

THE  
FIRST REPORT  
OF THE  
MONTREAL AUXILIARY  
BIBLE SOCIETY.

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MONTREAL :  
PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY,  
BY N. MOWER.

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1821.



*At the First Anniversary Meeting of the MONTREAL AUXILIARY BIBLE SOCIETY, held at the City Tavern, June 6th, 1821,*

HORATIO GATES, Esq. Vice President, was called to the Chair,  
on account of the lamented absence of the President, THOMAS PORTEOUS, Esq.

The respected Chairman, notwithstanding his short notice of the part which he had to perform, introduced the business of the Meeting by some very judicious and pertinent observations.

The Report of the Committee having been read by the Rev. ROBERT EASTON, one of the Secretaries, it was,

On the motion of the Rev. JAMES BRUNTON, seconded by CHARLES BANCROFT, Esq.  
*Resolved Unanimously,*

That the Report now read be adopted and printed.

On the motion of the Rev. ROBERT EASTON, seconded by Mr. WILLIAM LUNN,  
*Resolved Unanimously,*

That the thanks of this Meeting be given to His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR GENERAL for his continued patronage of this Institution.

On the motion of the Rev. ROBERT EASTON, seconded by JOHN FROTHINGHAM, Esq.  
*Resolved Unanimously,*

That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the

President and Vice Presidents of this Society, and that they be requested to continue their services.

On the motion of the Rev. ARCHIBALD HENDERSON, seconded by Mr. JAMES FLEMING,  
*Resolved Unanimously,*

That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Treasurer and former Secretaries for their past services; and that the Treasurer be requested to continue in office, and the following gentlemen to act as Secretaries for the present year, namely: the Rev. Messrs. EASTON, ESSON, LUSHER and BRUNTON.

On the motion of the Rev. ARCHIBALD HENDERSON, seconded by J. T. BARRETT, Esq.  
*Resolved Unanimously,*

That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Committee for their particular attention to the concerns of the Society.

On the motion of THOMAS TORRANCE, Esq. seconded by Mr. J. A. DWIGHT,  
*Resolved Unanimously,*

That the following gentlemen constitute a Committee for the present year, viz:

MESSRS. W. LUNN; J. TRY; J. FROTHINGHAM; J. FLEMING; D. FISHER; J. DILLON; J. BIGELOW; DR. PAINE; H. DICKINSON; E. LYMAN; G. SAVAGE; A. SMITH; C. TAITE; W. HEDGE; D. CAMERON; H. SEAVER; A. STANLEY; JACOB DEWITT; A. FESSENDEN; J. JONES.

