

REPORT

OF THE

Mission to the Lumbermen

IN THE

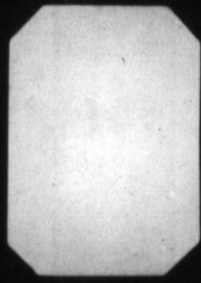
VALLEY OF THE COLUMBIA

Presented to the Synod of the Presbyterian Church
of Canada in connection with the Church
of Scotland, June 1872



KINGSTON
WILLIAM BAILLIE,
1872.

UNITED CHURCH
ARCHIVES



REPORT

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Mission to the Lumbermen

IN THE

VALLEY OF THE OTTAWA.

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KINGSTON :
WILLIAM BAILLIE, PRINTER.
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NOTE.

The following Report was presented to and approved by the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland at its last meeting. It was deemed advisable, and was consequently determined, that the Report should be published and circulated in the interests of the Mission. Any contributions to the Mission, either in money or in appropriate literature, will be gratefully received by the undersigned.

DANIEL M. GORDON, B.D., *Convener.*

ANDREW DRUMMOND, *Secretary-Treas.*

OTTAWA, JULY 1ST, 1872.

UNITED CHURCH
ARCHIVES

REPORT.

In submitting their fourth Annual Report, the Committee on the Mission to the Lumbermen desire to express their gratitude to God for the measure of encouragement they have had in their labours during the past season.

Your Committee secured, though for a much shorter period than they desired, the services of the Rev. Hugh Cameron, of Beachburg, who visited the shanties on the Black River and Coulonge, and of the Rev. James Fraser, of Chelsea, who visited those on the Gatineau and its tributaries.

The Rev. Mr. Cameron reports as follows :—

"I left home for the shanties on the 22nd January, and reached the shanty of Mr. R. J. McAlister, of Eardley, the same day. Next morning I proceeded up the River and visited the shanties of Capt. W. Findlay, at Moose Lake, and Messrs. Caldwell, and McTiernan & Fraser, the shanties of the last named firm being the furthest up on the Black River this season. On my way down I visited the shanties of Messrs. McCaushon & Fraser, Fraser, McLean, Capt. W. Findlay at Kedar's Creek, and Messrs. Comrie and Anderson at the same place. I then passed over to the Coulonge and visited the shanties of the Hon. Geo. Bryson and Mr. E. Carmichael. I visited, in all, seventeen shanties, five depots, and several stopping places. I conducted Divine service twenty-one times, family worship twelve times, distributed large quantities of religious literature, addressed between four and five hundred men, and travelled more than three hundred miles. The tracts, but especially the copies of the 'British Workman' are gladly received, while the copies of 'Le Messager des Familles' were welcomed by the young Frenchmen. Several shanties have sent in contributions to the funds of the Mission, and some others have signified their intention of doing so. All these are free-will offerings, unsolicited by any one. In all the shanties I was kindly received by men of all denominations, and returned from my two weeks labour among them invigorated rather than exhausted."

The Rev. Mr. Fraser reports as follows :—

"The Gatineau being one of the main tributaries of the Ottawa, with timber limits of vast extent, a number of large firms, a greater number of small firms, and a very great number of jobbers—each of the latter

owning, at least, one shanty—carry on lumber operations in its valley. A necessity of making a selection among them was, therefore, forced upon me, and out of the many, the shanties of Messrs. Gilmour & Co., Hamilton Brothers, W. & J. Welch, and McLaren & Co., were chosen; from them a further selection was made in respect to actual visitation, but, thanks to your liberal allowance of periodicals and tracts, I was able to supply all their shanties with reading matter. The districts visited were four in number, viz., the Pennechonge, the Joseph, the Ignace, and the line of the main river, and in these districts I visited nine shanties, eleven depots, besides several stopping places.

"In the shanties I generally read portions of Scripture in English and French, and afterwards addressed the men in both languages. Usually the services were concluded with prayer in English; sometimes the prayer was repeated in French; in all cases the strictest decorum was preserved. At the depots the services took the form of family worship, while at the stopping shanties they were of a still less formal character.

"The tracts and periodicals are eagerly perused, especially those with attractive plates. It was pleasing to watch the French Canadians grouped in different parts of the shanty, each little company listening intently to one of their number who read aloud. The pleasure with which they listen to the Scriptures, too, is very marked. On one occasion I was particularly struck with the interest manifested. While reading to one of the men from the Gospels I was frequently interrupted by his exclaiming 'Mais! que c'est un beau livre' (My! but that's a fine book). Later on I spoke of his being tired, but he replied that he 'could sit up all night listening to such a book as that.'

"While sensible of the importance of ministerial visitation, and of the results likely to flow from it, I cannot but feel that the greatest power of your Mission lies in the religious literature which you supply to the shanties. The literature is not discarded after a day or two, but, even when the novelty has worn off, many continue reading, and especially on the Sabbath-day, when the ordinary shantyman hardly knows what to do with himself, the package of papers is largely drawn upon. During my stay in a shanty I never solicited subscriptions, and always refused to take any money that was offered to me, simply because the Roman Catholics in the shanties often say that if it were not for the money collected they would never receive a visit from their clergy. To take away the least ground for a similar charge against your Mission I declined all offers of subscriptions.

