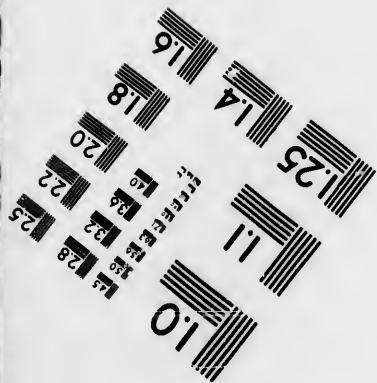
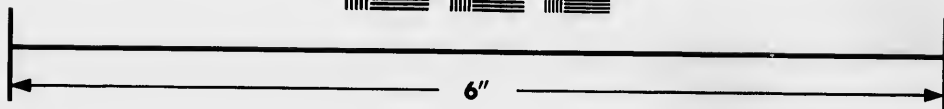
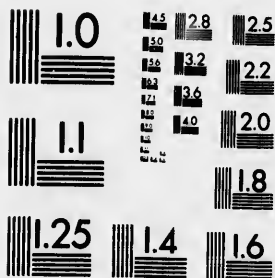


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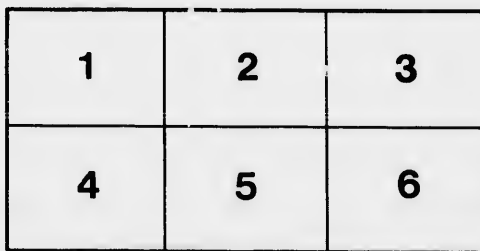
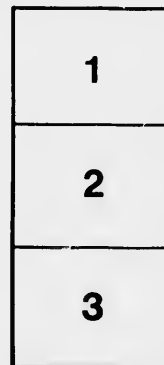
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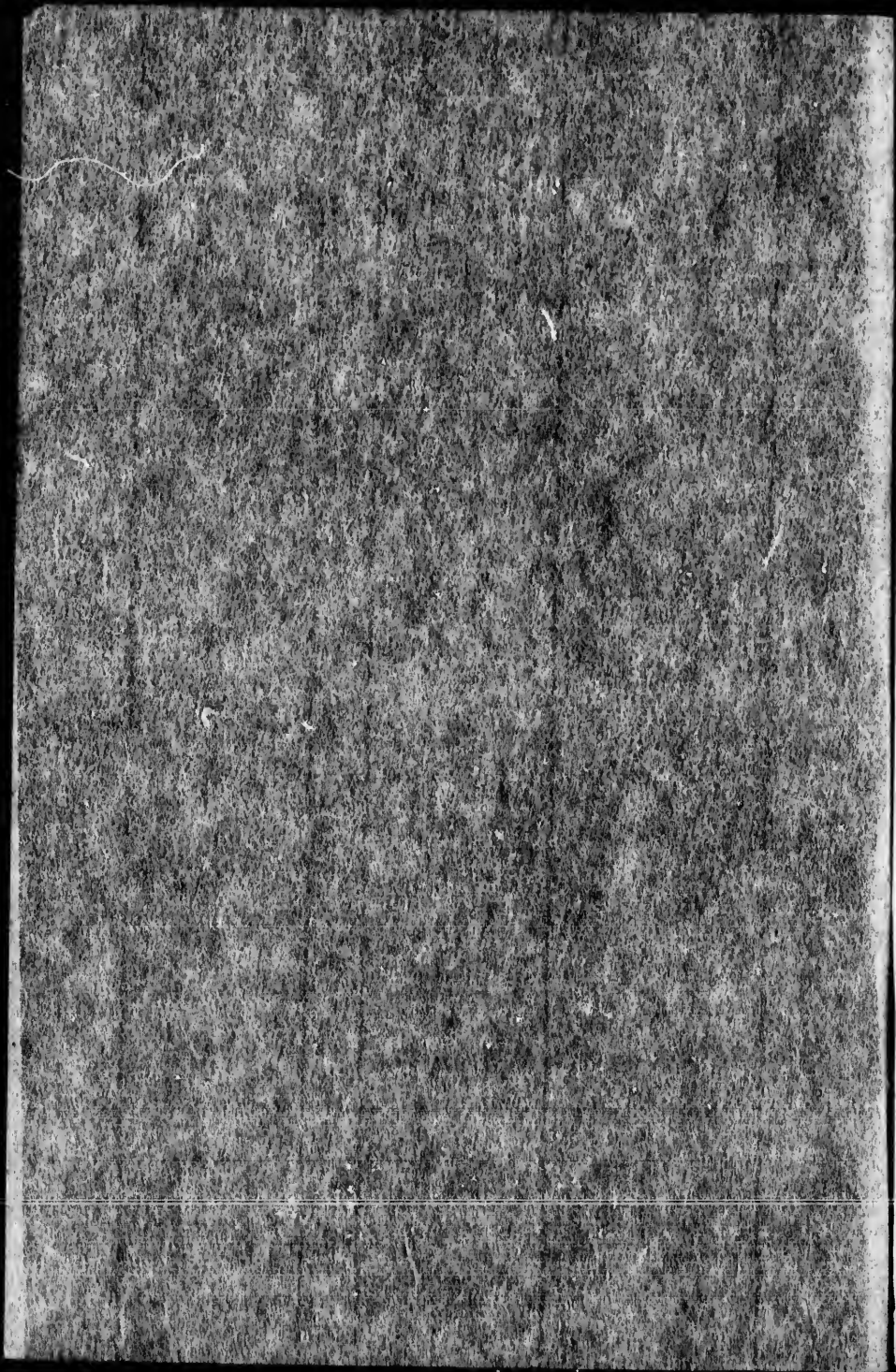
AN
HISTORICAL SKETCH
OF THE
GRANDE LIGNE MISSION IN LOWER
CANADA.

