

Presbyterian church in Canada.
Report... on the French mission
scheme. 1862

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RESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA IN CON-
NECTION WITH THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE
FRENCH MISSION SCHEME,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 23RD MAY, 1862.

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APPENDIX D.

REPORT OF FRENCH MISSION SCHEME.

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

Your Committee have sustained the Rev. Louis Baridon in the same field as hitherto. Quietly and prudently he has been pursuing the work of an Evangelist, visiting from house to house and preaching according to opportunity. There is much less prejudice against Protestantism than there used to be in the district. Some, who a short time since reviled, now listen attentively to God's word from the Missionary's mouth. Opponents have ceased to oppose and begin to show a favourable disposition. Offices which formerly had no value except when performed by the Romish priest are in some instances preferred from the Protestant Missionary. These things induce your Committee to believe that Mr. Baridon's persevering efforts have not been altogether in vain, and to hope that more satisfactory fruits will appear in due season.

In his latest communication to the Committee, Mr. Baridon says,

"I ought to remind you that our work amongst the French Romish families scattered abroad is essentially a missionary work more than a pastoral one. Our field must be plowed and plowed again, and sowed with the good seed of the word of life, before we can reap a plentiful harvest with a song of royal triumph. Nevertheless we have not plowed and sowed in vain. I am happy to tell you that a few persons have been enlightened and are now walking in the Gospel truth. Some others, feeble and fearful, have been strengthened and enabled to confess Jesus Christ, before their fellow-citizens bowed under the yoke of the priest. Others have heard about the Bible for the first time. I have paid numerous visits to such persons, and in almost every house where I have been well received, I have seen some good result of our work in behalf of their immortal souls. I have not noticed a single case in which I have not been well received."

The friends of the Mission should certainly pray for greater evidences of successful labour than appear in this statement, but if any think our French Mission a mere name, we ask them to read again these simple words, and consider whether or not they report far more than enough to reward the Church's scanty support, and encourage a much greater interest than seems to prevail. What is our Missionary's position? He goes in amongst a people trained to hate Protestantism. They are scattered over a territory very much more extensive than the bounds of our largest Charge. They live mostly in the woods. Priests are sent to minister to them according to the form of their fathers' worship. They are poor, and our missionary can hold out no temporal inducement to them to follow his teaching. Those of them who have received any education have much sophistry to throw back on Biblical truth; they have been taught in the school of the priests to argue against Protestantism, and this some of them do with great ability. "The decidedly ignorant are incredulous for all things, except for the errors and fabulous practices of the Church of Rome." The sincere Catholic is attached to his Church; the insincere is not prepared to encounter the persecution he must face on becoming a Protestant. With God, indeed, it is possible to change this state of things in a day. But as such matters usually go in mundane history—taking for example our mark from the formation of a congregation in a community professedly Protestant, within a field every corner of which is easily accessible—ought it not to be sufficiently pleasing and encouraging to learn, that, with an agency which the Church seems to grudge and in a field in which none of us would think of working, here and there an individual and a family have from year to year been brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Who

has the faith to look there for a large congregation, an organized church, in twenty or thirty years? Yet our Missionary, after labouring first for some time without countenance or support from any church, working with his hands to maintain his bodily life, and then for a period, commencing three and a half years ago, at the salary which your Committee offered him, can assure us that "if it were possible for our French families to meet together for the worship of the Lord, we would have a regular attendance of about three or four hundred people, that in one district there are forty persons who have come out of the Romish Church, and that last Sabbath he preached in a school room to twenty-five attentive listeners."

We do not know why it is that so many of our congregations persistently decline, year after year, to do anything for the Mission. We do not know what are the views and expectations which must be satisfied before we shall succeed in receiving from such the sympathy of a little giving. We have only to say, that, with full confidence in Mr. Baridon as a wise Evangelist, and with far fewer indications of success than those just noticed, we would think it a very great pity that the Mission has not more friends, and that the friends it has do not contribute more freely for its extension. Your Committee are glad to know that, small as Mr. Baridon's salary is and laborious the work he performs, he is not disposed to feel discouraged. He thus states his determination and the ground of it;

"By this, above recorded, you will see, dear Sir, that our work on the Provincial Line is soon blessed. We have certainly done some good to many souls and got ground on the kingdom of Popery. Without doubt we should be more and more thankful to talk about thousands of conversions to the Lord; but it is again the little time. We have good prospect to come. We will not be discouraged. We shall pursue our good work so far as we shall be sustained by our friends, who are desirous to see the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ come with power."

