SIXTEENTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MONTREAL

Religious Tract Society,

AUXILIARY TO THE

LONDON TRACT SOCIETY,

Presented at the Annual Meeting, January, 1852.

"Who hath despised the day of small things?"

Montreal:

PRINTED BY J. C. BECKET, 22, GREAT SAINT JAMES' STREET.

To be had Gratis at the Depository.

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MONTREAL AUXILIARY

RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

THE Sixteenth Annual Meeting of the "Montreal Auxiliary Tract Society," was held in the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Great St. James Street, on Monday Evening, January 26, 1852. David Davidson, Esq., in the Chair. The Rev. Wm. Reid engaged in prayer; and the Rev. B. Davies, Ph. D., read the Report.

Moved by Rev. John McLoud, seconded by Dr. Maclagan:—

Resolved,—That the Report now read be adopted and printed, and that the following gentlemen be the Officers and Committee for the ensuing year, with power to add to their number, viz.:—

Treasurer:—HENRY VENNOR, Esq.
Cor. Secretary:—REV. BENJ. DAVIES, PH.D.
Rec. Sec. and Depositary:—MR. JAMES MILNE.

Committee:—

Ministers of the Gospel, resident in the City.

Hon. James Ferrier,	Edward T. Taylor,	William Ross,
Dr. A. F. Holmes,	George Hagar,	Joseph Wenham,
D. Davidson,	Benjamin Lyman,	N. S. Whitney,
Peter Redpath,	Thomas M. Taylor,	F. W. Torrance,
W. C. Evans,	John Smith,	James Roy.
F. F. Blackader,	T. M. Thomson,	

Moved by Rev. Wm. Taylor, D. D., seconded by Rev. Wm. Squire:—

Resolved,—That in view of the great spiritual wants of the country, on every side, this meeting hails with lively satisfaction the Society's efforts in the work of Colportage, and recognizes the strong and increased claims which those efforts present for enlarged contributions and more fervent prayers.

Moved by Rev. Henry Wilkes, D. D., seconded by Henry Vennor, Esq.:—

Resolved,—That the extensive circulation obtained for exceptionable publications, and the evil influence they must exercise, call for increased activity on the part of the Religious Press, and of Societies such as this, whose business it is to diffuse abroad a healthful literature.

Moved by Rev. A. F. Spalding, A.M., seconded by Rev. Mr. Dickson:—

Resolved,—That this meeting gratefully records renewed obligations to the Parent Society for bountiful help, and also to the American Tract Society for generous encouragement in the work of Colportage; and cordially desires the prosperity of those most catholic and beneficent Institutions, in their vast operations both at home and abroad.

The Meeting, after singing the Doxology, was closed with the benediction. The collection amounted to £13, 3s.

LAWS AND REGULATIONS

OF THE

MONTREAL RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

1. That this Society be denominated *The Montreal Religious Tract Society, Auxiliary to the Religious Tract Society* in London, and that the Tracts circulated by this Society be chiefly those published by the Parent Institution.

2. That a Subscriber of Two Dollars per annum, or upwards, be a Member of this Society, and be entitled to receive Tracts, upon application for them *within the year*, to the amount of one-half his annual subscription; and that a Subscriber of Twenty Dollars at one time be a LIFE MEMBER; and that a Subscriber of Fifty Dollars at one time, or a life member who, by an additional payment, increases his original contribution to Fifty Dollars, shall be a Director for life, and, as such, have a Seat in the Committee of Management.

3. That one fourth of the funds of this Society, if practicable, be annually transmitted to the Parent Institution, in aid of its funds for circulating Religious Tracts throughout the world.

4. That the Tracts purchased by subscribers or others of the Society, *be paid for on delivery*.

5. That the business of this Society shall be conducted by a Committee, consisting, in addition to Life Directors, of fifteen members, together with a Treasurer and Secretaries, who shall be chosen at an Annual General Meeting of this Society; and that three Members constitute a quorum.

6. That all resident Clergymen be Members of the Committee, *ex-officio*.

7. That the Committee shall have power to add to their number; and shall appoint a Depositary, and a Collector or Collectors; and shall hold their meetings monthly, or oftener, as may be required.

8. That an Annual Public Meeting of this Society shall be held, when a Report of its proceedings and the general state of its affairs, shall be presented to the Subscribers; and Officers and Committee chosen for the ensuing year.

SIXTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT.

A Tract, what is it? Some would answer, "only the dwarfish semblance of a book!" Then what is a Religious Tract Society? The answer of many would be, "It is a petty and contemptible institution, fit only to interest very small minds." Were these things truly so, it might be our first duty at this time to apologize to the intelligent public for holding this Anniversary, and especially for giving it the first place among the gatherings of this festive week; but we feel that no such apology is requisite. Who, let us ask, are the objectors and despisers? Chiefly the ungodly and profane, but some also among the professors of piety; for there are professing Christians who grudge even a pittance in aid of this enterprise, while they give freely in aid of others. Yet "little among the thousands of Judah," as a Religious Tract Society may seem, both in the eyes of the world, and in the estimation of some in the church, we claim for it a most distinguished rank in the order of means and appliances for bringing glory to God in the salvation of men.

The despised Tract—is it after all so despicable a means of spreading the great truths of the common salvation? Should the church disdain

to use it, would her enemies feel the same lofty contempt for such an instrumentality? Oh, no! Paganism in China employs the tract, and adorns it too, to make it a more welcome messenger of heathenish lore. Vice and infidelity in the midst of Christian communities ply the same agency with fearful success, scattering pestilential pages in the path of the unwary and the reckless. And Popery—does it not press the tract into its service? Yes, the Jesuits have their series of cunningly devised tractates, in many languages, to "blind the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Verily, "the children of this world would," in this respect, "be wiser in their generation than the children of light," if the church had not its Tract Societies.

In presenting this Sixteenth Report, your Committee are thankful that they have good reason to believe that the Society is gaining both in usefulness and in public support—that its cords are lengthened and its stakes are strengthened. Wherefore let its friends thank God and take courage.

COLPORTAGE.

In last year's Report it was noticed that a commencement had been made by this Society in this important and now indispensable department in the labors of a Tract Society. The success attending our first attempt was such as to encourage us to enter more largely in the work in the year 1851. At the first Committee meeting after

last Anniversary, the subject was brought up, when the following resolution was passed :—

Resolved,—That by the help of God this Society will engage at least three Colporteurs for a part of the current year—say four months each—one French and one English.

In prosecution of this object, a Sub-Committee was nominated to direct the effort, and to report monthly to the Committee.

Correspondence was entered into with the American Tract Society, Boston, on the subject of engaging Colporteurs to labor under the auspices of this Society in Canada.

At the time your Committee were preparing for this work, the Committee of the Society in Boston were devising liberal things for Canada in the same way : they had engaged 13 Theological Students of Andover Seminary, to labor in the Eastern Townships; which plan was accomplished, and proved eminently successful. On the 22d April, a Special Meeting of the Committee was held to meet the Rev. H. B. Holmes, one of the Agents of the Society in Boston, by whose statements your Committee were refreshed and encouraged to proceed. Through the medium of the friends in Boston, four Students were secured to labor in the Eastern Townships for six weeks each. On the 1st of September, Messrs. Edson, Dickinson, Humphry, and Poland, entered upon their labors. They visited the Townships of Shefford, Brome, Stukely, Roxton, Ely, Bolton and Sutton. Your Committee have great pleasure in testifying to the zeal and dili-

gence with which the duties of these brethren were discharged, and the excellent spirit which marked their conduct and correspondence.

At the close of their labors, an interesting Public Social Meeting was held in Montreal to receive the reports of the Colporteurs; and the statements made by them were most satisfactory. The principal results will be here presented, and the details will be found in the Appendix:—

1345 Volumes were sold for cash, £81 17s 8d: 412 volumes were granted to destitute families, £17 10s 10d. Number of families visited, 954; of which 24 were Roman Catholic; 123 were habitually neglecting Evangelical preaching; 41 were destitute of the Bible, and 210 had no religious books except the Bible.

As already stated, it was the purpose of your Committee to prosecute the work among the French population. In the month of May we obtained the services of one of the Colporteurs of the French Canadian Missionary Society, Edward Jamieson, who has labored until the present time with laudable zeal and industry amid many discouragements, and we trust good will result. He was accompanied for one month by Israel Mathieu, a French Canadian. Mr. N. Le Marchand also labored for three months with success. The whole amount of Colportage labor is equal to 18 months of service by one man.

VISIT OF THE REV. DR. DOWLING.

The Committee, feeling the pressure of the still existing debt on the energies of the Society, resolved to invite the Rev. John Dowling, D.D., of New York, to visit Montreal, and to preach on behalf of the Society. With this invitation he

kindly complied, and the remembrance of his services on that occasion is still grateful to the minds of your Committee, and to many in this community.

Not only were the funds aided by the collections made after the sermons by Dr. D., but an increased interest was communicated to the public mind on the behalf of the Society.

RECEIPTS AND ISSUES OF PUBLICATION.

The number of Publications received into the Depository in 1851 is	149,659
The number on hand at the beginning of the year	113,585
Making a total of	263,244
The number issued during the year	85,577
Remaining in the Depository, Dec. 31,	177,667

GRANTS BY THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, LONDON, AND AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETIES OF BOSTON AND NEW YORK.

Our endeavors to spread Divine Truth in this land have been greatly encouraged by the liberal aid received from the above named institutions. From our munificent Parent Society we have had grants in Tracts to the value of £50 stg. and of £17 stg., in Books by selling to us at half price: making a total sum of £80 16s currency.

From the American Tract Society, Boston, Books for the Colporteurs, £12 10s currency, and from the American Tract Society, New York, Books, £17, 10s 10d currency.

By these munificent gifts we have been able to sustain the drafts of the Tract Distributing

Association for this city, and to carry through our Colportage operations for the year.

In addition to the above-mentioned liberal grants by the Tract Society, London, we have just received, *via* New York, a further grant of 125 Books in English, French and German on the Great Exhibition in London, also 600 Tracts on the same subject.

We cannot look back on the great amount of precious truth thus put into circulation—much of it into places where the publications of the Religious Tract Society were, up to that time, almost unknown—without cherishing a hope that many souls may be eternally blessed by being led to the "Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world."