By the REV. THEODORE LAFLEUR.

Montreal:

PRINTED BY J. STARKE & CO., ST. FRANCOIS XAVIER STREET.

1866.



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HISTORICAL SKETCH
OF THE
GRANDE LIGNE MISSION IN LOWER
CANADA.

The revival of religion with which Switzerland was visited, about 1820, and in which the Haldanes acted so important a part, awakened a missionary spirit. The efforts of Christians for the conversion of souls embraced at first their fellow-countrymen; then their neighbours the Romanists of France; and, at a later period, their attention was also directed towards Canada. It was in the heart of a humble private Christian that a deep concern for the conversion of the French Canadians was first kindled. Impressed with the importance of sending the Gospel to this people, he would say to his pastor and to his brethren, "Do you pray for Canada? Let us pray for Canada." This prayer, so evidently the fruit of the Holy Spirit, was soon answered; but in a manner quite unexpected. The Rev. H. Olivier, pastor of a Church at Lausanne, left his native country in 1834, with the intention of preaching the Gospel among the North American Indians. But on his arrival at Montreal, seeing that the large French population of the country (about a million of people) were destitute of the truth as it is in Jesus, he resolved to settle in that city; and there he began to preach in a school-house, kindly offered to him by the Methodists for this object.

Mr. Olivier met with severe opposition from the enemies of the Gospel, especially the priests; but feeling confident that a wide door of usefulness was opened, he was greatly desirous that some of his brethren in Lausanne should come and join him. He wrote to his friends in Switzerland, placing the subject before them, and urged them to consider its claims on their Christian charity.

There was at that time in the Church of which Mr. Olivier had been pastor, a lady distinguished for piety and Christian beneficence, and earnestly desirous to do her part toward the evangelization of the unconverted. This desire became a decisive call after the death of her husband and of her only child.

"After the death of the good husband and the dear child which God in His love gave me, and in His love took away from me," wrote Madame Feller, two or three years after her coming to Canada, "my heart was filled with the desire of being devoted exclusively to the service of the Lord. At first, I suppressed this feeling, because I knew it to be contrary to the taste and wishes of my family; and also because I was afraid of deceiving myself in cherishing it. But after some time I was convinced that it was the call of God, and resisted it no longer; and during the seven or eight years which followed, I besought the Lord continually to open before me the way, and to show me what He would give me to do in his service."

With such feelings and dispositions, Madame Feller was predisposed to receive Mr. Olivier's call. The idolatry, ignorance, and abject condition of a great portion of the Canadian people took strong hold upon her heart. "This call," says she, "coinciding with the expectation of my faith, and the circumstances in which I was placed, and being in answer to a new testimony which I had sought of the Lord, I was convinced that it was His will that I should go to Canada, and I accordingly replied to my friends that I would go." Mr. Louis Roussy, a Minister of the Gospel, who had also been led to choose Canada as his sphere of labour, resolved to start at the same time.

They sailed from Havre, and arrived at Montreal on the 31st of October, 1835.

Mr. Roussy was invited to take the charge of a school on the *Grande Ligne** of Lacadie, about twenty-five miles S.E. of Montreal. He thought that this situation would afford him a good opportunity of laying a foundation for future usefulness in that neighbourhood, and therefore accepted the call. Madame Feller spent the winter at Montreal; and, in conjunction with Madame Olivier, opened a school for French Canadian Children. Much of her time was also spent in visiting the Roman Catholics for the purpose of reading the Scriptures

* A Grande Ligne in Lower Canada is a road, generally straight, from five to seven miles in length, and with farms abutting on each side of the road.

and of conversing with them on the truths of the Gospel. By these means she obtained an accurate knowledge of the Canadian character, and was prepared for her subsequent efforts.

Meanwhile, Mr. and Mrs. Olivier had found their health exceedingly tried by the climate; and their physician advised them to return without delay to Switzerland. As the immediate result of their beginning, two persons had been brought to the saving knowledge of Christ. They were most reluctant to leave Madame Feller alone in this trying field of labour. But God wonderfully sustained her in this trial. She said "I had contemplated beforehand all the difficulties of a missionary life, and I had not forgotten isolation, abandonment, poverty, even death in the hospital. I could not then hesitate a moment as to the course to pursue."