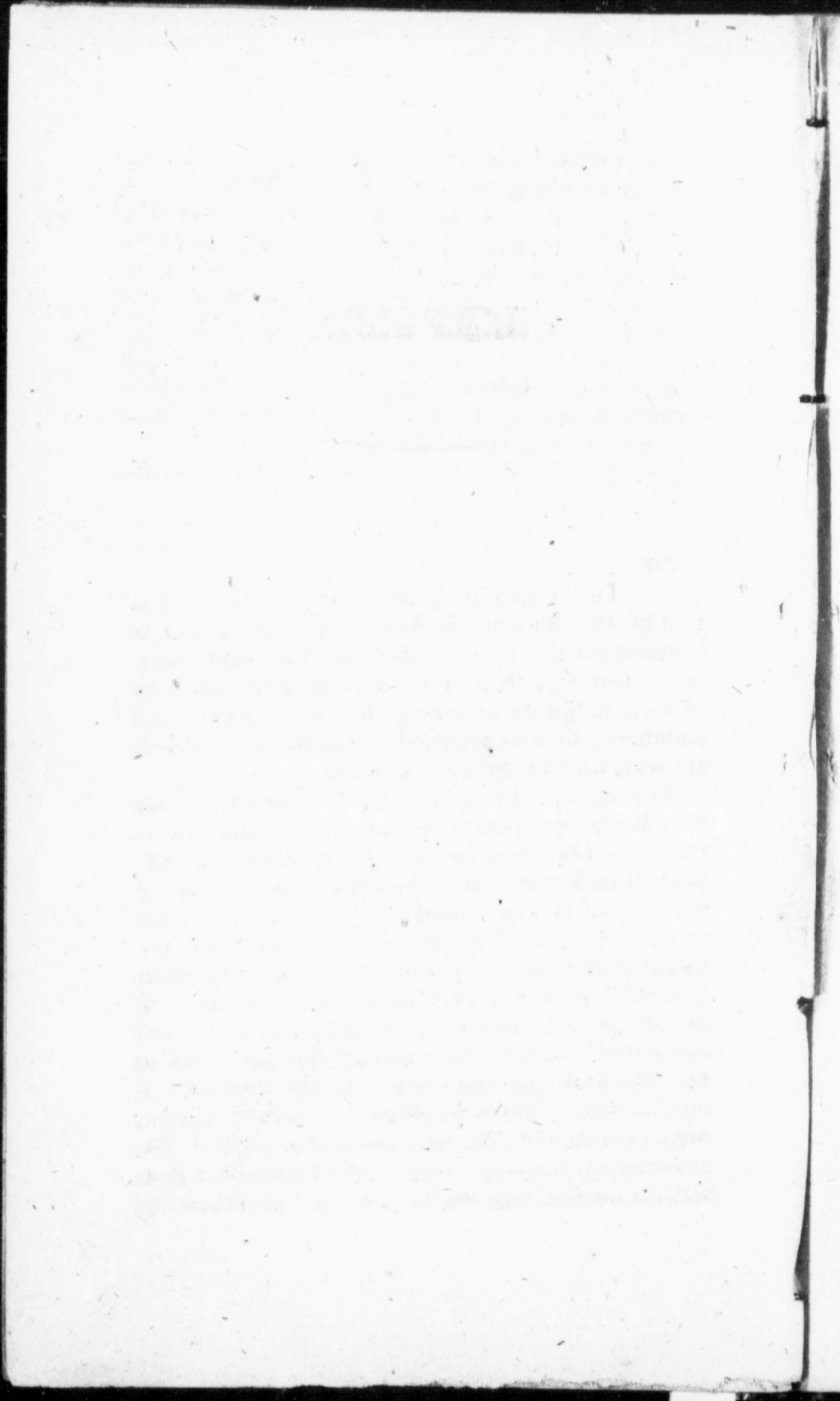
On the motion of the Rev. Mr. LUSHER, seconded by Mr. W. HEDGE,  
*Resolved Unanimously,*

That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Connecticut Bible Society for their liberal donation of 250 Bibles and Testaments; also to the

Washington Bible Society for their generous offer of a considerable number of French Bibles.

This interesting Meeting was concluded with three other motions and votes of thanks, namely to Mr. J. TRY for his attention to the concerns of the Institution in taking charge of the Books, and issuing them as occasion required, during the past year; also to the Chairman, for his conduct in the Chair; and to MESSRS. REIB & DURAND for gratuitously favouring the Society with the use of their House for holding the Meeting.

N. B.—Mr. W. LUNN is Keeper of the Depository for the present year.



## REPORT.

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SIR

THE Committee, appointed at the formation of this Society in August last, to transact its business till the present Meeting, have endeavoured to discharge their duty, according to the best of their judgment; looking after opportunities and embracing such as occurred, for exercising the powers with which they were invested.

The Society being only in its infancy, having only begun its operations, cannot be expected to have much business to do. Its existence is little more than known: and therefore subscriptions for the support and extension of its usefulness, are not so numerous, as they are likely to be when the valuable ends of the Institution come to be more generally known. The same cause operated to prevent your Committee from ascertaining, to any considerable extent, the wants of the Scriptures in this Province, and the desires of the destitute to obtain them. These wants and desires will be more fully developed by the progress of the Society. The information, however, which we have received from various sources, and the facts which have come un-



der our own observation, sufficiently evince the utility and importance of a Bible Institution in this City. And the good which has been already done, by putting the scriptures into the hands of a number of people who could not otherwise procure them, may be considered as a presage of extensive usefulness, in one of the highest departments of christian philanthropy.

