

Service every Sunday, the Rev. Mr. Elligood officiating as our chaplain, and being occasionally relieved by the Bishop of Montreal himself, while at Point Chair the Rev. Mr. Flanigan officiated as chaplain. On the week days, the building was used as a school-room for the children, and as a library for the workmen. There were sometimes as many as eighty children at the school, and we provided the library with as many as 1000 volumes of books.

Before the completion of the Victoria Bridge, the crossing of the St. Lawrence, during the time the ice bridge was forming and breaking up, was a most perilous proceeding, and one which few would attempt except from absolute necessity. The passengers were compelled to seat themselves or to lay down in the very bottom of the canoe. The canoe was manned by some ten or twelve Canadians, who, after watching for a favourable opportunity, when there appeared to be a larger space of open water than usual between the fields of ice, launched the frail boat into the troubled sea of ice and water, and paddled it through the circuitous and intricate channel, amidst thousands of floating islands. Thus they continued their journey towards the opposite shore until their progress was entirely prevented by the icy barrier, or probably by the meeting of two of the floating ice islands, between which they had been threading their course. Then the canoe was obliged to be lifted altogether out of the water, and every man jumped upon the ice, and helped to carry the boat over its uneven surface. Guided by one of their number, who having attained some temporary eminence upon the blocks of ice, directed them to the nearest open water, they again launched their canoe and paddled onwards. Sometimes a great portion of the distance had to be passed through small detached pieces of ice, not sufficiently large to carry them upon its surface, in which case the passengers had to keep rocking the canoe to prevent it from becoming frozen amidst these masses, while the boatmen, poised upon the gunwale of the boat, with their feet outwards, took advantage of any piece of ice sufficiently large to carry them. A crossing of this sort, when attempted under unfavourable circumstances (as was frequently the case, for the purpose of carrying over the mail bags, &c.), occupied several hours, and was fraught with such danger that instances have been known where death has ensued simply from fright. Of course the landing was made at any point where the shore could be reached; and sometimes it was miles beyond the point from which they started. The canoes used were those made from the solid tree called Dug-outs.

It only remains for the writer to give some few details respecting the form and dimensions of the tubes, &c., which may assist in explaining the Tables which will be found in the Appendix. He will first mention that the beams of the Victoria Bridge are 16 feet wide; they are 18 ft. 6 in. high at the abutments, increased to 22 feet in the