DECEASE OF THE CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

While we were earnestly engaged in prosecuting the various schemes of the Society, and extending our sphere of operations, it pleased a mysterious but wise Providence to lay the hand of death upon our much beloved and highly respected Corresponding Secretary, the Rev. Wm. Rintoul, A.M. This event was deeply felt by your Committee, who at its first meeting thereafter passed the following resolution :—

The Committee having been made acquainted with the sad intelligence that the Rev. William Rintoul, the Corresponding Secretary, had been unexpectedly cut off by a fatal disease, while on his way to Metis, Resolved, That such a mournful event should not be permitted to occur without a warm expression of regret for the death of one of its members so truly eminent for all those virtues which adorn the Christian character—a remarkable instance of activity, talent, self devotion and piety most happily combined; and of the

most emphatic sympathy for his honored widow, thus suddenly called to sustain such an irreparable loss; while they hope, that in this trying event she may fully know that consolation which God alone can impart.

Our deceased brother had been but a short time amongst us, but had greatly endeared himself to the friends of the Redeemer, by the active part he took in the various Benevolent and Religious Societies, and by the sweet Christian spirit which pervaded his whole conduct.

At the meeting of the Committee in November, Dr. Benjamin Davies was unanimously elected to fill the office of Corresponding Secretary, which he accepted.

BIBLES AND TESTAMENTS, WITH THE SCOTTISH VERSION OF THE PSALMS AND PARAPHRASES.

The usual Supply of these Books has been imported, say to the value of £105 2s sterling, and the demand for them is steady.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

The total income of the Society from all sources is £583 4s 7d; of which £132 10s 9d has been in Free Contributions. The payments have been £581 5s 9d.

THE MONTREAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS TRACTS.

The members of this Association have steadily prosecuted their work of faith and labor of love in the streets and by-ways of our city. They have been supplied, as formerly, with Tracts from your Depository. Their Report is, this year, printed separately.

RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, LONDON.

This mighty Parent Institution still "rejoices as a strong man to run a race," and renews and increases its strength with each annual period. With growing experience and resources, it goes on still devising more liberal things in blessing the world with the literature of the Cross. In its yearly career of beneficence, "its going forth is from the end of the heaven, and its circuit is unto the ends of it," dispensing blessings on every shore to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

The issues of the Society's publications during the year ending in May last, were 20,887,064, being an increase of 1,641,623 on the previous year. The total circulation of Tracts and Books, in 110 languages, including the issues of affiliated societies in foreign lands, has been from the beginning about 549,000,000. The total receipts for the year were larger than ever, and amounted to £62,169 9s 11d, including £7,002 7s 8d of benevolent contributions to aid its gratuitous issues, which issues amounted to no less than £8,563, 9s, being £1,983 6s 8d more than the free-will offerings cast into the treasury.

The Report is full, as usual, of facts and narratives demonstrating the wonderful success, under God, of the tract enterprise in advancing true religion. A few instances are here subjoined:

A TRACT ON THE SHORE.

A gentleman from Ireland had gone to Torquay in attendance on a younger brother, an officer in the army, in a declining state of health. Neither of them knew the other's mind upon religious subjects; but the elder had been for some years anxiously inquiring about them, and was greatly harassed with doubts.

The officer's increasing illness admonished them that it was urgently necessary his attention should be directed to what concerned his condition hereafter. It was proposed that a minister should be called in. He readily assented on one condition, namely, that the party introduced to him should be "a man who really believed his religion himself, and was in earnest about it;" the invalid giving, as a reason, "You know, J—, there are many of these men whose hearts are not in the matter, and I would rather not have any of that sort coming to me,—they could do me no good."

An honest man of God came, upon request. The elder brother, during the interview, proposed some questions, such as would be suggested by a mind verging towards scepticism. When the minister retired, the officer expressed regret that those topics had been mentioned, as they were likely to disturb his mind, which, he said, had been for some time made up on the truths of Christianity. His observations showed an advance in knowledge and faith much beyond what the elder brother had been aware of.

Some weeks after, the elder brother, not apprehending any immediate change in the patient, walked down to the shore for the purpose of bathing. Before leaving the house, when passing the invalid's room door, he had looked in, and thought he was going to sleep. Descending among the rocks at the beach, he observed a piece of paper lying, as if dropped there by some stroller like himself. He picked it up and found it to be the religious tract, No. 129, *The Sinner directed to the Saviour;* extracted from the writings of the Rev. John Flavel. He did not stay to read it then, but put it into his pocket with the intention of looking at it afterwards.

As he was returning to his lodgings he was met by the physician, hastening to convey the melancholy tidings that his brother had suddenly expired. The glance he took at the bed before coming out had told him truly, that his brother was going to sleep; but it was a sleep from which there will be no awaking upon earth till the resurrection at the last day. Happily it was with him going to "sleep in Jesus." On again reaching the house, the gentleman found only his brother's remains, waiting to be laid in their final resting-place; the spirit, there was good reason to hope, was "absent from the body," and "present with the Lord."

Necessary arrangements now occupied him, yet not so completely as to exclude reflection upon what had occurred in its bearing on his own soul's salvation. The tract he had picked up among the rocks at the very hour in which his brother was departing, was now read. It supplied to him the instruction that met his case. "The excellency of the knowledge of Christ," was one thing he needed to inspire him with hope and peace. He read; he understood; he believed. The truth contained in the tract, by God's grace, became in his heart life from the dead.

He returned to Ireland, leaving behind him the remains of his beloved brother, yet comforted in the assurance that he had laid aside the earthly house of this tabernacle, that he might be

clothed upon with a house which is from heaven. And what a blessed change was he conscious of in himself! He had gone to Torquay on his brother's account. While there he found the Pearl of great price. He came back to his native land a new creature, rejoicing in the grace of Christ Jesus. From that time he continued in the ways of God, and much engaged with various works of faith and labors of love for the good of those about him.

The identical "piece of paper" he picked up on the shore always lay upon his table. It was considerably worn by having been much used, but a cover was put on it, and it was carefully preserved. Just above the title the gentleman inscribed his name and the date when it was found. Can we wonder that he should mark and keep the tract?

Whether the tract was intentionally left among the rocks by some one accustomed to "sow beside all waters," or was accidentally dropped there, is unknown. But its being there was God's doing, for the purpose of saving a soul from death, and of providing the means of good to many for both worlds.

SIAM.

From the Rev. Mr. Smith of Bangkok.

The following encouraging fact furnishes clear evidence of the value of Christian books, in connexion with the missionary cause. The Siamese convert, whose case it describes, had never seen a Christian missionary, but had read "the foreigner's books," and "for years had worshipped no God but the one living and true God." He came a journey of five days to seek the foreign teacher.

"An elderly Siamese man called on Mr. Jones, to solicit Christian books. It seems that some tracts and portions of God's word had found access to his town, and he had accumulated some of the books that his neigbours had laid aside. He had evidently studied them with much care, for he displayed more knowledge of Christianity and its doctrines than the Siamese servants and workmen, who have been in the employ of the mission for six and eight years. He said that he was satisfied that it was the best religion of which he had any knowledge. He believed in it; thought he loved Jesus. He wished to be baptized, and to make a public profession of his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This fact, together with the desire to receive further instruction, had brought him to this city.

"Mr. Jones, who is too judicious to administer the holy rite of baptism to any applicant hastily, advised him to tarry here a while. Meanwhile, a lodging-place was provided for him in my house, and a boarding-place with one of the Chinese converts. Soon after his arrival, the cholera began to rage in this city very violently; and on the Thursday following the first Sabbath that our hopeful friend came here, he was suddenly and violently attacked with the disease. In less than twelve hours from the time of the attack, our friend was a lifeless corpse. Till the last, he declared his faith and trust in Christ. We trust he sleeps in Jesus.

CHINA.

From the Rev. Wm. Farebrother, Missionary from China.

"I will give you one or two scenes which occurred during my residence in China. I heard of a city thirty miles from Shanghae, and in company with Dr. Medhurst and Mr. Lockwood we studied some topographical books, and were anxious to reach it. We procured a boat, with provisions for the following day. When midnight came, we left our dwelling, and passed through the silent streets, till we came to the place where we knew it would be anchored. We laid ourselves down on the deck, rolled up in our blankets, till daybreak. We then found that we were passing through a village. We landed, and distributed some of your books, and towards noon we reached the great city. We stepped on shore at a small landing place, and passed through one of their narrow streets—for many of them are not more than four or five feet wide—till we came to a principal thoroughfare. On each side there were splendid shops. As we passed along, the streets poured forth their artisans, and at length we found ourselves wedged in. The streets were so filled that Dr. Medhurst looked and said, 'What shall we do? we shall have a disturbance.' I replied, 'Appeal to their politeness; that is generally successful.' The crowd tried to make a way, Dr. Medhurst going first, Mr. Lockwood and I followed, and Mr. M'Clatchie, of the Church Missionary Society, brought up the rear. We stood in an elevated position, and near the end we saw the three golden images—the three precious Buddhas. Standing in the presence of their gods, an elderly gentleman, in a satin dress rose and said, 'Give an account of yourselves. Where do you come from? where are you going? what is your business? and what are your ancient family names?' These questions were answered, and the people expressed themselves satisfied. I suppose they never saw a European before. The doctor said, 'We bring with us a book which the great God, of whom you have some knowledge in your ancient writings, has given to us; and we are commanded as his servants, to go into all the world, to carry the book, and make it known to every creature.' The astonishment of the crowd I cannot describe. They all came closer to the place where we stood, to hear something more about this wonderful book. The book was opened. The doctor said, 'If you will give attention to its contents, I will state them.' In a quarter of an hour he gave a simple outline of the truths of Christianity. They listened with profound attention; and, though I have passed through many troubles and dangers, as I stood gazing on that vast crowd—many of them educated young men—and saw them listening to the great truths of the gospel, I felt that it was a moment worth living for; it repaid me for all I had experienced. As soon as we had done, a shout arose from the crowd, 'When will you come again, and tell us more?' We said, 'We will wait on you in a month, but in the mean time, we have got books to give away.' We had got a sack of tracts; we placed them near a wall, where we knew we could defend them if any attempt were made to steal them. Standing there, we distributed the tracts, allowing each one to come, and when he had received a tract, to pass away. I believe all had one or more; but as we were passing to the boat, we saw

an elderly, well-dressed man come and bow down, and he begged us to receive a little book as a token of acknowledgment for giving him one. On opening it we read something to this effect: 'He that gives a good book is a good man; he that gives ten is a very good man; he that gives a hundred is a very, very good man, and will be happy for ages; but he that gives a large number of good books must be regarded as a benevolent individual, and as a benefactor to his species, and will be inconceivably happy for ever.' I mention this, to show the light in which the Chinese regard the distribution of tracts. Indeed they have something like religious tracts of their own. It is not an uncommon thing, when a man has been successful in a commercial enterprise, for him to go to the priests of Confucius, and say, 'I have been blessed in my undertaking; I am wealthy; I wish you to select some portions of the writings of Confucius, and I will be at the expense of the blocks by which they shall be printed.' The selection is made, the terms proposed are published, saying, 'The very honorable gentleman, So-and-so, has been so benevolent as to have the blocks of Confucius cut, and he now calls on liberal gentlemen to aid him in the work.' A subscription list is opened; one promises to pay for printing fifty copies, another twenty, and when the subscription list is closed they employ a printer; a number of copies are struck off, and given to each subscriber in proportion to his subscription, and these are distributed to the poor, in the dwellings in which they live.

