

Presbyterian church in Canada.
Report of French mission scheme
1860.

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APPENDIX .

REPORT OF FRENCH MISSION SCHEME.

Unto the Reverend the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland.

The Committee on the French Mission Scheme respectfully report as follows :—

Except in regard to the important matter of revenue, your Committee think there is no reason for discouragement at the affairs of the Mission, but on the whole good reason for thankfulness to Almighty God ; for, although the means at the command of the Committee have been small and their operations necessarily circumscribed, the Head of the Church has allowed them to continue the work upon which they entered eighteen months ago, when the Missionary, the Rev. Louis Baridon, was first engaged, and in addition to what may be His hidden designs and movements, He has vouchsafed some perceptible tokens of His favor.

Your Committee have not to report any extension of the Mission, in any one particular, as regards the field and the work. Much as they desire to increase the importance and usefulness of the Mission, by adding to its appliances, the state of the funds has prevented them from giving practical effect to any of the several plans which have occurred to them during the year. They continue to maintain one Missionary in the same district as before, namely, in the Northern part of County Clinton, State of New York, bordering upon Canada. They do not know of any field more favourable for occupation, and the reasons which determined their adoption of it, still weigh with them in resolving to keep it. As for the Missionary, both as regards the character of the man and his faithfulness in the active and prudent discharge of duty, your Committee have pleasure in reporting continued satisfaction. According to last accounts received from him, the stations in which he labours are these seven, Champlain, Chazy, Perry's Mills, Moers, Centreville and Sciota. Mr. Baridon resides at Moers, two miles distant from the Lines separating the British from the American Territory, the centre of the district in which these stations lie. For a condensed statement of the geographical position and religious condition of these localities, your Committee refer to the supplement to their last Annual Report. The stations just named comprise at least fifty families of French Canadians, once Romanist, but now Protestant. A few individuals only can read. With this exception they are all entirely dependant, for the means of religious instruction, upon the periodical visits of the Missionary. "You will understand," says Mr. Baridon, "if this number of families were grouped together in a town or village, it would be easy to form them into an organized congregation, which might enjoy a regular ministry and be more developed. But it is not thus. I visit them and preach to them in turn from place to place, one after another. It is a *missionary work* rather than a *pastoral one*."

Sciota is the principal station. Mr. Baridon preaches there, twice every second Sabbath, to a congregation numbering from 25 to 30. He has attempted to form a regular organisation, but from divisions amongst the people regarding material interests and conduct worthy of reproach, the effort has hitherto failed. "This people," he says, "are in the woods, isolated, and the most of them devoured by the anxieties, 'what shall we eat, what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?' not having sufficient strength to know how to wait upon the Lord and to expose to Him their wants. This state of things, all distressing as it appears, is not of modern history only. This has long been seen among those who are born under the influence of the priests. To combat and to conquer sin which is of the old Adam, has been in all time the

work of an experienced disciple of Christ, and not of a man newly brought to the knowledge of the truth of the Gospel, of which he only understands the surface." The people, however, profess much anxiety for the education of their children. To quote the words of our Missionary, "they have asked earnestly for a school to be placed under the care of the Mission. It would have a good influence, and I love to hope that later, if your treasury is more rich, you will place a schoolmistress there. Looking for better days we continue to labour there, in the hope that one day or another the seed of the word will bear fruit."

At Centreville there are 12 or 15 Protestant families. These the Missionary visits from time to time, preaching sometimes in one locality and sometimes in another. "Some of these families," he writes, "are very poor, owning nothing, and living from day to day like the birds of the air. My presence among them is generally welcome. We pray together and read the word of God, which consoles those of them who are cast down in spirit." Mr. Baridon mentions that the children of the 8 or 10 families resident at Champlain and Chazy, attend the American schools and become Protestants. Your Missionary writes hopefully of the 10 families resident at Perry's Mills, although the meetings there cannot be held so regularly as at other places. "They are generally firm in the paths of the Gospel. The annual meeting which took place there in September last was numerously attended. About 100 persons who formerly bowed under the yoke of the priests were present, and rejoiced over that Word which has taught them the way of safety."

Before leaving this part of their report, your Committee would submit the following quotations from the Missionary's statement, both because they are interesting in themselves, and they show the peculiar nature of the work, in regard alike to its difficulties and encouragements.

