

REPORT

16

OF THE

QUEBEC AUXILIARY TRACT SOCIETY.

DECEMBER, 1854.

QUEBEC :

PRINTED BY R. MIDDLETON, 27 SAULT-AU-MATELOT STREET.

1854.

COMMITTEE.

Messrs. JEFFERY HALE,

J. G. CLAPHAM,

R. PENISTON,

J. ROSS,

D. LOGIE,

D. WHITE,

D. WILKIE,

CAPT. HAULTAIN,

Messrs. W. WHITE,

A. C. BUCHANAN,

W. CURRY,

N. N. ROSS,

R. MIDDLETON,

THOS. VAUX,

G. W. PIERCE,

And all the Clergymen of the City being Members of the Society.

Treasurer :—C. WURTELE, Esq.

Secretary :—Revd. D. MARSH.

MEETING HELD AT LECTURE HALL, 19TH DEC., 1854.

JEFFERY HALE, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Moved by the Rev. W. POLLARD, seconded by W. WHITE, Esq. :

1.—That the Report now read be adopted and circulated under the direction of the Committee, and that the following gentlemen (see list) be requested to compose the Committee for the ensuing year, with all Clergymen being members of the Society :—

Moved by the Rev. C. L. F. HAENSEL, seconded by CAPTAIN HAULTAIN :

2.—That the Religious Tract Society of London has been a signal blessing to the world, in providing a supply of religious books and tracts of unexceptionable character, and admirably adapted to the wants and circumstances of the age ; and that this Meeting acknowledges with gratitude the evident tokens of the Divine approbation and blessing, in the large success which has attended the Society's operations in every part of the globe.

Moved by the Rev. Mr. CRONYN, seconded by T. VAUX, Esq. :

3.—That this meeting gratefully acknowledges the renewed obligations of the Quebec Auxiliary to the Parent Society for its generous encouragement to the Colonies, where its valuable publications are much needed in a rapidly increasing population, to counteract the evil tendency of the corrupt literature of the day ; and pledges itself to renewed exertions for the carrying out so pious and benevolent an object.

Moved by the Rev. W. B. CLARK, seconded by the Rev. R. A. CARDEN :

4.—That this Meeting records its conviction, that an organized system of tract-distribution for the city, and of colportage for the entire district, is especially desirable ; and invites all who love the Gospel to unite in their efforts and their prayers for the accomplishing of such an object.

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REPORT

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December, 1854.

THE mission of the Religious Tract Society of London has proved a signal blessing to the world. Its career and its results alike proclaim its heavenly origin. We justly regard it as a true development of that christianity whose pure and saving truths it so widely and efficiently, yet so silently disseminates; furnishing an apt and beautiful illustration of that living power which never fails to adapt itself to the character of the passing age; and knows well how to seize upon new and fitting agencies, rendering them subservient to its purposes and errand of mercy to mankind. The press has become a new energy among the nations—a teacher, a legislator and a ruler: it speaks daily to the millions; and christianity, which only has the words of eternal life, has wisely made it the vehicle of its saving utterances. A Tract has been contemptuously designated “only the dwarfish semblance of a book,” and yet its simple and unpretending character is really much in its favour. The Book of Books—the Bible—is only a collection of inspired tracts, written at sundry times by holy men who were moved by the Holy Ghost. And thus the simple gospel tract, whose author claims for himself neither inspiration nor infallibility, yet containing words which are both inspired and infallible, is a humble handmaid and imitator of the Bible itself, and the society which publishes and circulates such tracts through the nations, is second only to that noble institution whose object is to give the Bible pure, entire and intelligible to the whole world.

The R. T. S. was formed in London in 1799. And among its founders were some of the most excellent and pious men then living of almost every evangelical denomination. Indeed, one beautiful result of its organization was the bringing into such close and hallowed friendship those choice spirits who imparted to the society that peculiar tone and character which has ever distinguished it. It is also worthy to be known and remembered, that it was in the rooms of this Society, and among the members of its Committee, that those conversations took place which resulted in the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The eminent individuals, too, whose pens have been employed in the production of the many excellent volumes which the Society has issued, would never have been induced to labour as they did, but for the existence of this Society, and the encouragement which it afforded to them; so that it is to this Society that we are indebted for many of the most popular and useful works at present in use among us; of this class of writers the estimable Mr. Moggridge, recently deceased and much lamented, is a worthy example, better known indeed as Old Humphrey, whose observations and pithy sayings are familiar to most readers—known also to many juvenile readers as Peter Parley, Grandfather Gregory, or the Old Sea Captain. How much our various Home and Foreign Missions have been indebted to this Society, their reports and the journals of their Missionaries abundantly testify; while Sunday School and Congregational libraries would have been almost unknown and impracticable, if their shelves could not have been replenished from the stores of the depository in Paternoster Row. The testimony of intelligent booksellers in many country towns is peculiarly interesting, who have found that the opening of the depositories of the Society has tended greatly to their advantage, by exciting a more general taste for reading, and consequently a greater demand for books.