"May I give you some idea with respect to the manner in which we carry on our work in Shanghae? This spot is one of the five ports open to commercial intercourse. The resident population is not more than 200,000, but we have sometimes an influx of strangers from all parts of the empire, making a population of 600,000. I have never seen so truly a mercantile city as Shanghae. In this populous place we have thirty district congregations in each week, and after the service is over we distribute tracts. Those who come from every part of the empire carry them to the interior, or to the Archipelago of the east. We were one day sitting in the house—we had been making it a matter of earnest prayer that God's blessing might rest on our labors—we saw a fine intelligent young man walking backwards and forwards in front of our dwelling. Supposing he might have listened to a sermon and wanted an explanation, we asked him to come in. We gave him tea, according to Chinese custom, and requested him to be seated. He told us that he came from a great city in the interior, and said, 'I have found a little book there which contains something more sublime than anything I have found elsewhere. I was told this was printed at Shanghae. I have travelled here, and after great difficulty I have discovered the house where you dwell. Did you print that tract?' We saw that it was one of our publications, and attempted to explain the truths it contained. Night after night, when the toils of the day were over, that young man came to listen to the exposition of Scripture. It was most delightful to see how his powerful and educated mind grasped one truth of religion after another; and at length he went back, carrying with him tracts and portions of the Scriptures. We do not doubt the piety of that young man.

"There is another fact I must state. These great cities are filled with readers. Passing through the streets at night, you see the male population spending their evenings in the tea-shops. We frequently find at the end of the room a man who, with a clear and distinct voice, reads some Chinese novel. When he comes to the plot of the story, he folds up his book, puts it under his arm, and says, 'If you do not pay me for my trouble, I shall go away.' They then make a collection instantly. He says, 'That does not pay me; you must make another collection;' and when he has got as much as he desires, he finishes his story. We were one night passing along Shanghae, and saw one of our native converts reading a book. We listened: we thought surely he is not reading a novel. What was it? It was our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, which he was explaining to the people. We caught the idea, and sent this man to the tea-shop with tracts; and there, night after night, you will find him reading one of your interesting tracts, and when it is finished, he distributes a few copies to the more respectable class around him."

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.

Conversion of a Roman Catholic.

The following account of the steps by which a young woman, a native of Ireland, has been led to renounce the errors of Popery, has been drawn up by a minister in Canada West:

"When she was about fourteen years of age she went to the priest and was confirmed, and was afterwards a partaker of the Lord's Supper, as dispensed in the Roman Catholic church. Having been taught to believe in the doctrine of transubstantiation, she was surprised to find that the wafer tasted like 'flour and water;' and she questioned whether it could be, as represented, the body and blood of Christ. On going home, she told her doubts to her mother, who at once accompanied her to the priest; and he, on hearing them, said that Satan was busy with her, and prevailed on her to believe, even against the evidence of her senses, in the *real presence*.

"In a short time after, she left her native land for America. She was taken sick, and sent to the hospital on Grosse Isle. In the orderings of a gracious Providence, there was in the berth next that in which she lay a Protestant girl, who was visited by a minister o her own denomination, while the subject of our narrative was visited by a priest; and she was forcibly struck with the difference in the conversation of these two spiritual advisers. The Protestant girl received a tract from her minister, entitled, *A Dying Thief and a Dying Saviour*, in which was that beautiful hymn of Cowper, commencing with—

'There is a fountain fill'd with blood,
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.'

"The priest was neither full nor free in his conversation, and the extent of his instructions to the sick girl was, that she should repeat the prayer, 'Hail, Mary!' and the Creed ten times in the morning, and ten times in the evening. He never alluded to the heart's sinfulness, nor the necessity of Christ's atonement, insisting upon making a full confession to the priest as of principal importance. But although she complied with his counsel, the fear of death was not allayed in her mind, nor the feeling removed, that she was unprepared for entering another world.

"She requested from her neighbor girl the tract which her minister had left. She perused it, and committed the hymn to memory. A strong impression was produced by its contents. After having been in the hospital for two weeks, she was dismissed; but the arrow of conviction had now lodged itself in her heart, and although she was a careful observer of the forms in which she had been instructed, she could obtain no relief from the pain it was causing. Questions also presented themselves in connection with some of the Romish doctrines, which she could not solve—purgatory she could not understand; and if, at times, she did succeed in smothering her doubts regarding it, some other point would arise that she could not comprehend; nor did she know where to find a satisfactory explanation.

"When she recovered from sickness, she found herself forsaken by relatives who had accompanied her from the old country, and also deprived of what little money and property she possessed. Providence led her to this neighborhood, and to a family in which she found a situation. Soon after her arrival, she went to the priest to confess, and travelled that morning several miles, fasting; yet he would not acknowledge her to be a member of the church, nor admit her to receive the wafer, because she did not believe that it was the real body and blood of Christ, and that the priest was able to forgive her sins. Among the questions he asked were the following: 'Do you pray to the Virgin Mary?' She answered, 'No.' 'Do you live in a Protestant's house?' She replied, 'Yes.' Then he wished her to leave it, and promised to find for her a situation in a Roman Catholic family; but to this she would not consent. He next asked if she listened to the Protestant's prayers, or kneeled with the family at the time of family worship? 'Yes,' she replied. He then told her to go out somewhere, and not listen to their prayers, for that they were good for nothing.

"While living in the family alluded to, several conversations were held with her on the errors of Romanism; but she concealed the struggle that was going on in her own mind, and endeavored to defend the doctrines impugned. She now began to read the Bible—a book that had been forbidden to her by the priest before she left Ireland—but she read it in secret. Frequently has she taken it by stealth out of the house, and concealed it in some spot till she had an opportunity of returning and perusing it, when there was no human eye to behold her. The account of our Saviour's crucifixion was the first passage by which her attention was forcibly arrested; and so great was her interest in it, that she could not refrain from reading it several times in succession. Although she knew previously the manner in which Christ

was put to death, yet this was the first time for her to peruse it in the word of God. Her eye now beheld a glory in the cross that she never saw before, early and carefully as she had been instructed to regard it with superstitious reverence. That love which prompted Him who was in the form of God, and who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, to assume our nature, and die as our Surety and Substitute, wrought with constraining influence upon the faculties of her mental and moral constitution. The bands of delusion and superstition were broken; the darkness that was on her mind was still further dissipated, and she was more fully prepared for being led into the light and liberty of a church in which the whole counsel of God is declared. Still she did not immediately come out and separate herself from those whom she fully believed to be in error.

"About this time she was prevailed on to go and hear a Protestant minister. It was the first time she had heard one preach. His text was, 'I am the door; by me, if any one enter in, he shall be saved;' and, as she listened to the discourse, or reflected on it afterwards, she was confirmed in the belief, that the way of salvation was not taught in the church whose doctrines she had early imbibed. It is now almost twelve months since she removed into this neighborhood: during that period she has been in regular attendance on my ministrations, and is now a member of the congregation. Altogether, there is good reason to hope, that not only has her mind be delivered from the darkness of Popery, but that her heart has been influenced by the truths of Christianity."

A NEW PERIODICAL —"THE LEISURE HOUR."

To meet the flood of pernicious and blasphemous publications which issue from the press of the United Kingdom in millions annually, the Religious Tract Society has begun to issue a periodical under the above title. It will consist of 16 large pages, printed with new and clear type, on good paper, and will be illustrated with engravings. To appear in weekly numbers at 1d. each, or monthly parts, in a neat wrapper, at 5d. sterling.

AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

This noble laborer in the cause of truth and

righteousness has published its 26th Annual Report, from which we learn that it has issued 78 new publications, which have been stereotyped in English, German, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Dutch, Danish and Welsh, 42 of which are volumes. The total issues for the year are 7,837,692 publications, 886,692 of which were volumes. Its income for the year, ending April 1st, amounted to $310,728.32, of which $109,897.76 were free contributions and legacies.

The machinery of the Society is most extensive, with a large staff of general Agents and an army of nearly 600 Colporteurs, so that the vast region over which the Society's labors extend is thoroughly worked; and it has been solemnly resolved to increase this army to the number of 1000!

The following statistics of Colportage are from the last Report.

STATISTICS OF THE YEAR 1850-51.—Including 135 students from 40 colleges or seminaries for their vacations, 569 Colporteurs have been employed for the whole or part of the year, as follows:—Vermont, 3; Rhode Island, 2; Connecticut, 7; New York, 81; New Jersey, 9; Pennsylvania, 64; Maryland, 19; Virginia, 57; North Carolina, 8; South Carolina, 12; Georgia, 23; Florida, 2; Alabama, 13; Louisiana, 12; Texas, 6; Arkansas, 4; Mississippi, 4; Tennessee, 20; Kentucky, 12; Ohio, 62; Indiana, 49; Illinois, 31; Missouri, 22; Wisconsin, 14; Iowa, 3; Michigan, 12; Minesota, 1; California, 1; Canada, 4; Mexico, 2. Sixty-seven Colporteurs not included above have been recently commissioned. Of the whole number 109 were for the German, French, Irish, Spanish, Welsh, and Norwegian population. The whole number in commission, April 1, was 354. The statistical tables show that the Colporteurs have visited 505,422 families, of whom 90,779 were destitute of preaching; 68,027 were without religious books; 34,684 without the Bible, and 54,321 families were Roman Catholics. They have conversed or prayed with 238,864 families; sold 451,951 volumes; granted to the destitute, 127,884 books;

held prayer meetings, or addressed public meetings, to the number of 13,306, and distributed 14,201 Bibles and Testaments.