"It is necessary to observe that the half of the Canadian population, Protestants and others, who live in the States, are a floating people, constantly changing their residence. It is not easy to determine the degree of good that we can accomplish among those who belong to this class. A family is visited and preached to for some weeks or months. It receives good impressions, they leave the place to go elsewhere, and we see them no more. It may be that the Word has acted upon this people, and that it will grow and develop in the new place to which they will go, and thus one such family may find here the treasure which is destined to enrich it fifty miles hence. An example of this kind occurred recently. Six weeks ago I visited a family near here. I spoke to them of the things of God and read the Bible to them. During this time there came into the house a neighbour who had just come from Canada with his family. The man sat down and I continued to read and speak. He listened, and then went to call his wife, and returned with her. I continued as before, and after some time I asked the man and his wife if these things were true. 'Yes,' they replied, 'this is what we ought to believe. We have come from Canada to the States to be free to hear that Bible read which we are hindered from hearing in Canada.' In the morning I visited them and spoke to them again. They came also to my house, and I instructed them from the Bible. But, not finding work in the place, they went elsewhere. This people received the word but others will gather the fruits. There are constantly like cases in my work.

"As to the other class, that is to say, the stable Protestant families who are in our field, good is certainly done among them. These families have been edified and nourished with the truth, according to the degrees of faith and assurance in the promises of God. The second generation, their children, have participated in the benefit, and have been fortified in the paths of piety which their parents follow. Besides, these persons, if they are of a lively faith, propagate little by little, among their Romanist neighbours, the truth which we teach them. We avoid making a noise and proclaiming as conversions those of which

we are not thoroughly certain. We think it is best, according to Scripture, not to sound the trumpet when we give alms, that is to say, when we are giving the best good for the body and soul."

In addition to other trials the Lord has seen meet to visit our Missionary with severe family affliction and bereavement. In the end of March last, his partner in life was removed by the angel of death, and one of his children was laid down with a protracted and most dangerous illness. This necessarily interfered for a time with the active performance of evangelistic work; but, considering the gracious character of all the dealings of the Lord towards those who love and serve Him, it is not too much to hope, that the influence of this dispensation upon the Missionary and his labours may prove to be most salutary. Let us earnestly pray that this result may abundantly follow.

Your Committee regret exceedingly to report, that the state of the funds of the Mission is most unsatisfactory and discouraging. From the Treasurer's financial statement herewith submitted, the balance on hand at the commencement of the year, will be seen to have been \$153-71½ cts., an amount so inadequate, that but for the liberality of the Treasurer in advancing Mr. Baridon's salary, the work of the Mission would very soon have been brought to a close. Small as that sum was with a whole year's expenditure to be met, the balance now, in the same circumstances, is even less, being only \$136.75.

Agreeably to the injunctions of Synod contained in the "Act for regulating public collections," a circular was issued on the 16th day of March last, in the name and behalf of the Committee, intimating the appointment by your Reverend Court, of a collection to be made in all the churches on the first Sabbath of April, and along with this circular an appeal to be read by ministers from their pulpits. Up to the date of this report your Committee have heard only from 34 of the 111 congregations on the Roll, and the collections received amount to \$348.11. This then is the present pecuniary position of the Scheme,—there is on hand a very little in excess of what is required, to pay the salary of the Missionary for three months, that is, up to the end of August next.

The Committee feel the embarrassment of their situation very much. An important Scheme has been intrusted to them. They are expected to carry it on with some degree of efficiency, otherwise they would not have been asked to undertake its management. The members of Synod, in unanimously appointing a special collection in its behalf and issuing an injunction to ministers and congregations to observe the appointment, clearly assumed the obligation of supplying funds. Some proof is given, that the money spent in the prosecution of this Mission is not spent in vain. Yet, fewer than one third of the congregations has obeyed the instructions of your Court and responded to the appeal of your Committee.

Were even a majority of the congregations to contribute, each, an amount equal to the average of the collections already received, the duty of at least maintaining the Mission in its present state would be discharged. Unless additional contributions be speedily received, your Committee will be under the necessity of discontinuing the Missionary work. They would rather be spared this painful step. They therefore call upon the friends of the Mission to bestir themselves, to be liberal in their contributions towards the support of this Scheme, and to abound in prayer to Him who teaches how to scatter so as to receive a plentiful increase. Then will your Committee be able to hold out the encouragement which Mr. Baridon, in the conclusion of his statement, expresses a desire to obtain, namely, that our treasury may be so replenished as to enable us to extend our work for the employment, not of one Missionary preacher only, but of several.

All which is respectfully submitted in the name and behalf of the Committee.

