

GRATEFUL FRENCH CANADIANS.

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French Canadian converts from Romanism will never forget the men who conceived the blessed thought of giving the Gospel to their fellow countrymen, that they too might enjoy the happiness which the Word of God always brings to those who receive it.

Much is said of Anglo-Saxon union and that feeling is summed up in the phrase "Blood is thicker than water." There is something thicker than either, or both, viz., the religious sentiment. It is right that it should be so for it will survive all others. Therefore, the men who endeavor to permeate humanity with that divine leaven, are the true philanthropists. Seeing a brother in every human being they close their eyes to distinction of blood or race.

It was that broad Christian spirit that inspired the men who over sixty years ago, undertook the work of evangelizing my fellow countrymen. It was not with a view of Anglicizing the French element in Canada, nor to strengthen any political party, their only aim was the salvation of souls, and their successors have continued and are continuing the work on the same line.

Men are perishing for lack of knowledge and the work of the French Board is to give it. They are perishing for not knowing a personal Saviour, and the aim of the Mission and missionaries is to lead them to Jesus the Saviour of the world.

Like the men of Apostolic times the workers adapt themselves to circumstances, speaking to individuals in homes, addressing small and large gatherings, preaching the Word in season and out of season; and thus Christ is brought to souls and souls are brought to Christ and are being saved.

Last Sabbath one of my Sabbath school boys, whose father and mother have lately been converted, came to me with sparkling eyes: "See, Mr. Duclos," he said, "this basket was full of portions of Scripture," (the four first chapters of Matt. in tract form,) "I stood on St. Catherine Street and distributed them all. People called me all sorts of names, but were glad to have them."

A young man nineteen years of age, recently converted, came after service and introduced to me one of his chums, a fine fellow who acknowledged having been impressed by what he had heard. "It is not the first time," continued the young man, "that he has been here and he does not drink any more, he is quite a new man now."

Another came to me after meeting and asked for a Bible and a hymn-book. "I want," said

he, "to worship here with you all. I felt happy to-day."

A brick-layer who used to drink, now rejoicing in God's peace, sends to Sabbath School three fine-looking boys, and attends meetings with a bright and intelligent wife, and says God is blessing him in his work—he is now a contractor.

Another, again after much hesitancy and inward struggle, has finally taken a stand for truth and for Jesus as his Savior. He brought with him his wife and six children. All have been baptized and four are attending Sunday School. Thus the light spreads.

The work we, as a Church, are engaged in, had very humble beginnings—was rocked in a very small cradle, and may have to be nursed for a long time yet—but it is gaining health and strength, and is already following elder sisters in the field; taking some interest in what is being done: scattering seeds and gathering sheaves.

Oh, what a change in our country in the last sixty years! Outside of the very few families who claimed blood relations with the first Huguenot settlers, such as the late Hon. L. J. Papineau, the leader of the Revolution of 1837, who successfully refused at his death bed the intervention of the priests, resting in the peace of Jesus, Romanism was the supreme influence in Lower Canada and had borne its natural fruits, ignorance and poverty—still there was a yearning after liberty, civil and religious—the first manifested itself in the Revolution; the second in religious practices and performances, showing more zeal than knowledge.

I well remember when my father, wrapping me up in the ample folds of his cloak, was taking me to the foot of a cross erected by the wayside, and there kneeling was repeating long prayers. I do not know what they were, nor to whom they were addressed; but I can suppose they were not giving him much spiritual rest, for two years later, awakened to a sense of a more spiritual religion, he seized the first opportunity offered, and devoting many a night to the study of the Word of God, he soon found his religious and intellectual wants fully satisfied.

Another isolated light soon broke out in another range—others had appeared in neighboring parishes. A feeling of brotherhood was soon felt between them. Those first Christian converts could travel long distances to meet brethren and enjoy refreshing religious intercourse.

Ever since the work has been going on, as the current of a river, sometimes quietly, sometimes more swiftly; at all times with gratifying results. We would gladly invite friends to come and see