TEN YEARS OF COLPORTAGE.—The Report contains a sketch of the rise and progress of this system for ten years. The statistical results are most cheering. No less than 1599 different persons in all have been in commission as Colporteurs, including 531 theological students: the number of families visited has been 2,168,793, equal to nearly one half of our entire population, of whom 374,320 were destitute of all religious books except the Bible; 137,711 were without the Scriptures, of whom 84,707 were supplied; and 224,913 families were Roman Catholics. Within the past three years, 233,-344 families have been visited who were habitual neglecters of the sanctuary. The Colporteurs conversed or prayed with 1,103,344 families; held prayer meetings or addressed public meetings to the number of 60,578; sold 2,424,630 books, and granted 652,668 volumes to poor and destitute families. The providence of God and the wants of the country demand a thousand Colporteurs.

AMERICAN MESSENGER.

This is a Monthly organ of the Society, published at a very low price, so as to be delivered here at 1s. 10½d. per copy for one year. It contains matter the most excellent and highly evangelical, with the accounts of the progress of the Society. A goodly number in this city have subscribed for it, but it ought to be in every family. It has a circulation of 200,000 for each monthly issue, which is the largest number ever reached in the history of periodical literature.

UPPER CANADA TRACT AND BOOK SOCIETY.

We are pleased to observe the onward progress of this efficient Society.

KINGSTON AUXILIARY TRACT SOCIETY.

The Anniversary of this Society was held 15th January last. From the Report we learn that there is activity amongst the friends in that place

in the good cause. Tracts are distributed by the City Missionary in the Hospital of the Prison, House of Industry, in the Markets, &c., &c. They had then the near prospect of employing a Colporteur conjointly with the Bible Society.

CONCLUSION.

Another word, in conclusion, to the professing Christian who thinks meanly of Religious Tract Societies. Can you peruse the annual reports of the great and beneficent Institutions in London and New York, and still look on the enterprise with contempt or indifference? Impossible. You lend support to the Bible cause, to Missions and to Sunday Schools, and you do well; but behold in the Tract Society an enterprise that in a great degree combines all these noble objects. Enter the Depository and you will see a most extensive and varied assortment of works in Christian literature, ranging from the Infant's Primer and Sunday School Libraries up to the Oracles of God. Yes, Bibles in various editions and well adapted for popular use, being furnished with such expository helps as are generally approved by evangelical men, are among the cheap publications of this Society. And if you ask the Missionaries in every land, they will testify with one voice to the high importance and moral dignity of the Tract cause; for it is the gospel tract that often proves the best missionary, penetrating into 'the regions beyond,' which the living herald of the Cross has never reached, and bringing the anxious, or already converted pagan from his far distant home

to sit at the feet of 'Jesus Christ's man.' If you, then, choose to despise this agency, be assured that God himself has set honor upon it, even as the great apostle of the Gentiles has declared, "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." And to His name be all the praise for evermore!

MONTREAL RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, *in Account with* HENRY VENNOR, *Treasurer.*

Dr.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To remitted Religious Society, London, £50 Stg., at 11¼ per cent, ...	61	13	4			
To remitted Do., £100 Stg., at 11 per cent, ..	123	6	8			
To remitted American Tract Society, ...	77	2	6			
To remitted Wm. Collins, Glasgow, £50 Stg.; ..	61	16	1			
To remitted Francis Orr & Sons, £50 Stg., ..	61	18	11			
To paid for publications in the Province, ...	6	15	11			
Total paid for Books and Tracts, ...				392	13	5
To paid wages of Colporteurs, ...	54	0	0			
To paid travelling expenses, and freight of Books,	36	19	8			
Total expense of Colportage, ...				90	19	8
To paid rent and management of Depository, ..	58	6	8			
To paid removing Stock and fitting up Depository,	9	6	11			
To paid Gas-fitting, Signs, and Painting ..	5	9	5			
				73	3	0
To paid printing Annual Report, Circulars, &c.,	13	2	6			
To paid expenses of Annual Meeting, ...	2	2	4			
To paid Advertising, Postages, Gas, Insurance, &c.,	9	4	10			
				24	9	8
To Balance in the hands of the Treasurer,				11	14	1
				£592	19	10

Cr.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By Cash Sales at the Depository, ...	203	16	1			
By Cash for Bibles with the Scotch Version of the Psalms, ...	71	4	6			
By Payments from Agents and others, ...	33	10	10			
By Payments by Colporteurs, ...	139	18	0			
By Subscriptions for American Messenger, ..	2	4	5			
Total received for Tracts and Books, ..				450	13	10
By Collection at Annual Meeting, ...	15	10	2			
By Free Contributions received at the Depository,	5	2	6			
By Collections after Sermons by Dr Dowling, £30 8s. 1d.—less, expense £7 10s., ...	22	18	1			
By proceeds of Soiree to meet the Colporteurs,	10	15	0			
By Collections in St Paul's Church, by Mr Ross,	5	12	6			
By Do. in Baptist Church, by Mr James Mills, sen.—not yet finished	4	7	6			
By Do. in Free Church, Coté-St., by Mr Torrance,	14	7	6			
By Do. in Zion Church, &c., per Mr Taylor, ..	21	5	0			
By Do. in St Andrew's Church, &c., by Messrs. Smith and Wenham, ...	25	15	0			
By Balance of Subscriptions of 1850		17	6			
By Legacy by the late Wm. Jago, jun., ...	6	0	0			
Total Benevolent Income, ...				132	10	9
By Balance from last account, ...				9	15	3
				£592	19	10
By Balance brought down, ...	£11	14	1			

Errors Excepted,

HENRY VENNOR, Treasurer.

STOCK ACCOUNT, MONTREAL RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

Cr.

£592 19 10	By Balance brought down, ...	£11 14 1	£592 19 10

Errors Excepted,

HENRY VENNOR, Treasurer.

STOCK ACCOUNT, MONTREAL RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

Dr. *Cr.*

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
To Amount due Religious Tract Society, London,	191	1	5	By Books and Tracts on hand, per Inventory,....	535	13	2
" American Tract Society,.....	27	19	9	By Debts due by Societies, Agents, &c.,.....	153	3	4
To Balance due Francis Orr & Sons, Glasgow,...	89	15	0	By Cash in the hands of the Treasurer,.....	11	14	1
" Wm. Collins, Glasgow,.....	53	7	7				
To Amount due Cowan & Co., Edinburgh,.....	57	3	0				
To Balance over paid Sundry Accounts,.....	3	15	10				
To Stock Account.....	227	8	0				
	£700	10	7		£700	10	7

Errors Excepted.

JAMES MILNE,
Depositary.

Statement of Publications received and issued by the Montreal Auxiliary Religious Tract Society, from 1st January to 31st December, 1851.

	ENGLISH.											FRENCH.								
	Tracts and Sermons.	Hand Bills.	Broad Sheets.	32mo. Gilt Edge.	Select Sermons.	32mo. Children's Books.	18mo Rewards.	Bound Books.	64mo. Series.	Children's Tracts.	Gælic Tracts.	Tracts.	Hand Bills.	32mo Rewards.	Books.	Edinburgh Bibles.	Edinburgh Testaments.	German Tracts.	Tracts for the Blind.	TOTAL.
On hand January 1st, 1849.....	63067	1500	630	306	441	8412	759	2460	304	..	10606	16298	100	3704	81	348	682	3868	19	113585
Received in 1851	130231	..	..	..	12	2278	926	3914	331	4300	..	3124	1200	200	1120	1238	685	100	..	149659
	193298	1500	630	306	453	10690	1685	6374	635	4300	10606	19422	1300	3904	1201	1586	1367	3968	19	263244
Issued in 1851..	57621	850		173	5	5039	1053	3919	337	3500	1339	7808	375	45	61	1437	1181	834	..	85577
On hand. 31st Dec. 1851....	135677	650	630	133	448	5651	632	2455	298	800	9267	11614	925	3859	1140	149	186	3134	19	177667

JAMES MILNE,
Depositary.

Payments

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Rev. J. F
Mrs Sma
Mrs Chri
Rev. A. W
Miss Wil
Henry L
R. Camp
Edward
St. Georg
Miss Lyt
St Andre
French C
R. & A.
Rev. Joh
George A
John Bru
Zion Chr
Dr. Ran
Campbel
William
Rev. Jam
James S
Miss Ha
Rev. R.
Rev. Th
Rev. Ch
Mrs My
N. Le M
Rev. S.
Messrs.
Po

Subscrip
Bible S
Mrs He
Rev. R

Payments to the Religious Tract Society of Montreal, including the Proceeds of Sales by Colporteurs.

Rev. J. Ellegood, ...	£0	1	2			
Mrs Small, ...	0	2	6			
Mrs Christie, ...	3	8	0			
Rev. A. Wallace, ...	0	4	3			
Miss Wilgress, ...	0	14	6			
Henry Lyman, ...	0	0	6			
R. Campbell, ...	1	5	9			
Edward Jamieson, Colporteur, ...				36	17	2
St. George's Church Sunday School,	0	1	11			
Miss Lyman, ...	0	1	3			
St Andrew's Church Sunday School,	0	18	3			
French Canadian Missionary Society,	0	2	0			
R. & A. Miller, ...	0	8	0			
Rev. John Irwin, ...	2	0	0			
George A Pyper, ...	3	10	0			
John Bruce, ...	0	6	5			
Zion Church Sunday School, ...	0	14	4			
Dr. Rankin, Melbourne, ...	0	8	4			
Campbell Bryson, ...	0	9	0			
William Marshall, Huntingdon, ...	1	11	6			
Rev. James Anderson, ...	2	11	0			
James Smillie, ...	5	9	2			
Miss Harvey, ...	1	5	11			
Rev. R. Swinton, ...	0	9	10			
Rev. Thomas Bayne, ...	0	12	6			
Rev. Charles Mackay, ...	1	16	0			
Mrs Myers, ...	0	3	1			
N. Le Marchand, Colporteur, ..				21	3	2
Rev. S. Kedey, ...	1	15	1			
Messrs. Edson, Dickinson, Humphry & Poland, (Colporteurs,) ...				81	17	8
				£139	18	0
Subscriptions to American Messenger,	2	4	5			
Bible Society, ...	71	4	6			
Mrs Henderson, ...	0	3	0			
Rev. Robert Lindsay, ...	0	13	6			
				104	15	4
				£244	13	4

Free Contributions to the Religious Tract Society, Montreal, 1851.