W. SNODGRASS, *Convener.*

Montreal, May 22, 1860.

TREASURER'S STATEMENT.

RECEIPTS.

Congregational Collections from 17th May, 1859, to 22nd March, 1860.

King, Rev. J. Tawse.....	\$ ct.	Cornwall, Rev. Dr. Urquhart.....	\$ ct.
Smith's Falls, Rev. S. Milne.....	6 00	Dundas, Rev. J. Herald.....	40 00
Lachine, Rev. W. Simpson.....	4 00	Fergus, Rev. G. McDonnell.....	10 05
Milton, Mr. F. McCallum.....	4 00	Beckwith, Rev. W. McLutchison..	12 00
Brock, Rev. J. Campbell.....	6 00		4 00
Toronto, Rev. Dr. Barclay.....	5 00		\$175 05
Perth, Rev. W. Bain.....	26 00		
	58 00		

From 4th April to 16th May, 1860.

Lanark, Rev. T. Fraser.....	\$ ct.	Milton, Mr. J. McCallum.....	\$ ct.
St. Paul's, Montreal, Rev. W. Snodgrass.....	3 00	Ottawa, Rev. A. Spence.....	5 10
Chatham, C. W., Rev. J. Rannie... ..	76 15	Port Hope, Rev. D. Camelon.....	25 40
Brock, Rev. J. Campbell.....	8 50	Huntingdon, Rev. A. Wallace.....	13 00
Martintown, Mr. P. Couroy.....	7 00	Seymour, Rev. R. Neill.....	6 00
Valcartier, Rev. D. Shanks.....	5 00	N. Easthope, Rev. W. Bell.....	25 00
Peterboro', Rev. J. Douglas.....	4 00	St. Louis, Rev. J. Paul.....	6 00
Markham, Rev. J. Gordon.....	6 00	Laprairie, Rev. J. Moffat.....	2 00
Toronto, Rev. Dr. Barclay.....	8 00	Williamstown, Rev. P. Watson.....	1 70
Stratford, Rev. W. Millar.....	21 00	Williams, Rev. R. Stevenson.....	10 00
Niagara, Rev. C. Campbell.....	3 00	Melbourne, Rev. J. Sieveright.....	4 00
Stirling, Rev. A. Buchan.....	12 00	Paisley, Rev. K. McLennan.....	13 00
Lachine, Rev. W. Simpson.....	12 00	Woodstock, Rev. J. Stuart.....	2 00
Pakenham, Rev. A. Mann.....	4 00	Russeltown, Rev. F. Sym.....	5 50
Vaughan, Rev. D. Ross.....	5 00	Beauharnois, Mr. J. M. Browning..	4 50
Perth, Rev. W. Bain.....	5 00	Dundee, Rev. J. Livingston.....	8 00
Fergus, Rev. G. McDonnell.....	12 00		
Hemmingford, Rev. J. Patterson... ..	15 62		\$343 11
	7 39		

Donations.

A friend, Edinburgh, Scotland.....	\$ ct.	Joseph Tallard, Russeltown.....	\$ ct.
A Well-wisher.....	5 00		4 00
St. Joseph Street S. S., Montreal... ..	1 00		\$11 00
	1 00		

Receipts.

	\$ ct.
Balance on hand.....	153 71½
Congregational collections.....	523 16
Donations.....	11 00
	<u>\$687 87½</u>

Disbursements.

	\$ ct.	\$ ct.
Postage and Printing.....	9 12	
Rev. L. Baridon's Salary from 1st May, 1859, to 1st June, 1860.....	542 00	551 12
Balance.....	136 75½	
		<u>\$687 87½</u>

Montreal, 19th May, 1860.

ARCHIBALD FERGUSON,
Treasurer.

RESERVED BUILDING FUND.

<i>Dr.</i>	\$ ct.	1859.	<i>Cr.</i>	\$ ct.
To Postage.....	00 20	May 11.—By balance of account this day ..		97 60
Feb. 23.—To 1 Share Montreal Bank Stock, @ 18 per cent.....	236 00	By rent of house in Dorchester Street.....		80 00
To paid Insurance, house in Dorchester Street.....	6 00	By dividend on £200 Bank Stock.....		64 00
		By balance due Treasurer.....		00 60
	<u>\$242 20</u>			<u>\$242 20</u>

5 Shares Montreal Bank Stock worth 20½ per cent premium.....\$1202.50

Montreal, 19th May, 1860.

ARCHIBALD FERGUSON,
Treasurer.

QUALITATION