Mr. Roussy, keeping constantly in view the object of his coming to Canada, and anxious to see souls brought to the Saviour, did not confine his instruction to the communication of general knowledge, but embraced, in addition, the truths and duties of religion. His spare time was employed in visiting the people, and making known to them, in a familiar manner, the way of salvation.

While Mr. Roussy was teaching school at Grande Ligne he was, one day visited by a respectable old woman, accompanied by her son. She had come from a neighboring settlement of the same parish of Lacadie, and only a few miles from the place where the Mission house now stands. The spiritual history of Mrs. Lore—for this was her name—must be recorded as one of the most striking instances of the providential dealings of a prayer hearing and gracious God.

Her parents were living in Acadia (now Nova Scotia) near Grand Pré, when the Acadians were driven away from their homesteads, by English officers, and transported in vessels to other parts of the continent—an episode so touchingly narrated by Longfellow in "Evangeline." They were landed with many others at the port of Boston, and they settled in a small village a short distance from that place. When yet quite young the children were sent to the common schools and there read the Bible. When Mrs. Lore had reached the age of twenty, her grand-mother seeing her attachment to the Bible, and fearing that she might lose her religion, determined to bring the whole family to Lower Canada, with a view to avert this calamity. They settled in the Parish of Lacadie. As soon as they had reached this country the young woman was forced to abandon the reading of

the Bible that had been given to her in the United States; obliged to go to confess, in a word to become a strict observer of the rules of the Church of Rome. She was married to a Mr. Lore, a good catholic, and for twenty years she lived without the Gospel, without being allowed to read it, and also without confidence in the religious practices she had to perform. It was a most miserable life to her, so much so, that those who knew her well would say that the tears she had shed would be sufficient to turn a mill. After twenty years of such a life, and after the death of her old parents, Mrs. Lore returned to her precious book again, and when she met our Missionaries she had been reading it for twenty-eight years, in the midst of a continued spiritual struggle. She saw the truth but dimly, and, surrounded as she was, she found no one to whom she could open her mind, and who could understand her. She was often heard to say to her children: "I shall have a most fearful death, for I know that I have been induced to practice what is not the truth; the truth is here, pointing to her Bible, and I have not followed it." She had such a high regard for the Bible, that going once to Champlain Village, procured from Judge Moore a copy of the Holy Scriptures for every one of her children.

When she heard of this strange school teacher, who read the Holy Scriptures to the children in the school at Grande Ligne, and in houses around, she hastened to see him. After a few moments of conversation, she exclaimed: "The Lord has heard my prayers; He has not despised my tears; this is God's servant, I know it; this is the man of God whom I have asked of Him these many years." She very soon found sweet peace in believing—a peace that never was disturbed during the eight months that she lived in this world after her conversion. She was seen to come on foot to the meetings held at Grande Ligne, to hear the preaching of the Holy Word. As the time of her departure drew near, her Roman Catholic neighbors, accustomed to see infidels repent, and return at the last hour in submission to the Church, they expected that she would also at last submit and accept the offices of the Priest. In this they were greatly disappointed, for not only did she remain firm in her faith, but with a clear mind and a glowing heart she bore her affectionate testimony to her Saviour as the all sufficient One at the hour of death. The whole of her family, composed of eight children and many grand-children, after her example, left the Church of Rome to embrace the Gospel. One of her daughters being one day by the bed-side of a man to whom the

Missionary was endeavouring to point out Christ crucified, she was so struck with what he said that she immediately asked Mr. Roussy if he would not come to her house on the following Sunday to speak to a few persons she should invite there. Mr. Roussy was exceedingly rejoiced with this opening, and went on the next Sabbath to find a full house. They all listened with the deepest attention to the discourse so new and interesting to them, and at the end of it, they invited him to preach to them again. There and then was sown the first good seed from which has sprung the ever progressing and widening work of the Grand Ligne Mission.

The meetings were sustained and attended by some forty persons. But the Priests, informed of these labors, began to preach violently against Mr. Roussy—calling him a fool, an innovator, a heretic, and all the insulting names that their hatred could suggest. Through their efforts and influence he was soon dismissed from the school. He was then fully at liberty to give himself to the propagation of the faith; and he began to travel more extensively, preaching the Gospel wherever he could get access to the people, particularly in St. Johns, Sherrington and Napierville.

During this time Madame Feller was residing at St. Johns. She had gone there after Mr. Olivier's departure, hoping to find an opportunity for usefulness; but her endeavors failed of success through the opposition of the Priests, and her attention was ultimately directed to Grande Ligne. "Judging," she said, "it would be best to associate my labors with those of Brother Roussy for the advancement of the kingdom of the Lord, I visited the different places where he was received, in order to fix upon one where I might station myself. In going to Grande Ligne twice a week, I soon saw that this was my place. Several families had already abandoned Popery, and the adults, as well as the children, needed a school. One difficulty was the want of a place of residence; there was not a single house where I could be lodged. The family in whose house preaching had been regularly held, offered me a garret, which I divided into two apartments, that it might serve for a bed-room and school-room."