It has already been publicly announced to the Church, that in the beginning of November last, the Rev. Emmanuel Tanner, Pastor of the French Reformed Church of Montreal, along with twenty-six communicants and twenty adherents of his congregation, addressed a memorial to your Committee, containing a sketch of their congregational history and an application to be embraced in the operations of this mission, with reasons for making it. Mr. Tanner has been nearly twenty-one years in Canada, for the most part in Montreal and neighbourhood. Fifteen years ago he was inducted as Pastor of the French Reformed Church in that city, which connection he has maintained ever since. The Committee had no difficulty in assuring themselves of his thorough respectability as a Christian gentleman, and of his fitness for pastoral or missionary work among the French Canadians. The circumstances which led him and the majority of his people to seek connection with us, having been duly inquired into and considered, were found to be such as to demand our sympathy and strongly incline us to receive them. But your Committee had no pecuniary support to offer, and they were aware, that while Mr. Tanner relinquished the salary he had been receiving from the "French Canadian Missionary Society," he could easily place himself in a much more favourable position in respect of worldly means than they could hope to offer him. This having been fully explained to the memorialists, the reply made to them was to the effect, that if they were willing to ally themselves to a Committee who had then no means of helping them, steps would be taken to represent their case to the Church, with the view of obtaining aid. Your Committee now submit this action to the Synod and crave an express deliverance upon it which they hope will be favourable.

Mr. Tanner's flock is yet small and poor. But the connection between him and his people is a very endearing one. They have shown their

attachment to their friend and pastor in his recent trial, and were this the proper place for such details, instances of a self-sacrificing devotion for their good on his part might be cited. Your Committee have reason to believe that the congregation has in it the elements of stability and growth, which will not fail to be strengthened by a little kindly, seasonable attention. Should the Synod approve of the Committee's course in the matter, the responsibility of rendering assistance must be accepted, and the aim to give a regular allowance from the funds of the Scheme for the support of ordinances kept steadily in view. Your Committee have no doubt of the ability of the Church to do with ease all that is required. Did each of our congregations conform to the Synod's appointment of an annual collection, with even a moderate liberality, there would not only be no difficulty in maintaining existing operations, but also means for extending them. It is believed that our having a foothold on the chief centre of French Canadian Romanism will operate as a wholesome stimulus to that end. Meanwhile your Committee have done what they could to aid Mr. Tanner and his congregation. They have provided accommodation for their religious assemblies in the little wooden building on the mission lot in Montreal, and have assumed the responsibility of a donation of \$200 payable out of the last collection.

The following extract from a report recently received from the Consistory of the Church will be read with interest:—

“We have two services every Sunday, one every Tuesday, and a small Bible class every Sunday afternoon. We have also a singing lesson on Monday.

“Of the 26 communicants who signed the petition to you, one has died in the peace of the Lord, one has gone with the minority, another not being strong enough to support persecutions and pecuniary difficulties, has gone back to Romanism, but we do not think he can remain long in it. Three of the communicants, to whom the petition had not been presented, have remained with us, and three other persons have been lately admitted to the Lord's Supper; so that the present number of our communicants is 29. Twelve of them were previously Roman Catholics. The others were born Protestants, and nine are French Canadians.

“Though we are thankful to God and to you for the place we occupy at present, we feel much the want of a neat and suitable place of worship, and are persuaded that its erection will contribute to the increase of the congregation, and have a good effect upon our French-speaking citizens.”

Your Committee are thoroughly convinced of the great advantage it would be to have a neat ecclesiastical edifice erected for the use of the congregation. For this purpose the mission lot in Dorchester Street, Montreal, being in a central position as respects the whole city and its French Canadian population, is very suitable. We have failed to get any better at a reasonable cost. A plan of a Gothic structure, adapted to the configuration of the ground, has been procured. It meets the views of your Committee. Specifications have also been prepared, and even tenders from some of the most respectable tradesmen in Montreal have been received. At the very lowest estimate the cost of a building according to plan would be \$4000. The Treasurer's statement shows \$1842 at the credit of the Reserve Building Fund. The balance required would have to be raised by subscription. Your Committee see no reason to shrink from this undertaking. At the rate of from \$20 to \$24 from each of our congregations—collected, say, by a committee of young people in small sums—the amount required would be obtained. This is a work for the Church at large, and if done in the way suggested, one good effect would be the enlistment of the sympathies of the Church to a greater extent than at present on behalf of the Mission. Your cordial recommendation of this enterprise is craved, and should you be pleased

to grant it, your Committee are prepared to proceed at once to test the practicability of the scheme.

A few days ago your Committee sent Messrs. Baridon and Tanner on a missionary tour up the Ottawa, chiefly to visit Buckingham and vicinity, with which Mr. Tanner is well acquainted, and where there is a considerable number of French Canadian Protestants. It is hoped that this visit will be refreshing to those for whose benefit it is intended, as we have been led to believe they have few opportunities of enjoying the preaching of the Gospel and the dispensation of ordinances.