"During the course of my journey I met four clergymen of the Anglican Church, sent out by the Bishop of Montreal on the same work as that in which I was engaged. Several shanties were visited by them and me with an interval of only a day or two between our respective visits. The suggestion of one of your Missionaries last year to the effect that a central committee of the various Evangelical Churches should be appointed, if possible of realization, would prevent all seeming waste of labour, and be productive of other benefits."

While your Committee feel thankful that the results stated in these reports have been accomplished by the Clergymen who engaged in the work of the Mission during the past season, they keep always in mind the desirability of securing, if possible, the services of one or more missionaries, whose special ministerial work will be to labour among the shanties. Owing, however, to the scarcity of labourers in the settled congregations and mission stations of the Church their hope in this respect has not yet been realized. Feeling deeply the inadequacy of the ministerial supply at their command to meet the wants of the

Mission, they have tried to make up to some extent for this deficiency, and to extend the operations and influence of the Mission by circulating a much larger quantity of suitable literature than during any previous season. Many districts which cannot be reached by the Missionary can, by means of such literature, be brought under a most wholesome influence, and, while the visits of the Missionary must, at best, be very brief, magazines, tracts and similar publications may, week after week, prove a source of great benefit to the men. During the past winter your Committee have distributed a large quantity of appropriate reading matter, including portions of the Scriptures in French, 10,000 pages of French tracts, 125,000 pages of English tracts, over 2,000 copies of the "British Workman," besides many copies of "Le Messager des Familles" (an illustrated and valuable French paper), "The Cottager and Artisan," "Leisure Hour," "Sunday at Home," &c. In the circulation of this literature, the Committee have been greatly and cordially assisted by several of the lumbering firms whose shanties lie in districts where the Missionaries were unable to visit, and they have reason to believe that much good has been done by this agency. Your Committee hope that during next winter they will be able greatly to extend their work in this respect; they are thankful that the present large balance in the hands of the Treasurer (\$231 56), together with such gratuitous contributions of magazines, &c., as they may receive, will enable them to secure and distribute a much larger supply of literature than they have hitherto been able to furnish. While in regard to the supply of religious services among the men, their desire is that eventually every shanty shall be visited, at least once each winter, by some Minister of Christ, their aim, in regard to the circulation of literature will be that every shanty shall be furnished with a suitable, though small, supply of interesting and improving reading matter. This is the point towards which, though it still seem very far distant, your Committee desire to work.

Your Committee would gladly co-operate with others who may be engaged in this work. In the Report of the Rev. James Fraser, reference is made to the labours of Missionaries of the Church of England, and to the fact that, in one section of the country, he and they are visiting the same districts, almost within the same week. Where there are so many shanties in need of missionary service and so few labourers in the field it seems unfortunate that the labour was not better divided; the cause, however, is simply ignorance on the part of each Church of the missionary labours of the other. If it is too much at present to expect the formation of a Central Lumber Mission Committee, composed of members of the various Evangelical Churches, your Committee hope that they may at least be able, by correspondence or otherwise, to make such arrangements in the future as shall secure the widest possible spread of all missionary labor among the shantymen.

Your Committee resolved that the rate of remuneration given to the ministers engaging in the work of the Mission should be increased to fifty dollars per month and travelling expenses. They leave it to the discretion of the Missionary, whether or not he is to accept any voluntary contributions from the shantymen to the funds of the Mission: in no case, however, are such contributions to be solicited.

Your Committee have to express their gratitude to all who have aided them in their labours during the past year, especially to those who have generously contributed to the funds of the mission, to the London Tract Society for a large donation of their valuable publications, to the Lumberers who have assisted in the circulation of the literature, and to the managers and foremen of the shanties for their kindness towards

1871.

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June 1—	By balance on hand	\$165 11	
1872.			
Jan. 30—	Subscriptions from Hon. G. Bryson.....	20 00	
April 11—	“ “ Levi Young	10 00	
	“ “ James Gordon.....	2 00	
May—	“ “ Allan Gilmour.....	50 00	
	“ “ H. F. Bronson.....	20 00	
	“ “ J. R. Booth.....	20 00	
	“ “ E. B. Eddy, M.P.P.....	20 00	
	“ “ Hon. James Skead.....	20 00	
	“ “ Robert Blackburn.....	5 00	
June 3—	“ “ Hon. M. Cameron.....	2 00	
“ 4—	Contributions per Rev. H. Cameron, viz :—		
	Subscriptions as per list	\$29 00	
	“ from Mr. McAlister's Shanty.....	7 00	
	“ from G. Bryson, Jr.....	5 00	
	“ from Mary Lawry.....	0 50	
			41 50
			<u>\$375 61</u>