Rev. C. Bancroft, ...	0	10	0
Montreal Association for the Distribution of Religious Tracts, ...	3	0	0
R. Armour, Esq., ...	0	10	0
John Rose, ...	0	10	0
Mr. Marshall, St. Rose, ...	0	2	6
Mrs. Henderson, Quebec, ...	0	10	0

Collections in St. Paul's Church, by Wm. Ross, Esq.:—

James Johnston	£0	10	0	
A D Parker	0	10	0	
A Begg	0	5	0	
R Blackwood	0	5	0	
William Ross	0	5	0	
D Stewart	0	5	0	
William Hopkin	0	5	0	
Mr Macfarlane....	0	5	0	
George M'Donald	0	5	0	
A B Stewart	0	5	0	
William Muir	0	5	0	
J F Smith	0	5	0	
J Porteous....	0	5	0	
Jas Porteous	0	5	0	
John Rose....	0	5	0	
W Christie	0	5	0	
William Ross	0	5	0	
George Stephen	0	2	6	
Cash from 3 persons, 5s each....	0	15	0	
				£5 12 6

Collections in Zion Church, per Messrs. T. M. and E. T. Taylor:—

Thomas M Taylor	£1	0	0
Henry Vennor	1	0	0
James Baylis	1	0	0
James P Clark & Co	1	0	0
Edward T Taylor	1	0	0
I C Mayer	1	5	0
John Leeming	1	5	0
A K Lavicount....	1	5	0
H H Whitney	1	5	0
W S Childs	0	12	6
A F Sabine	0	12	6
A Cameron	0	10	0
Alfred Savage	0	10	0
Theodore Lyman	0	10	0
J & D Lewis	0	10	0

William Learmont	0	10	0	
Charles Alexander	0	10	0	
John Whyte	0	10	0	
George Bent	0	10	0	
William MacDougall	0	10	0	
Sibley Forster	0	10	0	
Henry Lyman	0	10	0	
William Rodden	0	10	0	
John M'Watters, junior	0	5	0	
F F B	0	5	0	
S Jones Lyman....	0	5	0	
William Brodie	0	5	0	
C B	0	5	0	
J F Smith....	0	5	0	
J F Arthur	0	5	0	
Several donations entered Cash	2	5	0	
				£21 5 0

Collections in Coté Street Church, by F. W. Torrance, Esq.:—

James R Orr	£2	0	0	
James Court	1	5	0	
Robert Anderson	1	0	0	
James B Greenshields	1	5	0	
Joseph Mackay	1	5	0	
Mrs Caldwell	0	15	0	
A & D Ferguson	0	10	0	
R Forrester	0	7	6	
James Morrison	0	7	6	
William Hutchison	0	7	6	
Edward Mackay	0	5	0	
James Davison....	0	5	0	
T D Heathfield	0	5	0	
A M'Goun	0	5	0	
J Sterling....	0	5	0	
Neil Macintosh	0	10	0	
F Torrance	0	5	0	
D A P	0	5	0	
A Stevenson	0	5	0	
James Scott	0	5	0	
John Campbell	0	5	0	
James Rough	0	5	0	
J Auld	0	5	0	
T Brown	0	5	0	
Archibald Swan	0	5	0	
E MacIver	0	5	0	
James Sculthorp	0	5	0	
X Y Z	0	5	0	
X Y Z	0	2	6	
Peter Dods	0	2	6	
William M'Master	0	2	6	
Robert Dalgleish	0	2	6	
				£14 7 6

Collected in the Baptist Church, by Mr. J. Mills, senior :—

William Muir	0	10	0	
Mrs Galt	0	10	0	
Charles G Hill	0	10	0	
James Claxton	0	10	0	
James Mills, senior	0	10	0	
James B Stevenson	0	5	0	
James Muir	0	5	0	
James Milne	0	5	0	
D W Hitchcock	0	5	0	
Rev A F Spalding	0	5	0	
W S Robertson	0	5	0	
Mrs Milne	0	2	6	
George Mochrie	0	2	6	
David MacGregor	0	2	6	
				£4 7 6

Collected by Messrs. J. Smith and J. Wenham :—

John Smith	£1	5	0	
Joseph Wenham	1	5	0	
D Davidson	1	5	0	
Robert Weir	1	5	0	
Hon Peter M'Gill	1	5	0	
J G Mackinzie	1	5	0	
Thomas Ure	1	5	0	
John Frothingham	1	5	0	
Hon James Ferrier	1	5	0	
G W Campbell, M D	1	5	0	
A H Campbell	1	5	0	
Thomas Paton	1	5	0	
C Dorwin	1	5	0	
H Mulholland	1	5	0	
H L Routh	1	5	0	
W H Robinson	1	0	0	
G Binmore	1	0	0	
John Brodie	1	0	0	
John Smith	1	5	0	
Charles A Low	1	5	0	
George D Ferrier	0	10	0	
G W Warner	0	10	0	
John Henderson	0	10	0	
				£25 15 0

By the same, received after the Accounts were made up :—

J Torrance	£1	5	0
William Dow	1	5	0
William Stephen	1	0	0
J H Evans	1	0	0
James Gilmour	1	5	0
Wm Murray	1	0	0

W Colquhoun	0 10 0	
T Mussen	0 10 0	
Mrs Rintoul	0 10 0	
J Thomson	0 10 0	
F M'Culloch	0 15 0	
		£9 10 0

The following contributions were received after the accounts for the year were made up:—

Collected by Messrs J. C. Becket and John Lewis:—

John C Becket	£0 15 0	
Jno Lewis	0 10 0	
J Morice	0 5 0	
James Cochrane	0 5 0	
Robert Watt	0 5 0	
James Poet	0 5 0	
J Williamson	0 5 0	
R S Oliver	0 2 6	
Cash, S E	0 2 6	
James Roy	0 5 0	
Thos Jackson	0 5 0	
Henry Morgan	0 5 0	
Jos McNeice	0 2 6	
Laird Paton	0 5 0	
C Fairbairn	0 2 6	
David Brown	0 10 0	
		£4 10 0

Collected in the American Presbyterian Church, by Messrs. Benjamin Lyman and N. S. Whitney:—

N S Frost	£2 0 0	
R Corse	1 5 0	
Mrs J E Mills	1 5 0	
J M'Loud	1 5 0	
N S Whitney	1 5 0	
B Lyman	1 5 0	
H Seymour	0 15 0	
Geo Hagar	0 10 0	
H Benson	0 10 0	
Geo Childs	0 10 0	
Mrs N S Whitney	0 10 0	
Miss Mills	0 10 0	
Cash, D P Janes	0 10 0	
		£12 0 0

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APPENDIX.

REPORTS OF COLPORTEURS.

JOSEPH DEXTER POLAND'S REPORT

TO THE MONTREAL RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

As there is unity in God, so in all Christian effort is there unity of purpose—the promotion of the kingdom of Christ on earth. But we are so constituted in life that this single end must be sought by various means. Streams of influence must flow through many channels. Christian activities are "distinct as the billows, yet one as the sea." In view of the different conditions of society, wise and pious men have devised the system of *Colportage* as best adapted to certain stages of social progress, and to meet wants which exist in every community, and which can be met in no other way so well. The peculiar advantages of Colportage, as suggested by a few weeks' experience in the work, it may not be inappropriate briefly to illustrate.

In the first place, *It reaches all classes in the community.*—The minister cannot preach in every house. The Sabbath School cannot gather the children of every family. But the Colporteur goes to all alike—the orthodox and the errorist, the Christian and the infidel, those who hear a single sermon once in two, three, or four weeks, as the case may be, and those who hear no sermon at all. In his package of religious books, and especially his pungent tracts, he has an armory of chosen weapons, from which, if he be skilful, he can draw, with almost sure effect upon every heart.

In the second place, Colportage being an *union effort*, and thus divested of sectarian influence, disarms prejudice. The practical value of this fact none can know so well as those who have been on the field, and seen all the chilling jealousy of sects, and moved harmless and welcome among them all, as *mere Christian Colporteurs.* Opposers too, dare not so much oppose religion as religious sects, and when you come to them knowing no sect, you

have got between them and their shield, and perhaps you may reach their hearts.

Again, it is a very *cheap* agency. No one engages in it for the pecuniary compensation. The wages of Colporteurs are the extreme minimum. This is as it should be, for none who are not willing to make a personal sacrifice in this particular should undertake a work which calls for sacrifice in so many others. Moreover, the enterprise partly sustains itself by the sale of religious books.

At the same time, Colportage is *rapid in its operation.* Not unfrequently twenty or more families would be visited by one man in a single day, though he would have to travel ten or twelve miles on foot to reach them. In 4½ weeks, two of your Colporteurs visited nearly every accessible family in a district of country embracing 250 square miles.

Still, though cheap and rapid, this system is *permanent in its influence.* Books will speak when the living tongue is silent. If laid aside now, there will come times when some providence of God which leaves the heart sorrowing and bereaved, will cause the books to be read, and men must yield to their appeals. I met with a copy of "Boston's Fourfold State," which was more than a hundred years old. So it may be, that in many a house, long after the grass is rank upon our graves, Baxter will still *call to the unconverted*, Alleine will still *alarm* the careless sinner, and James will direct the *anxious inquirer* in the way of life.

But these books will be read. The influence of Colportage is *diffusive.* Where there are but few books, these few are well read. They are lent from house to house, and sometimes are much worn before the original owner can regain them. Indeed, this fact was a serious objection with many men against purchasing our books at all: "I am not going to supply the whole neighborhood with books," says one.

Another important consideration is, that the books which are circulated by means of Colportage contain religious truth in the *purest and most impressive forms.* The pious meditations of Baxter on the Saints' Everlasting Rest; Doddridge, from his own holy experience, developing the Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul; Bunyan, with his Pilgrim, making Progress toward the celestial city; the Practical Thoughts of the devout Nevins; the fervid Remains of Payson; the profound contemplations of Edwards on the Religious Affections,—these have furnished many pious hearts with Christian nutriment, and they will preach "very wisely" when the Colporteur is forgotten.