The Committee of the Quebec Auxiliary, in coming at this time before the public, (though they can assign a good reason for doing so) feel that their position is somewhat peculiar. The past movements of the Society have been somewhat eccentric, and its appearance before the public

comet-like, at uncertain intervals, so that some may possibly be taken by surprise to-night; and if they do not say to us, Who are you? may at least ask, Where have you been, or what have you been doing? Some one has said that few persons can give a tolerably good account of themselves, which, were it true of the Quebec Society, yet the parent Society has done it in a very interesting volume entitled, "The Jubilee Memorial," where the early doings of this Society, or its predecessors have been permanently chronicled, which we shall take the liberty of quoting in full:—

The first auxiliary which was regularly organized was at Quebec in 1824. A small donation was received from its committee, and a grant of tracts sent in return. No permanent effort was made by this new cause and it soon ceased to exist. In 1833, another association was formed which made a considerable remittance for books, on which occasion the Treasurer remarked, ever since the former Society ceased its operations the difficulty of procuring religious tracts and books has been commonly complained of, the baneful influence of noxious publications deplored, and a gradual decline dreaded in the tone and tendency of the public taste with reference to the general publications of the day. A large supply of suitable publications was immediately sent to the local friends.

It was not long after the Society was revived that a devoted clergyman in Quebec was able to furnish evidence that the divine blessing had rested on its publications. "I have met with one instance of, I trust, decided conversion by means of your little messengers of mercy. This was the case of a captain of a vessel who came into port here and was landed very ill. Being out of my district in the city he was visited by a brother clergyman, who found him well versed in the letter of Scripture, but ignorant of the nature and necessity of conversion. After some conversation he left him, putting into his hand the tract, "The Great Change." On his seeing him again, he declared that although he had for many years pretty regularly read his Bible, and was in the main a moral character, yet until the day he read that tract he never saw that there was a deep meaning in John 3: 3, 5; of which had he died in ignorance, he must have perished eternally. He lay

ill for nearly eight weeks, during which time the Lord was pleased to give him increasing light, wisdom, and knowledge. To many who visited him he bore comfortable testimony of the power and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; and to myself he said, 'The Lord bless you, sir; the Lord bless you in your ministry: never cease telling careless, thoughtless sinners the preciousness of the blood of Christ to a man like me on his dying bed. May you, sir, when brought as low as I am, be blessed with the same support and peace as I now feel.' I trust this is another soul gone to tell what the Tract Society has done for the good of sinners. May the Lord gladden your hearts with many, many more such facts."

The Society's works were scattered by the Quebec Society far and wide between Gaspé and the Ottawa, a distance of from 600 to 700 miles. Its treasurer, in noticing the sales from the depository, remarked—"I may venture to affirm that there are not twenty houses of Protestant families in the place in which your publications are not seen; in many instances to the discomfiture of works of a questionable character which used to decorate but not adorn the tables. These books have been so owned and blessed of God as to produce a manifest alteration in the reading taste of many persons." The reports from Quebec for several years were of an interesting character. "Many instances might be produced," remarked the committee, "of these humble publications becoming, by the blessing of Almighty God, the handmaids to the reception of the truth, and producing conviction in souls hitherto hardened in sin, and deaf to the voice of conscience and the preaching of the Gospel. In short, to many in this city and to hundreds in the country settlements, have your tracts brought comfort, joy, and the peace produced by faith in Jesus Christ.

After this statement was received, a variety of painful events, particularly an awfully calamitous fire, retarded the progress of this once active Society. The parent committee have, since 1840, placed upwards of 60,000 tracts and books at its disposal, hoping that brighter times were at hand, when revived and extended operations would take place.