We have great pleasure in stating, that the Institution has been singularly favoured with the means of being useful. Bibles and Testaments, to the amount of 1,000 copies, mostly in the English language, have been placed at the disposal of the Committee; partly by the kindness of individuals; and partly by the liberality of the Connecticut Bible Society. It is proper also to notice, that a society of the same description, in the County of Washington and State of New York, has generously proposed to furnish us with a quantity of the French Scriptures for circulation in Canada. The Books have not been received; but the necessary steps have been taken to realize the benefit of so kind an offer.

Our much respected Governor Earl DALHOUSIE has been applied to for permission to bring these books into the Province *Duty free*. And we are happy to state that his Lordship has returned a favourable answer; and along with it, is a letter of permission, addressed to the Collector and Comptroller of the Customs at the Port of St. Johns.

In writing his Excellency on this subject, we expressed the satisfaction which this society would derive from the honour of his presence at the anniversary Meeting; to which his Lordship was pleased to reply in the most obliging and friendly manner, as follows: "I regret that it will not be in my power to attend your annual meeting on the first



Wednesday of June. But I assure you of my best wishes and support to your Society. I am not sure whether I subscribed my name last summer, but if I did not, I request you will do so now, with an annual donation of £5."

As our supply of French Books, originally inconsiderable, is nearly exhausted; so we are the more grateful to our Christian friends in the State of New-York for proposing to make an addition to our stock.

We have applied also to the Parent Society for as many French Testaments, of Mr. De Sacy's Version, as we think will answer the demands for one year. Our reason for commissioning these Testaments in Mr. De Sacy's Version is the exclusive preference given to it by those, for whose benefit they are intended. Tho' it is not the Version, which Protestants use: yet we feel no reluctance to its circulation in Canada, in as much as it has been edited in Paris, expressly for the use of Roman Catholics, and under the sanction of the Society in London to which ours is Auxiliary, and whose object, as is well known, is not to attack the peculiar sentiments of religious parties, but to furnish all of them with ready access to what they themselves consider as authentic sources of religious knowledge and moral improvement. It may be of some importance to read the letter, lately sent to the British and Foreign Bible Society; because it not only contains our application for the aforesaid Testaments, but shews also the manner, in which Providence has been pleased to smile on our infant Association.

The letter was addressed to the Rev. JOSEPH HUGHES, A. M. one of the Secretaries, and is as follows:

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## COPY.

REV. SIR,

“ We have the pleasure of informing you that on the Twenty-Eighth day of August last, a Bible Society, Auxiliary to the British and Foreign Bible Society, was established in this city, under the patronage of his Excellency, Earl Dalhousie, for the purpose of circulating the Scriptures, without note or comment, and of co-operating with the Parent Society in the distribution of them throughout the world.

The very liberal grant of 500 Bibles and Testaments from the Parent Institution, directed to the care of Mr. Lunn of this place, was received at a very seasonable moment ; and excites the gratitude of all the members of the society for a donation so generous and valuable.

We have much pleasure in reporting that those, who belong to the society, are zealous and active in the distribution of the Scriptures among the poorer classes of the population, who have in general expressed real satisfaction in receiving them ; and give us every reason to conclude that the end of the distribution has been answered.

During the late war between England and the United States, about 250 copies of the Scriptures destined for Canada were captured by an American Privateer, and carried into Boston, where they were sold. As soon as the Connecticut B. Society became acquainted with this occurrence, they had the goodness to replace them with an equal number of copies, tho' of inferior quality ; which we have lately received, after a detention of nearly four years at Whitehall on Lake Champlain.