Madame Feller became a resident at Grande Ligne in October, 1836. She immediately opened a school, with twelve children belonging to families that had left the Church of Rome, and all, except one, the grand-children of old Mrs. Lore. Soon the number increased to twenty. Not content with instructing the children in the day, she

opened an evening school for adults, with twelve scholars. In addition to the regular pupils, a considerable number attended the concluding exercises, which comprised reading the Scriptures, conversation on the passages read, and prayer. So interesting were these services, that they were often prolonged till midnight. It was a season of arduous yet delightful effort.

In the following June, 1837, the heat being insupportable in the garret, the exercises were conducted in a barn. About that time the Rev. J. Gilmour, pastor of the Baptist Church at Montreal, visited the Station, and being deeply affected by the inconveniences and privations endured by Madame Feller, undertook to provide some suitable accommodations. A small house was erected, chiefly by means of contributions from Christian friends in Montreal, Champlain and Plattsburgh. That building served for a dwelling, a school-house and a place of worship, till the mission-house was commenced in the autumn of 1838.

A small church, organised in 1837, now numbered sixteen members, and besides these converts, many showed favorable dispositions towards the Gospel. But an hour of trial was drawing nigh. The fire of persecution was soon kindled, and they were to suffer for the truth's sake.

In the course of October the insurrection in Canada broke out. The Roman Catholics around Grande Ligne took advantage of the prevailing confusion, and commenced a series of outrages. Mr. Roussy was deliberately shot at, but was providentially preserved. A mob assembled around the house of Madame Feller at night, and with frightful yells and imprecations ordered the Missionaries to leave the country, threatening to set fire to their dwelling, and to murder them, if they should refuse to comply. In the same manner they went to the houses of all who had renounced Popery, and commanded them to abandon either their new religion or their country, under pain of fire or sword. Such disorder prevailed in the country that the Government could afford them no protection; and hence, after serious and prayerful consideration, they unanimously resolved to give up all and flee to the United States. To human view, nothing could be more sad and miserable than this fugitive band; but to the Christian eye, their trial had its bright side, as it was for the name of Jesus they were reduced to such a pitiable condition. Christians in the United States provided liberally for the urgent wants of the persecuted ones.

At the expiration of two months they returned, and found that their dwellings had been preserved, but nothing else. The labors of the mission were resumed with increased success during the year 1838. But in the month of November civil war again broke out around them. Mr. Roussy was made a prisoner. Through the influence of Madame Feller, the angry rioters were appeased, and pledged themselves that neither the Missionaries nor their property should be molested during the war. The pledge given was literally redeemed. While all around them were pillaged, by the kind providence of God the mission family and property were untouched.

The need of a normal school, to train teachers and colporteurs, was now deeply felt, as well as of a building suitable for such an institution. Without waiting for the means necessary for such an undertaking—walking by faith more than by sight—the Missionaries began, notwithstanding their poverty, to lay the foundation of a large stone building, trusting to God for its completion. While the foundation was still under ground, the Rev. Mr. Kirk, of Albany, (now Dr. Kirk, of Boston), came to visit these religious pioneers. On looking over this unfinished foundation, he felt a call from the Lord to help these poor beginners, and immediately resolved to do so. Mr. Kirk accompanied Madame Feller to the United States to plead the cause of the Mission before all denominations of Christians. His warm heart, his glowing eloquence, his love of souls, gained to this cause a great number of friends, many of whom, in spite of the denominational feelings which were afterwards raised, and so embittered the Missionaries' cup, have to this day remained steadfastly attached to the Mission. His services to this cause were invaluable, and will ever be remembered with gratitude and love by the Missionaries themselves, and by all the converts who are acquainted with this laborious but glorious beginning. Next to God, the Mission owe him everlasting gratitude. Dr. Kirk repeatedly visited the Mission at Grande Ligne, and once or twice visited other Stations of its field. He was present when the good substantial building, erected mainly by his efforts, was consecrated to the service of the God of Missions. The discourses he delivered in French on that day and the following are still remembered by those who were then present, with great delight. It may be that when the shadows and imperfections of earth have disappeared in the light of eternal day, his labours on behalf of this cause will shine as one of the brightest among the numerous gems in his crown of rejoicing.

After the erection of the Mission-house, the good providence of God was strikingly manifested in providing a teacher for the new institution. Mr. Normandeau, a priest of the Roman Catholic Church, had been engaged as professor in the Seminary at Quebec for five years. After a long season of doubt and anxiety on the subject of religion, being in the neighbourhood of Grande Ligne, he sought the aid of the Missionaries, and by their instrumentality was led to receive the truth as it is in Jesus. He immediately engaged in the good work; and he has now been labouring for more than twenty years in an unassuming, humble, but most effectual way, to promote the knowledge of the Gospel among his countrymen; and for the last seven years he has been the pastor of a promising, though yet small, Missionary church, in that very city of Quebec, where he formerly taught as a priest in the Roman Catholic Seminary.