We sincerely trust that the anticipations of the parent Society concerning this Auxiliary may yet be realized. Four

years have passed away since the publication of that memorial, during which, though little comparatively has been done, yet at no time has the distribution of religious tracts ceased ; but by the liberal supplies from England many thousands have been circulated in various parts of the country, both above and below Quebec. Within the last twelve months two grants of tracts have been received of 10,000 each, a large proportion of which have been already put into circulation from the depository here, and it is sincerely hoped that much good will result.

Towards the close of last year, arrangements were made with Miss Cochrane, and the depository was removed to her Store in John Street. And through the liberality of two devoted members of the Committee, several orders for books have been sent to England, and the sale of the publications of the Society auspiciously recommenced. Many persons had previously expressed a desire to be able to purchase in Quebec, such books as the Society publishes, and since then the demand has considerably increased.

It was with the hope of increasing this demand, by creating a taste for reading the Society's valuable works, and thus diffusing more widely the advantages, that the committee reduced the selling prices considerably below the rate at which they had been sold before, enabling the public to purchase at the London catalogue prices, paying currency for sterling. This they were enabled to do through the liberality above alluded to, and the favorable terms which the Parent Society now offers to the colonies. Whether the same low prices can be continued will depend upon the manner in which the Christian public of Quebec may respond to the appeal made this evening, and afterwards when collectors shall go round to receive subscriptions. The Committee conclude with the expression of their earnest wishes, that from this time the Tract Society of Quebec may never fail for want of patient effort on the part of those who conduct its affairs ; that it may never lack the support of the Christian public ; and most of all, that the Divine blessing may ever rest abundantly on its operations in answer to the fervent prayers which will be offered on its behalf.

SUBSCRIBERS TO TRACT SOCIETY.

	£	s.	d.
C. Wurtele (five years arrears),.....	5	0	0
D. Wilkie,.....	0	10	0
S. Corneil,.....	0	10	0
A. C. Buchanan,.....	0	10	0
Mrs. Racey,.....	0	10	0
Mrs. A. Campbell,.....	0	10	0
Miss Hale,.....	0	10	0
Taylor (Qr.-Master),.....	0	10	0
N. Ross,.....	0	10	0
Captain & Mrs. Wright,.....	1	0	0
Mrs. J. Hall,.....	1	0	0
Miss K. Hall,.....	0	10	0
Miss M. Hall,.....	0	10	0
Miss Clapham,.....	0	5	0
Mr. McLimont,.....	0	10	0
Captain Scott,.....	0	10	0
James Hossack,.....	0	10	0
H. S. Scott,.....	0	10	0
W. White,.....	0	10	0
Rev. C. L. F. Haensel,.....	0	10	6
Donation do.,.....	0	10	6
J. Musson,.....	0	10	0
Mrs. Henderson,.....	0	12	6
Lady Caldwell,.....	0	10	0
James Sloan,.....	0	10	0

£18 8 6

THE QUEBEC TRACT AND BOOK SOCIETY IN ACCOUNT CURRENT WITH CHRISTIAN WURTELE, TREASURER.

1854—		£	s.	d.
April 29—	To Cash for Account Book.....		0	5
May 3—	“ Remitted London Society £30 stg., at 9½ per cent.....		60	16
July	“ Book Case and Shelves.....		4	15
Aug. 19—	“ Carriage of Books.....		0	2
“ 30—	“ Remitted London Society £50 stg., at 9½ per cent.....		60	16
Sept 11—	“ Middleton for Advertising.....		3	7
“ 14—	“ On account of Rent Depository.....		2	10
Nov. 1—	“ Remitted London Society £25 stg., at 9½ per cent.....		30	6
Dec. 3—	“ On account of Rent Depository.....		2	10
Dec. 18—	“ On account of Loan.....		2	17
	To Balance.....	£168	8	3
		£34	5	7½

1854—		£	s.	d.
May 9—	By Cash from late Treasurer.....		0	11
June 26—	“ Donation £50 stg., at 9½ per cent.....		60	16
July 13—	“ On account of Sales.....		10	0
“ 19—	“ Do, do.....		10	0
Aug. 18—	“ Do, do.....		1	16
Sept. 1—	“ Subscription, to date.....		18	8
“ 11—	“ On account of Sales.....		8	16
Oct. 21—	“ Donation—Friend per Rev. Haensel.....		1	5
Dec. 3—	“ On account of Sales.....		22	7
“ 18—	“ Balance due Treasurer.....		34	5
		£168	8	3

E. F.

CHRISTIAN WURTELE,

TREASURER.

Quebec, 18th December, 1854.