We have also to acknowledge the receipt of Bibles and Testaments of different kinds, to the number of 159 copies, from the Rev. Robert Easton ;

being a remainder of books, belonging to the Parent Society, and committed to him for distribution.

In addition to these supplies, we have been favored with a few copies of the French Scriptures, sent to the Rev. John De Putron, Wesleyan Missionary, on the application of Robert Stevens, Esq. London. Some of these copies have been sold by that Rev. Gentleman, whose time and labors are devoted to the noble purpose of disseminating the Scriptures among the Roman Catholics of Lower Canada. The money arising from the sale of them is deposited in the hands of the Treasurer, amounting at present to £7 17 8.

From information by Mr. De Putron, as well as from our own observation, we are enabled to state to you, that there exists a great want of the Scriptures among French Canadians. And a considerable desire is manifested by not a few of them to obtain copies in their own language. Their connexion and intercourse with the protestant population, has had some effect in arousing them from their ancient lethargy, and exciting among them a spirit of free inquiry. Schools begin to be established among them; and their youth are more generally furnished with the advantage of education. The thirst of knowledge, and the spirit of improvement begin to manifest themselves on every hand. And many circumstances concur in promising success to the design of circulating the scriptures more extensively.

We trust that the Parent Society, considering the favourable opportunity now presented and the wide field opened in these Provinces, will be induced to send us a large supply of the French Scriptures as early in summer, as possible. It seems to us that 1000 Copies of the French Testament would not be more than an adequate supply for the present

year. And we beg leave to observe that Mr. De Sacy's version is the only one, which we can hope to distribute with success; as any other would be condemned by the Priests; and every attempt on our part for its distribution would be strenuously resisted.

The sum now in the hands of our Treasurer, arising from subscriptions and sales of books, amounts to £80. We hope to make some additions to that sum, before we remit it; which we shall do in the course of three months, when the exchange is expected to be more favourable.

Tho' as an Auxilary Society we have no right to claim in books more than one half of the money remitted; yet, knowing the generous principles which actuate the British and Foreign Bible Society, we trust that the religious wants of Canada and the increasing demand for the word of God will prevail with the committee to afford all the encouragement in their power to our infant establishment.

We herewith transmit to you a copy of our constitution and regulations. And that the Father of Lights may continue to bless your society, to prosper its means, and extend its usefulness more and more, is the fervent prayer of the subscribing Secretaries, in the name of the Society to which they have the honour to belong.

(Signed)

{ ROBERT EASTON,  
HENRY ESSON.

Montreal, 3d April, 1821.

Such is the statement of the number of books received, how they came into our possession, and of the means employed to procure additional supplies of those kinds of which there is a deficiency.

Since the above mentioned letter was written, the benevolent Committee of the British and Foreign

Bible Society, having been informed of our organization by Mr. Lunn of this City and anticipating our wants, have very kindly sent no less than 1000 copies of Bibles and Testaments, valued at £230, including freight. These were addressed to the care of that gentleman, and are now in our Depository, 200 of the Bibles, and 300 of the Testaments are of Mr. De Sacy's version; the rest of the books consist of 100 French Bibles of the protestant version, 100 German Bibles, and 300 German Testaments; so that the Germans of this country who are destitute of the word of God, by applying to your Committee, may be supplied with the scriptures in their own language.

The Foreign Assistant Secretary, who communicates this pleasing intelligence, observes to his correspondent "for the encouragement of our Catholic Brethren (in Canada,) your committee may inform them, that 50,000 Copies of the New Testament of De Sacy are actually in circulation among their brethren in France; that the distribution of this version takes place, chiefly by the hands of enlightened and pious Priests of their own communion; that the demand for more copies and for the whole Bible is very great, so that printers and binders, can hardly keep pace with them. The Bible has but just left the press."

We shall next inform the Society of our proceedings, relative to the disposal of the books committed to our care.

