —, who had never seen a Protestant Missionary before, urged me to return soon and bring him some good books and tracts. I left him a New Testament. He thanked me for it and promised to read it." Referring to Madame Paradis, Mr. Allard says: "She is worth two