

would be true had the Church retained all her children, but she had lost half of them. So no authorities place the loss even higher than this. The editor of the *Celt* in 1855 declared that it amounted to sixty per cent of the children of Roman Catholic parents; and J. O'Kane Murray, as late as 1876, expresses a similar opinion in his "History of the Catholic Church in the United States." He says: "It may be safely said that more Catholics have fallen away from the faith in this country during the last two centuries and a half than are to-day living in it" (p. 583). This is the testimony of their own authors, and shows what happens when Papists are brought within reach of efficient free schools and an open Bible. The exodus from this country, which the priests are so anxious and so powerless to prevent, is palpably reacting, and will continue to do so in an increased degree, on nearly every parish in Canada. Nor do we feel uneasy about the influence of government and priestly schemes for repatriation, because every French Canadian who returns helps to hasten the liberalizing process preparatory to the disestablishment of the Church. Such tell their compatriots that it is high time for them to begin to think for themselves, and that they do possess God-given rights which are not to be tamely sacrificed on the altars of the Pope. They support and extend the influence of the liberal French press, which refuses to be gagged by bishops and archbishops; and the disreputable little game of securing French votes, which some falsely call statesmanship, must come to an end. When our population has increased fivefold these votes will have lost their present significance, and God will raise up men of courage, patriotism, and fidelity to contend for truth and freedom. Above all, the great quickening power which is touching the minds and hearts of the people, and kindling thought and aspiration in them, is the Word of God. The priests can do nothing effectually against the truth. The more they denounce and curse and burn it, the more it is sought after and read. Thousands of homes are regularly visited by colporteurs, who bring them the simple message of eternal life through Jesus Christ, and tens of thousands of Bibles and portions of the Word have been distributed and are being devoutly studied in these homes. The Bible Society and all the evangelical denominations have engaged in this work,

and Romanism is honeycombed by their united efforts. The Presbyterian Church alone has sixty-two missionaries in the field, besides twenty, who were trained by her in whole or in part, who are laboring in the United States. She has numerous schools and preaching stations in different parts of the provinces, and Roman Catholics are attracted to the principal missionary institutes at Pointe-aux-Trembles in larger numbers than can be received; and the pupils, after being instructed in the principles of the gospel, are scattered over the country as so many living epistles known and read of all men. For a considerable time missionaries were brought from Switzerland and France, but for the last fourteen years they have been successfully trained in the Presbyterian College, Montreal. This is found to be an immense advantage in many ways. Natives of the country understand the people and have ready access to them, and it is a most encouraging fact that a large number of them feel called to be teachers, colporteurs, and evangelists. The proportion of young persons among French converts giving themselves to such work is far greater than with English-speaking people, which shows the strength of their missionary spirit and promises well for the future. The initial work in a Romish as in a heathen country is, of course, necessarily difficult and slow, and specially is this case in the Province of Quebec, where Romanism has everything on its side; but still the progress of late years has been manifest and cheering. In Montreal, for example, ten or twelve years ago, there were only two small French Protestant churches, and now, reckoning all denominations, there are eight churches with about four hundred families connected with them, most of whom have been gathered from the Romish communion, and similarly satisfactory results have been reached at other points. So that, while fifty years ago there was not a single French Protestant Church in the whole country, there are now nearly one hundred, and probably between twenty and thirty thousand French Protestants in Canada and the United States. The outlook, therefore, is far from discouraging. In spite of the enormous disabilities under which a portion of our citizens labor, we have faith in the future of our country and in the power of the gospel to emancipate them. The truth and the Spirit of God are strong