Mr. Try, at the request of the Committee, agreed to keep the Depository for the Bibles and Testaments of the Society. Such methods of distribution, as seemed to be the most effectual, the most promising of success, were resorted to by the Committee. An address was early published in the Newspapers of Montreal, that those who were in



want of the Scriptures, might know where to apply. The Members of the Committee exerted themselves in their individual capacity to find out needy objects, and to enrich them with the treasure of Gods word. As the Ladies of the *Benevolent Society* of Montreal are much engaged to their immortal honor in relieving the necessities, and alleviating the sorrows of the indigent and afflicted; it was thought that their assistance in distributing the Scriptures would be of great importance.— They were accordingly requested to make inquiries, in their visits to the habitations of the poor, what families are destitute and desirous of possessing them; and to recommend such families to the Committee. The request was followed with an answer worthy of their humane character.

The great utility of Sunday Schools in all places of their establishment induced the committee to resolve, that, as an encouragement of these schools in Montreal, upon an application by the Managers of them, two Bibles and two Testaments shall be gratuitously bestowed as prizes on the most deserving of the scholars; and that these prizes shall be given every half year, if required. At a late meeting of the Committee, another measure was proposed and adopted, that of visiting the Steam Boats and other vessels, which come to the port of Montreal, and leaving copies of the Scriptures, according as opportunities may occur.— Messrs. Frothingham and Lunn were nominated and consented to attend to that business during the summer.

Such are the plans, which occurred to your Committee, as the best calculated to accomplish one principal end of their appointment and to answer the expectations of the Society. The practice has been to sell the books at *cost* or *reduced prices*, and



in cases of indigence to bestow them *gratuitously*.

In this manner 320 copies of the Sacred Oracles have been disposed of. The names of the receivers, their places of residence and their religious profession have been ascertained, as far as possible, and placed upon record. The Committee have the satisfaction to say that, as far as our observations have extended to these cases of distribution, an ardent desire to possess the Holy Scriptures, and a grateful sense of the kindness of the Society have been manifested.

The last point, to which we desire to call the attention of the Society, is the state of the funds.— It appears from the account of the Treasurer that after a deduction for the necessary expences of the Institution, there remains upon hand the sum of £ 78,18,8 to be remitted to the Parent Society, with some additions which we know of, and which will increase it at least to £ 90.

Your Committee are of opinion that it is practicable with a little further exertion to extend the subscriptions; for tho' the badness of trade and the scarcity of money, so generally felt throughout the Province, must operate as one cause against the increase of our funds; yet there is still another, and a cause which may be easily removed, namely; that a number of our respectable citizens, no less well disposed and liberal than the present contributors, have either not been applied to, or require to be more particularly informed of the important objects of the Institution in order to take the same active interest in its affairs.

By this means the Society would gain additional strength, as it is not wanting in respectability; being patronized by a distinguished Nobleman, who happily for this Country, stands at the head of the Government, and is disposed to encourage every

scheme of public utility. Moreover when it is considered that Bible Societies are established, or establishing in all parts of Christendom; and that these Societies are the great instruments of Providence for enlightening the nations of the earth; for improving the moral condition of man; for conveying the bread of life and the consolations of the blessed Gospel to Millions, who would otherwise remain destitute; we cannot but hope that our Society, co-operating with others throughout the world in advancing the dearest interests of the human race, will command more extensively the attention of our christian brethren in this place.

If the design was only to supply the destitute of our own population with the inestimable treasure of the word of God, the Society would be deserving of every encouragement. But we wish also to enjoy the blessing of God and the gratitude of our fellow creatures in other parts of the world by assisting, as an Auxiliary Society, the Parent Institution in carrying on its immense operations over the four quarters of the Globe; apprehending that the time is not far distant when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. It is in our days, as it was in the days of the Apostles, the word of the Lord is not bound: and we hope and pray that it may have a free and uninterrupted course among all the kindreds of the earth, and be every where glorified.