The year 1841 was one of the most remarkable periods in the history of this Mission. During that year a new field was opened in St. Pie and its neighbourhood, a parish forty-five miles east of Grande Ligne.

It was brought about by the following circumstances: The house of a certain person having been burned, and, as was common in French Canada (where at that time there were no insurance offices), two of his neighbors went round the country to solicit aid on his behalf. On his errand they came to Grande Ligne, and happened to stop at the house of one of the new converts, and there met the Missionaries. In the course of conversation these men told the Missionaries that in their village (St. Pie) there had come back from the United States a young man whose religious views were changed, and who professed to follow only the doctrines of the Gospel. This young man had a copy of the New Testament, to which he constantly referred. Induced by Mr. Roussy to take a copy of the Scriptures with them in order to examine the Word of God, these men returned to St. Pie and shewed this New Testament to the mother of the young man just spoken of. After comparing the two copies of the Scriptures, and having consulted an old Bible in the possession of an old North-Wester, they wrote to Mr. Roussy: "We are quite perplexed about religious truth, do come and instruct us." This Macedonian cry was immediately answered. Mr. Roussy left Grande Ligne the same day by roads almost impassable. When he reached St. Pie the little band of anxious inquirers were soon gathered around our friend.

Old Mr. Anger, the North-Western traveller, was not forgotten, and his Bible, which he got while in the service of the Hudson Bay Company, was the text-book of authority, to which they constantly referred. There was a reason for its being an authority above others. These French Bibles, scattered here and there in the country, and whose power slumbered as it were until a living voice came to appeal to them—until then the Priests had not contested their genueness as true copies of the Holy Scriptures. The old man had been called by the Priests, and some of the people after him as well, an old fool, an infidel, a devil, because he made no use of the services of the Church, and would not allow his son to be baptized only when of age, so that he could do it of his own promptings. After days and nights of religious intercourse, explanations, reading and praying, Mr. Roussy had the happiness to see eight persons leave the Church of Rome to follow the pure doctrine of the Gospel. These formed the nucleus of a most flourishing station.

We cannot but remark here how the Providence of God had, during so many years, prepared the way for these persons to come to the truth in the two first Stations of the Mission. One was sent in exile with her parents to sojourn in a Protestant country, from which she brought with her the Word of God and the love for it; the other comes from the far West with a Bible to enlighten his old age; and both come to Canada in time to prepare the way for the Missionaries who come all the way from Switzerland to appeal to those Bibles as to a focus of light and truth.

A short time after the opening of St. Pie as a Missionary station, a violent persecution broke out against the converts of that place. The priests of the neighbourhood had been for some time actively engaged in exciting the enmity of their people against the Protestant Christians. A number of young persons gathered before the Mission-house, and when the Missionaries came out to speak to them, they were received by a shower of stones. This was the beginning of serenades with horns, pans, and other discordant instruments, and of violent scenes, which lasted fourteen days, and which terminated with burning the house of one of our brethren. Though very reluctantly, the Missionaries had to appeal to the protection of the law, and to show that whilst they suffered everything for Christ's sake, they might, when they chose, be effectually protected against these outrages. But the fire of persecution only seemed to kindle all around St. Pie a new desire for the Gospel, for the Missionaries were soon constrained to estab-

lish two out-stations, which numbered at least one hundred hearers, who, with but two or three exceptions, left the Romish Church.

While the Lord was preparing a new field, He was also, in the wondrous and mysterious workings of His love, preparing new labourers.

One of the leaders of the Canadian insurrection of 1837-'38, and for several years a member of the Canadian Parliament, Dr. Côte, was obliged to flee to the United States in order to save his life, as a price had been set on his head by the Governor-general. Being a deist, as most educated Frenchmen are, and having no hope beyond this world, Dr. Côte was a prey to great internal anguish. His chequered life appeared to him suspended on a few threads, whose frailty filled him with apprehension. Death was to him the king of terrors. Disgusted with the superstitious worship of the Romish Church, his heart yearned for something that he did not know. His mental sufferings became intolerable, and convinced him that his system of philosophy deceived him. He resolved to read the Bible, of which he was very ignorant, though he had referred to it at times, to find weapons against the priests. At first it brought him no relief. His mental state so re-acted on his body, that his friends perceived it, and said that he was losing his sanity. While in that state of mind, he met on the frontiers of the State of New York a French Canadian family, members of the church of Grande Ligne. The expression of peace which he remarked amongst them greatly impressed him; he said that he did not possess it, and that he knew not how to obtain it. Having heard from them that Mr. Roussy had been the instrument of their conversion, he wrote to him, asking him to come and see him. In relating the memorable change which followed, Mr. Roussy says that "After days of conflict, of earnest prayer, of a crushing sense of sin and condemnation, Dr. Côte, filled with the spirit of adoption, exclaimed, 'Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to men.' We wept," continues Mr. Roussy, "but our tears were tears of gratitude, of happiness, and of love. All was solemn around us; the blessing of God was descending; our cup was filled. Oh! blessed moment, to all eternity blessed!"