It also furnishes *peculiarly favorable opportunities for faithful religious conversation.* The Colporteur has always fewer reasons than the local preacher for restraining plainness of speech. But aside from this, a man, called unexpectedly from his work in the field to have a stranger talk to him of God and Christ, and the world to come, cannot soon forget what he has heard; Conscience will repeat it over and over again to him by night and by day. And a woman, interrupted amid her family duties, by a man who

sits down among her household things and asks her "if she is a Christian;" "if she expects to become one;" and "why she is not one now?" will constantly hear those questions, like murmuring echoes in the hall of memory, which will forever repeat themselves till they are answered.

The labors of a Colporteur *exert a valuable influence upon Christians in the community.* While it encourages them, it also imparts a silent but powerful practical lesson of Christian duty. The minister will say, "I must water these seeds of divine truth that they may bring forth fruit;" and the pious layman will say, "this Colporteur work is very simple; why have I not thought of it before? If a stranger comes hundreds of miles to speak of Christ and to distribute religious books and tracts among my neighbors, why should not I be doing the same, who dwell upon the field?"

In still another respect the system of Colportage is peculiar. It is the surest and, indeed, *the only successful means of combating the influence of a corrupt and poisonous press.* We must supplant an enervating and polluting literature with the elevating influence of a Christian one.

In such an encouraging department of Christian effort it has been my privilege to labor a few weeks in September and October under the auspices of your Society. The Eastern Townships were my field, viz, Brome, West Bolton and Sutton. A few subjoined incidents will give you a view of the work.

Soon after entering upon our labor, my comrade and myself fell in with a pious gentleman, who, beside many acts of personal kindness and hospitality, very much comforted us by an account of his feelings in regard to our mission. He said, that as soon as he heard that two young men had come to his town for the purpose of visiting the people with religious books, before he knew who we were, or the details of our plans, his soul was melted into unusual tenderness, in view of Christ sending us to seek the spiritual good of his friends and neighbors; he was affected to tears in his private devotions; he had an unwonted gush of emotion—his heart was like that of a child. He said, he felt that God would bless our labors; it was just what was needed among them, and some hearts, he thought, were prepared to receive us.

Met a Universalist woman one day, who boldly affirmed that she had always done her duty, and that she loved God with all her heart, and all her mind, and all her soul, and all her strength. When pressed with the question in various forms, she always insisted that she had never done anything wrong. I told her I would not utter such language for the wealth of the Province.

Another Universalist woman told me that she did not think it constituted a Christian to belong to a religious society. I assented; and then asked her, what she thought did constitute a Christian? and received for an answer, "I should think that was rather an impertinent question for a stranger to ask me."

A young lady inquired for Shakspeare. I told her my books had more good things than Shakspeare, and none of his bad things. As she would not purchase, I left her a tract on the Value of the Bible.

Found a young man who was sick, and expecting soon to die with consumption. Said he had hoped in Christ about eight months, and that he would not turn his hand over to secure life. He bought some books on practical piety.

Called at the house of a veteran English soldier, who had been in the army 19 years, and had served in the Spanish wars under Wellington. He showed me his medal for having been engaged in the hard fought battles of Vittoria and Corunna. The old man says he loves the Saviour now. As I parted with him, I told him I hoped he would be more faithful in his service to the Prince of Peace, than he ever had been to the "Iron Duke."

Met a young Universalist woman who said, she supposed, according to my views, that her father and brother were in hell, and if so, she wished to go there also. I told her she did not know what she was saying; and tried to show her the daring impiety of such language, but she only insisted on it the more, that she was satisfied with her present belief,—and that if her father and brother were in hell, she could not be willing to go to heaven.

One house I found occupied by a young man and woman, who were but recently married. Had considerable freedom in urging them to begin their married life as Christians, and to commence at once the discharge of their religious duties.

Sept. 20.—I called upon an aged man, above 80, who has read his Bible once through since the commencement of 1851, and is nearly through Isaiah, in the second reading. It was a privilege to kneel with him and his aged partner around their family altar, and lead their morning devotions at the throne of grace.

Became considerably interested in a medical student, who said he sometimes studied his professional books on the Sabbath. Spoke to him of its being a sin, and urged him to buy a Sabbath Manual, telling him that he ought by all means to investigate the subject thoroughly before presuming thus to appropriate hours which should be sacred to the Lord. As my repeated solicitations, seconded by his mother, could not prevail on him to buy, I offered to give him the book if he would promise to read it. Still he refused, alleging as a reason, that *he had no time to read.* Poor young man; he had time on the Sabbath to study medicine, but none for enquiring whether he had a right thus to study medicine or not!

Met a good old Scotch woman who lived within two miles of religious meetings, by crossing the line into Vermont, but staid at home on the Sabbath, because it was seven or eight miles to the nearest meeting in Canada. When asked, why she did not go down into Vermont, and attend meeting, "because," said she, "*my heart will na' let me go out of the kingdom for that.*"

Had an altercation with an infidel one evening in a store, who spoke against all religionists with much bitterness. The next morning I called at his house. Found that he had an interesting young wife who was pious. Wishing to purchase some of my books, she sent her little daughter, of about four years old, into the store to get half a dollar from her infidel husband, which he promptly sent to her. But finding this insufficient for what she wanted, she sent her little girl back again for another quarter of a dollar, and the infidel husband gave that also. She bought Flavel's Method of Grace, and Henry on Meekness; and it may be, that sometime the iron heart of the scoffer himself will soften, so that he will seek to know the *method* of that surprising *grace*, and shall clothe his morose spirit with that heavenly *meekness*.

From September 8 to November 9, the length of time devoted to actual labor on the field, I visited 324 families, in 163 of which I held personal religious conversation with one or more of the members. 7 of these families were destitute of the Bible, and 66 had no other religious books except the Bible. 25 of these families neglect attending the evangelical preaching to which they have access once in two, three, or four weeks. 2 families only were Catholics. I addressed 6 public meetings, and sold books to the amount of $70 39, and made grants to the amount of $11 24. In these families I must have circulated as many as 400 volumes, and 1200 religious tracts.

JOS. DEXTER POLAND.

REPORT OF S. J. HUMPHREY,

COLPORTEUR FOR MONTREAL RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, FROM SEPT. 3 TO OCT. 14, 1851.

I shall perhaps best answer the design of this Report, by giving a brief sketch of the towns where we labored, the state of society, religion, education, &c., and a detail of our mode of procedure, adding such incidents as will illustrate the nature and importance of the work. In following this plan, I shall speak only of those townships through which my colleague, Mr. Poland, and myself passed.

We visited Brome, Sutton, and the Western part of Bolton.—These townships lie just north of Vermont, and west of Lake Magog. The surface of the country is hilly and mountainous, but the land is mostly arable, and with proper cultivation gives abundant returns. Although some neighborhoods have been settled thirty or forty years, yet this may be considered a newly settled country. Much of the land is still in the state of nature, but the forests are rapidly disappearing before the axe of the hardy settlers, who have come here to begin the world, and seek their fortunes in the woods. Perhaps a majority of the inhabi-

tants live along the Government roads, yet many families are found in retired places, scarcely accessible to any but foot passengers.

As is generally the case in newly settled countries, the people are very diverse in their origin, habits of thought and feeling, and in their religious sentiments. Society is in its forming state, fluctuating, impressible, and this united with a want of general information on the part of the people, makes it a fruitful field where spring up error and fanaticism in a great variety of forms. Some parts of these townships seem to have been burnt over with Millerism and kindred sects, leaving the minds of the people scathed and withering. There is no stage of society so critical as this. If a strong religious influence of the right stamp is infused at this point, it has a powerful and healthy influence in giving tone and direction to public sentiment as it takes its abiding form. If no such element is intermingled, it is greatly liable to become fixed in its opposition to evangelical religion, and to be almost impervious to future efforts.

In these towns there are three or four pious, intelligent, and educated clergymen, who bring to their work ardent devotion and untiring perseverance. They are doing much. Their hands are stayed up and their hearts cheered by the sympathies and cordial co-operation of a few earnest and faithful private christians, but the obstacles which meet them on all sides are many and stubborn. The sparse population; the extent of territory over which they must spread their labors, and, if I may so speak, *dilute* them; the ignorance of the people and their want of enterprise; the efforts of illiterate and fanatical preachers, so called, who on the one hand confuse the minds of those who listen to them as to what true religion is, and on the other destroy the confidence of many in religion altogether; THESE are some of the difficulties which impede—and, in part neutralize—their exertions; and which time and enduring labor alone can overcome. It is believed that the humble efforts in which we were engaged, will have no small influence in removing these obstacles, and will afford valuable aid to that instrumentality which above all others God blesses to the salvation of the soul—the Gospel ministry.

The destitution of all kinds of books, and especially of religious books, is great. Through the efficiency of the Bible Society, the inhabitants are nearly all supplied with the Word of God. Aside from this, few families possess any religious work; some may have one or two, the mass none at all. We find a general desire to purchase our books; sometimes they were sought with great eagerness; but the want of money even with those who possess a competency in other respects and the want of appreciating the importance of religious knowledge on the part of many, made our sales much smaller than the real necessities of the community demand.

Our plan of operation was usually as follows:—On going to a town we introduced ourselves as soon as possible to the evangelical clergyman, if there were such there, and if not, to some leading private christian with whom the way was usually prepared for us beforehand by notices in the periodical or by letters from your

committee at Montreal. We then embraced the first opportunity to acquaint the people with our object, and to excite an interest among them in its behalf. This was done by public notices given at religious meetings, or by meetings called expressly for that purpose. We were not always successful in this, and often had to labor under the disadvantage of explaining to each family as we called upon them the nature of our business. With the way thus prepared, we started out, having as many books and tracts as we could conveniently carry By means of little maps of the roads of a town, which some friend would sketch for us, we were generally able to lay out our work so as to make circuits and return to our head quarters every two or three days for the purpose of replenishing our stock of books, of laying our future plans, and of seeking each other's counsel and sympathy, (for we, of course, in making our calls, went out singly). At such times we often had occasion to remark the wisdom of Him who sent out his disciples two by two. Our purpose was to call at every house, however retired it might be, or however poor its inmates. In visiting a family, we would first call attention to our books, their cheapness, their value as religious works, and the importance of possessing such books, especially where children were growing up and forming characters. This would usually lead the way to personal religious conversation, and when circumstances rendered it appropriate, we gladly embraced the opportunity; sometimes kneeling down and commending them to God, and imploring a blessing on the means of grace we had brought to their doors. We left in every house, with scarcely an exception, something; if they could not or would not buy, we sometimes granted a bound volume, and always a number of tracts; so that in nearly every family in those towns, the little tract and the religious book are silently appealing to the eye, and preaching to the heart and conscience of its members; and long after the memory of our brief visit shall have passed away, those little volumes will still preach on, and we trust, under God, be the means of saving immortal soul.

