

THE POINTE-AUX-TREMBLES SCHOOLS.

BY REV. J. BOURGOIN, PRINCIPAL.

I AM glad to take this opportunity of expressing to the numerous friends and supporters of the Mission Schools at Pointe-aux-Trembles our sincere gratitude for the sacrifices they have made lately in order to render our schools more efficient and more attractive. But we feel that we could not thank you in a better way than by making the best possible use of the means you place in our hands for the progress of the truth, and it is what we shall always endeavour to do with the help of our Master.

Your increasing liberality in the direction of education is an evident proof that you realize more and more that the school is one of the first and most efficient instruments to be used in any mission work. If the rising generation is the hope of the country, it is also the hope of the Church, and the future of the nation is certainly, to a great extent, in the hands of the educators of the young.

The pupils gathered in our central mission schools come from every direction. During the four or five sessions they remain there they are under a Christian influence, and every day the Word of God is taught to them. Their errors, their superstitions and their prejudices, are gradually vanishing. The truth casts deep roots in their young hearts. The field of their intelligence is widening every day. They act under new principles. Higher aspirations prompt their activity, and when they go home with the Word of God in their hands and in their hearts, they become so many messengers of the good tidings of the Gospel.

In the country many people are very suspicious about colporteurs who visit them only from time to time, but they generally listen with pleasure to their children and they learn from them the way to a free salvation through faith in Jesus and gradually they are detached from the church which has deceived them.

Those young people, whether they become farmers, tradesmen, merchants, or men of profession, are a leaven in every village and in every town, and whenever you go if a former pupil of our mission schools has settled, there you will find the people around him more liberal, more accessible and perhaps a few reading the Bible.

The influence of our young people is plainly shown by the fact that half of our recruits of every year are brought to us through the efforts of our boys and girls. Within the past ten years the accommodation of the mission schools belonging to the various denominations has been nearly doubled, and the number of pupils has increased so rapidly that during the past winter they were about all full to their utmost capacity.

The young French Canadians are thirsting after education, and in spite of the innumerable difficulties they have to encounter in spite of a lack

of material means, we see a great many of them going bravely forward, working and toiling hard during summer in order to be able to reopen their books when the vacation is over.

There are at present no less than twelve of those who were with us lately who are studying medicine, three or four are students in law, twelve want to be teachers, over twenty are studying for the ministry and some others are in various business colleges. And all of them pursue their studies at their own expense, and without any help from anybody.

More than ever before it has been our privilege to see during the past few years the blessed results of a sound education under the precious influence of the gospel, and I know I could encourage and gladden your hearts by many an interesting fact, but time will no more than permit to relate briefly a single one.

A young girl who, after having left the Church of Rome, had become a sincere Christian, went home to her parents full of hope that she would easily bring them to a knowledge of the truth she had found herself. To her great surprise, she had hardly said a few words, when the anger of her parents were aroused, and though she was over 21 years of age, she was locked up in their house, kept a prisoner and brutally struck because she refused to give up her Bible.

To this cruel treatment she opposed only her kindness and her usual devotion for those who had become her persecutors.

Delivered from their hands by a Protestant friend, she came again to us and continued to write home from time to time.

Two months ago her father came to Pointe-aux-Trembles on foot and from a long distance. He said to me:—"You must be surprised to see me here, Sir, after what has taken place a year ago, but I hope you will not refuse me the privilege of seeing my daughter.

She has changed her faith and has become a Protestant, but after all she is the best of our children." And tears were flowing from his eyes. His heart was broken and the light of the truth was beginning to penetrate in his soul.

So the conversion of one pupil is generally followed by the conversion of a whole family.

In the pursuit of this grand work of educating the young people of this province we meet frequently with this objection:—"Are there not schools all over the country?" Yes, there are many indeed, but we must not forget that they are almost entirely under the control of the clergy of the Church of Rome. And as you know, the Church of Rome has never favored education amongst the masses of the people.

Has she not through all ages and in every land kept faithful to her proverb? "Ignorance is the mother of devotion!"

If you see Roman Catholic school houses everywhere, you must remember that many of them are there simply to occupy the place of Protes-