A short time after his conversion, Dr. Côte was allowed to return to Canada, where he laboured in different stations, with great success, both as an eloquent preacher of the Gospel, and as a Christian physician, until the autumn of 1850, when his Master called him suddenly to a better world.

In the same year, 1841, two young men, Mr. Cyr and Mr. Lafleur, residing in a village near Grande Ligne, were gradually brought from Romanism to a saving knowledge of the Saviour. Shortly after their conversion they joined the church at Grande Ligne, and entered the Missionary institution, as students for the Ministry, having as a teacher one who had been a priest in the church they had left. After a few years of preparation at Grande Ligne, both were sent to the theological school of Geneva, presided over by the well-known Merle D'Aubigné; and they have been since labouring in the Mission field, one as the editor of an Evangelical French paper, published in Montreal, the *Semeur Canadien*, the other as a pastor and a teacher, at first at St. Pie and out stations, as successor to Dr. Côte, and then at Longueuil, and Montreal.

During the second five years of the mission's operations (1841 to 1846), some thirty persons were brought to the knowledge of the Saviour, under Dr. Côte's ministry at Chazy (on the frontiers of the State of New York); and by the blessing of God upon his labors at St. Pie, many more were converted; so that upwards of 100 persons, affording satisfactory evidence of conversion, were received into church fellowship in those places, and these, added to the converts at Grande Ligne, and its neighbourhood, presented a total of about three hundred souls, rescued from ignorance and sin, and introduced into that kingdom which is "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

If we next glance at the success enjoyed in the five years, from 1846 to 1851, we find that the Missionaries and the supporters of the mission had abundant reason to bless God and feel encouraged. During that period about a hundred individuals were added to the churches in different stations. New Missionaries raised up in the country entered the field, and new instrumentalities were used, so that a broader foundation for future usefulness was laid.

In 1849 a station was opened at St. Mary, a parish twenty miles east of Grande Ligne, where remarkable conversions soon took place. The first two converts were living in the heart of the parish, close to the church and to the Priests; one of them being the school teacher, under the direction of the curate, and the other one of the trustees of the church. The school teacher was a young married woman of remarkable force of character and mind, and widely known for her piety. When she first began to read the Scriptures, it only strengthened her religious dispositions, and made her conscientious scruples more acute.

In her confessions she would often question the Priest as to the surest method of obtaining perfect sanctification. The Priest at last became annoyed at meeting with so much zeal and conscientiousness, and told her, "You need not be afraid of not doing enough to secure heaven—you only do too much; you weary God with your constant devotions and penances. If all the world were like you there would be no hell." What satisfied the Priest did not, however, satisfy this earnest seeker after righteousness; and longing for more light and more holiness, she returned with new zeal to the reading of the Bible. When the Priest heard of it, he came to see his penitent, and said to her, "Now I understand why you were so troublesome with questions of conscience. You read the Bible, that's what troubles you." "I beg your pardon, Sir," said the teacher; "the Bible is the very best book that comforts my soul, because I find there the perfect Saviour who has accomplished for me what I cannot do myself."

Shortly after this woman left the Romish Church, and was followed by her father's household and the church trustee already mentioned. In the course of the year they were succeeded by some ten families, whose withdrawal caused a great sensation in the whole parish. The Priests saw that great efforts must now be put forth on their part, in order to retain something of their influence over the French Canadians who still remained in the church. For this purpose they employed their most popular preacher, *Father Chiniquy*, the Apostle of Temperance in Lower Canada. The Bishops allowed him to preach most intemperately against French Protestants, whose doctrines, in the eyes of the Priesthood, were a rising evil, much more to be feared by them than drunkenness.

Faithful to his orders, and doubtless also to his convictions, Mr. Chiniquy did not spare the French Protestants, but spoke and wrote, and acted against them in every way possible. After a public discussion with one of the Missionaries, Mr. Roussy, at St. Mary's, Mr. Chiniquy, in one of his discourses against "the new and detestable sect," pointing to the Chapel whose foundations were laid, said, "Children of our Holy Church, you will not allow these walls to rise any higher, if you are faithful to your mother." They endeavored to be faithful in their own way; but still the walls rose, and the Chapel was completed; and Mr. Chiniquy, before a year had elapsed, had been sent (the Bishops alone knew why) to a distant settlement of French Canadians in the State of Illinois, in the United States, where we shall have to notice him again presently.