In addition to these labors, as often as practicable we held meetings, or took part in those already appointed.

I subjoin a few incidents, not because they contain anything peculiarly striking, but as illustrating the every day life of a Colporteur:—

Called on a family, the father of which was a Universalist; he said in conversation, he could not believe that God would make men to damn them eternally for a few sins committed in this life. I did not discuss the point with him, but appealed to his conscience, and said that every man knew and would acknowledge if he were honest, that he justly deserved, and would receive the abiding wrath of God, if he lived a life of impenitence and of opposition to his will, and warned him not to risk the eternal interests of his soul on a mere presumption, which his better judgment condemned. He willingly consented to my request, to pray with the family, all of whom knelt as I commended them to the throne of Divine grace.

I spent a night with a man who went three quarters of a mile to tell a neighbor that a Colporteur was at his house with reli-

gious books to sell. Late in the evening, after I had retired, the neighbor came with his wife and one or two children to look at my books. I arose, and sold him two or three little books to the amount of 1s 4d which seemed to him quite a purchase, and though he had come so far through the woods, on foot with his family, said he was richly paid for his trouble. In the morning the man with whom I spent the night went with me to the house of a French Catholic, who, he told me, often attended the Protestant prayer meetings, and who was frequently affected to tears at hearing *intelligible* prayer and praise. After conversation with him, I left him a few tracts, which his kind neighbor promised to come and read to him and his family on the next Sabbath.

In one house I found three Irish Catholic women. They were trifling and profane, one of them swore at her children in my presence, for which I reproved her; she said in reply, it was what she always did, could not help it; and yet she was a good Catholic, and confessed regularly to the priest.

Was uncivilly treated in the house of an intemperate man, who was by turns silly and saucy; threatening personal violence, if I did not leave the house. His daughter apologized with tears for her father's conduct. I left with her "James' Anxious Inquirer," and for her father "Beecher on Intemperance."

Found a young mother in a most comfortless house, holding an infant and reading a novel. She said all her reading was of that kind; had not read a chapter in the bible for eight years, was afraid if she opened it, she would meet with something she did not wish to see; had been religiously educated, and thought once she was a christian, but now was totally indifferent to the future, and read novels to kill time. I endeavored to rouse her to a sense of her situation, and left her reading a tract in place of the novel which she had laid aside,

A good old lady inquired for "Baxter's Call," which she purchased. Said she read it through twice when she was young, and had always longed to own it. She handed it to her impenitent daughter, saying, "There, Jane, read that through, and you can't help turning to the Lord."

Gave a few tracts to a man who was too poor to purchase any books, "What, do you *give* me all these, he exclaimed; it is too much." He followed me to the door, and with tears bade me God-speed. Another poor man, took money which he had laid up to purchase bread, saying he had rather go without bread than without books.

In an Irish Catholic family the father had died recently. In the latter part of his life he virtually renounced Romanism. His attention had been directed to the errors of his Church, by a sermon which he had heard in a Protestant place of worship. On his way home he called on a neighbor and said, "My heart is all on fire; I have a good mind to tear out all my Romanism and trample my feet on it. Before he died he left directions that he should be buried according to the Protestant form. His request was complied with, and the funeral was attended by a Wesleyan

clergyman, although the Catholics were greatly enraged, and tried every means in their power to prevent it. His wife had been a bitter Catholic, but since her husband's death has permitted her children to attend a Protestant Sabbath School, and reads Protestant books.

In concluding this report I would express my gratitude for the many kindnesses which I received from the people among whom I labored; even those who had no special interest in our work, treated us with great hospitality, and the hearty sympathy and cordial co-operation with which the clergymen of those towns, and many of the private Christians, cheered our hearts and strengthened our hands, have an enduring place in our memory.

S. J. Humphry.

MR. DICKINSON'S REPORT.

Andover, Nov. 4, 1851.

Dear Sir.—When I saw you last you wished me to give a report of my Colporteur labor in the townships, together with some part of my journal while laboring for the Montreal Religious Tract Society. This I am happy to do, if in any way, it will advance the cause of pure religion among those whose hospitality we so often enjoyed while laboring for the Society.

In order that the fitness of the system of colportage to the work to be done in the new settlements of Canada may appear, I will first notice the physical condition of the people. In the Eastern Counties the largest part of the people are living on new farms, and are consequently subjected to all the difficulties and hardships of new settlements. Some few farms are under cultivation, and yield to their owners a competency of all the necessaries of life, yet this is not generally the case. The land, though naturally rich, must be subdued by long and patient toil, before the sweat of the brow will be rewarded by an abundant supply for their families. Houses must be erected—trees felled, stumps dug out, stones cleared away and fences builded, before the farmer can reap the full reward of his labor. This long process to subdue the soil, with little or no appropriate reward, leaves the people without the means to supply their spiritual wants. They must now have food and clothing for the body, but they can put off the claims of the *soul* till a future time. In most places they are not able to support without assistance a minister of the Gospel; nor are they able to obtain Religious Books for themselves and children, at the high prices of ordinary sale. Their ministers, if they have any, must be sustained, for the present, by the contributions of other parts of the Christian Church.

This being their condition physically, some cheap way of circulating religious information and pure Bible instruction should be adopted, until they can supply themselves with the regular

means of grace. The agency needed is one which will teach a spiritual, active, and holy religion; one which will be free from all sectarian prejudice; one which will commend itself to the intelligence and *hearts* of the people, as the pure Gospel of Christ. Colportage is such an agency. It has advantages which are at once seen and felt by the followers of Christ. It is peculiarly fitted to preach the Gospel to the *poor*. The colporteur, like his Lord and Master, goes about doing good. He goes to the houses and log-cabins of the poor and destitute, yet honest and simple hearted farmer, and there, though a stranger, he sees and sympathises with them in their destitution. With a word of kindness he wins a way to their hearts, and then he endeavors to lead them to Christ. The circumstances in which he finds them suggest the best way of introducing his subject. I will give an example from my note-book: September 17th.—Called at a house where the father had been confined to his house for five weeks, with a hand terribly swollen with a felon. To my questions, he said he was a professor of religion. Had neglected family prayer, and sometimes secret prayer. Was often in a hurry in the morning to get to his work. Could not stop to attend to his duties. He seemed much humbled, and thought God had taken as much time from him by sickness, as he would have spent in prayer, with his family, and in secret for several years. He said he found he *must* spend time to be sick, and for the future he would spend time for prayer.

But it is not by a direct application of the truth only, that colportage is fitted for the work of evangelization in the scattered and destitute settlements of a new country. The Colporteur leaves behind him that which, in another form, will teach the people. The best religious writings of past and present ages are left in their houses, and they remain there, and preach to the people. Baxter, and Bunyan, and Doddridge, and Flavel, and Jay, will speak, and their tongues though silent will yet be heard. Now is the time to give the people good reading matter—the *best time* to form a taste for *religious* reading. As yet, the little money which they can spare for books, has not tempted into their region those emissaries of Satan, who pollute the *heart* and *conscience* of the people with yellow covered pamphlets, and dreamy novels. If such books as those published by the London Tract Society are *first* brought to their doors, they will be read, and the important truth they contain will find its way to their hearts, and it will *close* the *door* to such miserable trash as constitutes the fire-side literature of too many of the present day. The people are hungry for something to read, and if they are not *now* supplied with that which is *good*, they will *soon* have that which is *bad*. Whatever they have, they will read, and what they *begin to read*, will determine the character of their *future* reading, and from their future reading they will form the standard of their morals.

Again, we see the fitness of Colportage to the circumstances of the people in new countries, from the fact that it *aids the Minister of Christ in his pastoral visits*. A deficiency exists, and always must exist, in this part of ministerial labor, where the field assigned to each is so large. He that sympathises with the

minister who truly watches for souls, must know the deep anxiety which he feels for those to whom he preaches the Gospel. His *preaching* to them is not enough. He longs to see them face to face, their own homes, and then in more intimate communion with the family, direct them personally to the Lamb of God. This he cannot do while his people are so scattered, and his parish is so large as we find them in these new settlements. To the honor of those laboring in these parts. be it said, that my short acquaintance with them, has proved them faithful men. Rev. Mr. Flanders of the Methodist Church, and Rev. A. T. Whitten, and Rev. Robert Lindsay, of the Episcopal Church, are abundant in labor for the good of their respective flocks. Yet what can they, and all other ministers do in pastoral visits, when the field of labor is so large. One of them has *sixteen* preaching places, and to meet his appointments must preach almost every day in the week, besides preaching three times on the Sabbath. The extremes of his parish are twenty-five miles apart, and the work of each of the others is scarcely less arduous.

What can Ministers do in *pastoral visits*, when they are driven to and fro, like a weaver's shuttle, over highways and by-ways, to meet their appointments in preaching? They can do nothing. If they make a visit, it must be a *flying* visit. They cannot have time to sit down for an hour, and talk seriously with the family about the interests of their souls, and then seal the impressions made by heartily commending them to God in prayer. Many families which I visited, spoke of never having a visit from the minister. One case I will mention. I called on a family, when I soon learned that the mother was a widow. She was a member of the Methodist Church, yet, she had not heard a prayer, nor seen a minister since she left the old country, over a year ago. She seemed rejoiced to have one call on her who could pray, and we kneeled and wept together at a throne of grace. When we met such persons, we always went away feeling that it was worth all our toil, to be able to comfort and encourage them to go on in a Christian life. Could you have looked in upon the families, as I visited them from day to day, you would have seen the eyes of many of those honest-hearted and hardy farmers filled with tears, as we endeavored affectionately to speak of the love of Christ, and to urge upon them the duty of immediate concern for their souls.

I fear I have written too much already in giving you these thoughts and feelings concerning the Colporteur work in Canada. To me it has been a most interesting work, and I shall ever look back with pleasure upon the time spent by me in the service of the Montreal Religious Tract Society. If my labors on our interesting field does not benefit others, I know it has done me good. I can appreciate better my own exalted privileges, and I hope I shall be humbled that I have such advantages for knowing God, and yet improve them so little.

PRIVATE REPORT.