In 1852 this Chapel was opened, and the Missionaries could not but compare this dedication service with that of the Grande Ligne Mission-house in 1840, and bless our Divine Redeemer for the almost incredible transformation which had been wrought among the French Canadians during the interval. Twelve years before, the Grande Ligne Chapel was filled chiefly by English and Anglo-American friends, who were hailing with joy the opening of a new field, full of promise; but now, a much larger chapel was filled mainly by French Canadians, who had been brought to the knowledge of Christ by the labours of the Missionaries. Twelve years ago, the Ministers who filled the pulpit and addressed the people on the occasion were all, without exception, of foreign origin; but now, of the six Ministers present, five were Missionaries on the field, and three of the last named were French Canadians by birth and education, and one of them had formerly been a Priest in the Romish Church.

Until 1850, the education of Canadian girls had been limited to a few received in the Grande Ligne Institution, which was chiefly intended for young men. The need of a separate school for young women, and of more systematic teaching, was deeply felt; and it was resolved that an institution of this kind should be established at St. Pie, under the direction of Miss Jonte, a French lady. After four years of encouraging prosperity, and blessed religious results to the pupils, who averaged twenty in number, the mission-house was accidentally burnt down. The institution was then transferred to Longueuil, opposite Montreal, on the south side of the St. Lawrence, under the superintendence of Mr. and Mrs. Lafleur, until 1864. During that period it averaged thirty pupils, many of whom were converted during the "American Revival," including some who had entered the school as Roman Catholics. Without any exception known to us, their subsequent conduct has been honorable to their profession.

A word is due here, perhaps, as to the nature and the object of these schools. An establishment to prepare young persons as teachers of elementary schools, and as colporteurs and Bible readers, was absolutely necessary in a country where general education had been so sadly neglected. It was also desirable that young men looking forward to the work of the ministry should begin their preparation for it at home. Besides, there were a large number of French Protestant families, isolated in the midst of a Roman Catholic community, and who must remain in ignorance if the Missionaries did

nothing specially for them. To establish as many elementary schools as were wanted was impossible; and the most simple as well as the most *effectual* thing to do was to receive the elder children in the Institutions, and to send them back, after one, two, or three years' good training, to teach the younger children of their own families, and perhaps even their parents.

It must be stated that none of the pupils, however poor, are admitted completely free of charge. Some pay for the whole of the tuition and board, others for half, and others one fourth. The results have been most gratifying.

Since the opening of the Mission House at Grande Ligne, where a Normal School was immediately established, not less than eight hundred pupils have been admitted in the two institutions of Grande Ligne and St. Pie, which was afterwards transferred to Longueuil. The average number of pupils has been yearly about sixty in the two Schools, and many of them were there only for a year—a few from three to six years. The influence of those pupils, who have all received sound religious instruction, and many of whom have been converted in our establishments, must, of necessity, be very great in the country—tending to enlighten many of their countrymen, and an influence which will be durable in its character.

The frequent outpouring of the Spirit of God on our Schools has been one of the cheering tokens of His approval of this (what may be thought) expensive way of laying the foundation for a great and lasting work. Some years have been more marked than others in this respect, especially 1857 and 1865; yet none of those years have passed without our witnessing some conversions.

Besides these institutions, the Mission saw the necessity of establishing, at the first, elementary Schools, in places where the Missionaries had obtained access to the people. For a long time these Schools were mainly sustained by the Mission funds, and by this instrumentality hundreds of children were taught the first branches of secular knowledge, and made acquainted with God's Word, which they read, and portions of which they committed to memory. It is only a few years since those Schools have become independent of the Mission and in the charge of the parents alone.

Mention must also be made of another instrumentality employed by the Mission to scatter abroad religious truth, viz., the Press. *Le Semeur Canadien*, a weekly religious and secular paper, was estab-

lished, in 1851, by the help of a few friends. A few years after it was partly sustained by the funds of the Mission until 1862. During that period it was, no doubt, the means of spreading a good deal of religious truth in the country. It has, since 1862, ceased to be in connection with the Mission.

For a few years past we have extended our labours as far as the frontiers of the States of Vermont and New York. A certain number of our first converts had gone to settle in those parts, where many French Canadian Roman Catholic families reside. Living among American Protestants, their prejudices had gradually given away, and our brethren found them more accessible to the truth than their coreligionists in Canada. The Rev. J. Letourneau was especially blessed among them. After a few years of arduous labours he found himself surrounded with numerous congregations eager to hear the Word of God; and with more than a hundred persons who professed to have passed from death unto life, and from the Kingdom of Satan unto the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Central Station of that field was for several years the Town of Enosburg—it is now Montgomery, in Vermont.

It pleased the Lord to open, in 1853, three new Parishes to the labours of our Missionaries. One of our Colporteurs found access with one of our remarkable French Canadian gentlemen, Mr. B. B., once the editor of a French political paper, in Montreal. After a few visits from our unassuming labourer, the simplicity and the genuineness of his faith, recommended the Gospel so strongly to Mr. B. B.'s heart that he yielded unreservedly to its divine power. Living on a small farm, in the midst of an agricultural population, he became the centre of an Agricultural Society for the improvement of the soil, and the heart and soul of a Missionary Agency. One of the converts of that neighbourhood, a venerable old man, named Poissant, left the Church of Rome when he was upwards of seventy years of age. His unblemished life as a Roman Catholic, his clear comprehension of the Gospel, and his devotedness to the cause of Christ as a Protestant, soon increased his influence as a Christian, and marked him out as a dangerous enemy to the Romish Church. One evening as he was quietly reading the Bible in the house of his son-in-law, with a Colporteur, the house was mobbed by a dozen masked men. He was most cruelly beaten, and a few months after died from the effects of his wounds; suffering most intensely to the last, but with a faith and a

heavenly joy which made him more than conqueror, through Him who loved him and died for him.

Another opening was made in Quebec, in 1857, by the cruel treatment of a Colporteur. The Gospel had been occasionally preached in Quebec, the Bible had been read by a few, and a number of families had been visited by the Missionaries; but still the City remained quite closed against the truth. In 1857, a Colporteur was assaulted in one of the streets, and beaten almost to death by a band of working men, whose zeal had been kindled by the exhortations of the Priests. Immediately after his recovery he desired to preach. The use of the English Baptist Chapel was granted to him; and to the astonishment of all, nearly a hundred French Canadians came to hear him. As he was a very illiterate man, and, though a good Colporteur, not at all qualified to preach, other Missionaries were called to speak publicly to those persons who came there from various motives, some from curiosity, others to amuse themselves, and a few from a real desire to find the truth. Mr. Lafleur and Mr. Normandeau especially, visited Quebec alternately, to preach the Gospel to those inquirers, who at one time numbered more than two hundred—a large number for such a place as Quebec. The result of this movement was the formation of a small Baptist Church, of living, devoted members, over which Mr. Normandeau, once a Priest, presides.

Towards the end of the year 1857 it was rumoured that Mr. Chiniquy, whose history is now well known in this country, had incurred the displeasure of his Bishop. In the beginning of 1858, a letter of his in answer to the threats of the Bishop, was published in a French paper in Montreal. This letter became the occasion of a private correspondence between Mr. Chiniquy and one of the labourers of the Grande Ligne Mission, which continued for some months; after which the Missionary visited Mr. Chiniquy at St. Anne, Illinois, and became intimately connected with his ensuing spiritual and ecclesiastical struggle, as well as with his final secession from the Church of Rome. He also had the privilege to take some part in that remarkable work of reformation among his fellow-countrymen settled in that Western State of the Union.

In the course of a year, nearly as many French Canadians left the Roman Catholic Church in those parts as had left it in Canada since the commencement of the Missionary work there twenty-four years ago; and the close connexion existing between this happy result

and the preparatory labours which had preceded it ought not to be overlooked.

From the position that Mr. Chiniquy had held among the Canadian Priesthood, it was fondly expected that he would be the instrument in the hands of God to accomplish a great reformation in this land. His very popular lectures on Temperance, which had accomplished an immense amount of good, had given him a wide-spread influence, especially on the people of country parishes, who almost worshipped him for the good he had done them. No other man had such favorable antecedents. Knowing this, Mr. Chiniquy determined to come to Canada in the beginning of 1859. Expecting to be more favorably received, he came in the garb of the Priest, but it only gave the impression of a want of frankness, both to Roman Catholics and to Protestants. After a flying visit to this country, where he should have remained to do a great work, he returned to St. Anne, Illinois, and confined his labors to those settlements around him. Less of the combative element and more of a deep spiritual christian character was necessary, even with his former influence, to effect the reformation of which we thought we saw the dawn a few years ago.

In summing up the tangible and visible results of these thirty years of labour, we may safely say that about three thousand persons have been rescued from the influence of superstition to follow the Gospel alone, and that more than twelve hundred of these have become the subjects of divine grace.

We could not show more than half of that number in our midst, owing to the large emigration of our French Canadian Protestants to the United States. This is a somewhat discouraging feature in our Missionary efforts, but we comfort ourselves by the thought that those are only lost to us and not to the Church of God. The nucleus that remains in our midst is sufficient, if faithful, to enlighten a large portion of the country.

The Mission-work embraces some forty Parishes, every one of which contains French Canadian converts. It has twelve Central Stations, ten organised Churches, and employs about twenty laborers, as Pastors, Teachers, Evangelists and Colporteurs.

And now this work began in faith, nurtured with prayer, labor and tears, and on which the Lord, whose work it is, has set the seal of His approbation and crowned with His blessing, is commended to the sympathies and the prayers of all who love the Master and His cause.

There is much to be done in this land, and the work requires zeal, energy and devotedness of no ordinary kind. Let the compact between the heroic Carey and the unfaltering Fuller never be forgotten. While there are the devoted servants of Christ who go down into the pit; let every one who professes to have been rescued from its darkness cheerfully and lovingly "take hold of the ropes."

This little seed from Heaven
Shall soon become a tree,
This ever blessed leaven,
Diffused abroad must be,

Till God the Son
Shall come again,
It must go on,
Amen, Amen!

MONTREAL, July, 1866.

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