Cash received for sales of Books,.....	$92.94
Do do Bibles and Testaments,.....	7.03

Value of Grants of Books and Tracts.....	18.36
Do do do Bibles or Testaments,	2.16
No. of Public Meetings addressed, and No. of Prayer Meetings held,.....	12
No. of Families destitute of all Religious Books except the Bible...	84
No. of Families who habitually neglect Evangelical preaching.....	26
No. of families conversed with on personal religion, or prayed with.....	74
Whole number of Families visited.....	231
No. destitute of the Bible.....	21

REPORT OF LABORS

AS A COLPORTEUR IN SHEFFORD COUNTY, C.E., BETWEEN SEPT. 4 AND OCT. 11, 1851.—BY H. K. EDSON.

A report of Colportage will, at best, give but a partial view of the work. To give statistics were easy, yet this would be but a brief *index* of what the Colporteur accomplishes.

As his name implies, the Colporteur is but a transient visitor to the families or neighborhoods he enters. He cannot, like the Pastor, or stationed Missionary, often stay on his field to gather the ripened fruits of the seed he has sown. In a majority of cases, the families he meets for the first time, will not see him again till they meet on the shores of eternity. Yet so closely does the blessing of God follow in the steps of the faithful laborer, that not unfrequently, even "whiles speaking and praying," he witnesses the early blossoms, and receives the first fruits of his toil.

Colportage is a means of good accepted of Heaven, and baptized of the Spirit, as is evident from its ten years' history in the United States. The friends of Christ in Canada need but to know the facts, to be convinced of the destitutions of the field around them, and that Colportage is eminently adapted to its wants, and is a work of God.

It was my privilege in the Spring to labor in Drummond County for the American Tract Society. This experience gave me some acquaintance with the people and inspired the desire to engage in the work again under the auspices of your society, in September.

My labors were confined principally to Shefford, Stukely, and Bolton, on the Western shore of Memphramagog. The neighborhoods and families I visited gave me a cordial welcome, with few exceptions. The need of such a work was felt and expressed by both ministers and their people. It was often said, "Why has not this work been begun before?" "Why have we been for-

gotten so long ?" The clergymen of the different evangelical denominations gave their influence to the work, and much is due to their aid and co-operation. With a circuit or parish, thirty miles in diameter, and a dozen or more preaching places, the families of which they could not visit; they acknowledged in Colportage a valuable and *indispensable auxiliary*.

Frost Village was my head quarters, to which I was obliged frequently to resort for books, and to despatch supplies to my brethren in the work.

I met on my field with almost every shade of religious belief,—Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists; and with every variety of error—Catholics, Infidels, Universalists, Millerites, and Nothingarians. In one neighborhood, Millerism, "smuggled in from the States," is deeply rooted. The victims of this delusion profess to expect their Lord yearly. They have violent "struggles" for sinners, in which they roll upon the floor, froth, and throw themselves about in the most frantic manner, kicking to pieces whatever comes in their way. By such means reproach and distrust are brought on all who profess religion, and infidels and scoffers are multiplied. Such may surely be called "*burnt districts*," which it will take half a century to convert to a "fruitful field."

Permit me to give some illustrations of my work, as taken from my journal in the field:—

The Universalist.—A young Scotchman, the head of a family, refused to buy and was loth to receive books as gifts. God was good, he said, and would save all, as he could prove from his word. Yet he did not worship him, nor would he risk his eternal happiness on his creed. Cautiously questioned him to ascertain whether he ever attended meeting, or read the bible, if he had one. But he shrewdly remarked, he supposed I had a book and would note all down to tell in Montreal. He wanted nothing to do with religious people in this world. Finding that he was only confirmed in his wickedness by controversy, and would not be won by kindness, I gave his children tracts and left him.

The Backslider.—He is often met with. One invited me to his house after Sabbath services. He had been member of an Orthodox Church in New England. Several years since he embraced Millerism, and was now an infidel. "The Sabbath was all a humbug," he said, and "religion was worth what it would fetch." Truly, "evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." His family gave proof of the ruin his principles had wrought.

Another said he had got far away, and it was hard—more difficult now to get back, than first to come to the cross. All around him was discouraging. Gave him suitable counsel and tracts, prayed with him, and left with his cordial thanks.

The Universalist Blacksmith.—I went into a blacksmith's shop by the way side. The smith had heard my account of Colportage the previous Sabbath, and gave me apparent welcome. He told me at once what he was, and what he believed; but drop-

ping his hammer and throwing off his apron, says, "walk in, I want my children to read and examine, and judge for themselves. He could never believe his maker worse than himself or his creatures, as he certainly would be if he made people to destroy and torment them." He cut short my replies by adding, "all the talk and ministers in the world would not move *him*." Having bought books for each of his seven children, he returned to his anvil; and, as I believed, with more inward disquiet than his externals would indicate. There was at least encouragement to pray that the words spoken and the books left, might be as "nails fastened in a sure place," and like the "fire and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces."

Catholic Schools.—Called on a Protestant family who had sent their children to the Convent to "learn the accomplishments." A daughter was at home in her vacation. Said she knelt to the virgin, said mass, "and conformed to please the teachers." I set before them the danger and criminality of such a course, and gave warning from its results in other cases, some of which were known to them.

The Degenerate New Englander.—Found a father, mother, and eight children, inhabiting a poor log house in a small clearing. Only three of the number could read. They lived far from church. The aged father remembered attending meeting in his early days in New England. Said he was never taught to read, was poor, it was hard to get a living, but he wanted books; knew not where he would go after his life's journey was over, said this with emotion. After conversing some time, I gave him Pike's Religion and Eternal Life, a chapter of which he promised to have read every Sabbath in his family. At the next clearing lived a family like the heathen, without a bible or book of any kind; never attended meeting nor schools. Gave them Baxter's Call and tracts. Started on, and seeing a house at some distance off the road, it being late, I did not visit it; but putting some tracts in a slit stick, I set it up by the path leading in to the house. I afterwards heard they were scoffers. But, although I "drew a bow at a venture," an unseen Providence guided my hand to select appropriate tracts.

Novel Reading.—This pernicious practice is doing its death-work in many families. I sought to apply the best remedy—supplant bad by good and attractive works at a cheap rate. Gave a lecture on novel reading, to an attentive audience. One, offended, as I supposed, with my plain dealing, withdrew in the midst of the meeting. His family loved novels, and the Sabbath was his holiday.

Good books are needed and read. Met in one family a tract society publication that had been lent out till it had reached this place from Stanstead, forty miles away, and was still under a number of engagements. Books, as soon as bought, begin their travels, and are met with in their exchanges through the whole neighborhood. A travelling merchant testified also, that through the whole county where he had been accustomed to

see no books, or nothing but almanacs, Tract Society publications were now found, and were read with interest.

The Pure Essence.—One old man and his consort seemed to have got beyond my books. He "had professed religion forty years, and had lived by faith twelve." He ran over my large supply of books in haste. Saw "little but leaves and branches—wanted the solid wood." D'Aubigne's History was set aside, as "a murder book," and as for Abbott, and James, and Pike, they were the "a-b-abs, and baker lessons of religion." Edwards was "pretty good." My interest was more excited by his exclamations, "I have found it now, here is the *pure essence.*" "There, daughter, read that, and you cannot help being converted—it tears the sinner up root and branch." I found he was pleading for Baxter's Call, which, for an additional reason he thought it would be a piece of wisdom and good economy to buy, viz: the reading space was not as in some of the other books, taken up with pictures. The hardships of his first life had wrought in him, a severe taste, while he relished, as I believe, the kernel and root of religion.

Steamboat Scene.—After laboring two days at the outlet of Memphramagog, I took the steamer for a point twelve miles up the lake and on the west side. The nature of my mission was soon known, and my carriage was surrounded,—some curious to see and others to buy books. Many volumes were disposed of, the Captain himself leading the purchases. He gave me a free passage. I placed on the cabin table, tracts, and works of Baxter and Alleine. At one of the landing places two well dressed gentlemen came on board. On entering the cabin and seeing the books, one of them exclaimed, "hurrah, religion by the wholesale," and then commenced reading from Baxter's Call, "Turn ye, why will ye die." He suddenly stopped, and in evident confusion laid down the book,—I knew not why. Scanning me very closely he paced the deck, and soon introduced himself, recalling to my memory an acquaintance made in the Spring. It is never safe to trifle with sacred things must have been the lesson he learned.

"*Church in thy house.*"—Called on a venerable man, a native of Scotland. He was full of pleasant Scotch memories, and love for old Scotch divines whom he had heard.—Dr. Chalmers among others. He took down to shew me the old, well worn Bible, brought from Dunfermline. I was sorry to learn that neither he nor any of his family attended meeting. In answer to my inquiries, he reminded me of "the church in their house," which St. Paul speaks of. This was his church, for he could not commune with any of the sects around him. I brought to his mind another passage from St. Paul, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." He was supplied with books, and I left with his "peace be with you."

Many more facts might be stated, but perhaps I have already exceeded the proper bounds of a report. Pages might be filled showing the advantages of Colportage. Numerous testimonials

might be added from the wise and good on our field, to attest the good done to old and young, to saints and sinners, in villages and in lone forest homes.

STATISTICS OF OUR UNITED LABORS.

The aggregate of labor performed amounts to twenty weeks. There were sold 1347 volumes, amounting to $336.73; given away, 412 volumes, amounting to $70.16. Of these vols., 25 were Baxter's Saints' Rest; 42 Baxter's Call; 32 Bunyan's Pilgrim; 43 Sabbath Manual; 35 setts of D'Aubigne's History; and 100 Pictorial Tract Primers, besides many thousand tracts. 954 families were visited, of which 24 were Catholic, 123 habitually neglected evangelical preaching; 41 were destitute of the Bible, and 210 of all religious books except the Bible.

Cost.—The total expenses for services, freight, tolls, postage, meals and lodging, were $186.04. Grants $70.16, which sums subtracted from $406.89, the value of the Society's publications disposed of, left to be returned to the Treasurer $150.69. The expense will be greatly diminished, by employing laborers found on the field, and by securing their longer enlistment in the service.

With these statements, we leave the cause of Colportage in Canada, with Christians and philanthropists. They will see the need of continued and increased benevolent effort. Many more laborers are demanded. The usual salary of a Colporteur is $150. Are there not some who read these lines, who will esteem it a privilege to contribute the sum necessary to sustain one of these self-denying laborers? Are there not others who will give $50, or $10, or $5, even to supply the destitute with religious reading? The great Master of the vineyard hath said, "Ye shall in no wise lose your reward;" and in the final day will say, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

H. K. EDSON.

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