A request has been recently received from the French Canadian Protestants resident in the Township of Bayfield, on the shore of Lake Huron, consisting of some 20 families, that Mr. Baridon or Mr. Tanner should visit them for a week or two, meet with them for Divine service, and dispense the ordinances of religion. Your Committee have had pleasure in appointing Mr. Tanner to this duty, and he will proceed thither immediately after the meeting of Synod. It is pleasing to be able to state that the application for this favour is accompanied with a promise to defray travelling expenses.

A purchaser has at last been found for the property of the Mission at Sorel. It has been sold for \$400 payable in five years, the purchaser to pay six per cent. on the mortgage, and to have the option of redeeming the property at any time within that period. The terms of the sale are less favourable than your Committee could have wished, but as the property was rapidly depreciating in value, it was deemed advisable to accept them.

In conclusion, the attention of the Synod is anxiously directed to the state of the funds as shown in the Treasurer's appended report. Every thing was done in good season to advise ministers and congregations of the appointment of a special collection to be made on the first Sabbath of April last, and to set prominently forward the necessity of liberal contributions to meet the enlarged liabilities of the Mission. It is with the regret of extreme disappointment that the Committee report a falling-off of upwards of \$80, as compared with the receipts at this time last year. The number of congregations that have remitted collections is only 48, being 5 less than last year, and considerably under half the Charges on the Synod Roll. Many congregations systematically persist in contributing nothing from year to year. A number cannot be depended upon for regular remittances. Most of the city congregations are on the list of non-contributors. \$280 are on hand to face an expenditure of at least \$700 during the coming year. These are sore discouragements for the Committee to contend with. Your Committee plead the necessity of a more liberal provision, the respect due to the appointments and recommendations of the Synod, the importance of the Scheme, its enlarged operations, and the increasing tokens of usefulness with which it is blessed to immortal souls and the glory of the Redeemer, as reasons which ought to have weight with those congregations that have not responded to the last appeal. Their immediate interposition is most earnestly solicited to avert the serious embarrassment which threatens the whole concern.

Your Committee turn from this unpleasant subject to devote the closing word of their report to the expression of their special gratitude to the friends of the Mission in the congregation of Perth, from whom they have this year received the noble contribution of \$93.08.

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

W. SNODGRASS, *Convener*

Montreal, 23rd May, 1862.

TREASURER'S STATEMENT.

RECEIPTS.

Congregational Collections from 19th May 1861 to 6th April 1862.

Arnprior, James Blair, Esq.....	\$ 4 00	Lachine, Rev. W. Simpson.....	\$5 00
Belleville, Rev. A. Walker.....	5 00	Lanark, Rev. T. Fraser.....	3 00
Beckwith, J. McArthur, Esq.....	4 00	Lancaster, Rev. T. McPherson.....	7 00
Chatham, C.W., Rev. J. Rannie,...	5 00	Matilda, Rev. T. Scott.....	1 00
East Williams, Rev. R. Stevenson..	4 00	North Georgetown, Rev. Dr. Muir.	6 00
Fergus, Rev. G. McDonnell.....	10 00	Pakenham, Rev. A. Mann.....	5 00
Hornby and Trafalgar, Rev. Wm.		Russelton, Rev. W. Masson.....	5 00
Stewart.....	4 00	Valcartier, Rev. D. Shanks.....	2 00
Huntingdon, Rev. Alex. Wallace...	4 00	Vaughan, Rev. D. Ross.....	5 00
Huntly, Rev. J. Sinclair.....	5 00		
Litchfield, Rev. Jos. Evans.....	10 00		\$94 00

From 6th April to 16th May, 1862.

Bathurst, Rev. Wm. Bain.....	\$ 3 50	Middleville and Dalhousie, Rev. W.	
Brock, Rev. J. Campbell.....	3 00	Clarke.....	6 00
Brockville, Rev. D. Morrison.....	14 55	Montreal, St. Paul's, Rev. W. Snod-	
Buckingham and Cumberland, Rev.		grass.....	76 20
P. Lindsay.....	11 00	Martintown, Rev. J. Mair.....	7 00
Cantley and Chelsea, Rev. J. Borth-		Niagara, Rev. J. Campbell.....	10 00
wick.....	3 45	Newmarket, Rev. J. Brown.....	4 00
Chatham and Grenville, Rev. J.		Ottawa, Rev. Alex. Spence.....	25 00
Black.....	8 00	Peterboro', Rev. James Douglas...	10 00
Dundee, Rev. J. Cameron.....	10 00	Port Hope, Rev. D. Camelon.....	8 00
Eldon, Rev. J. McMurchy.....	8 00	Perth, Rev. Wm. Bain.....	13 36
Fergus, Rev. G. McDonnell.....	11 00	Smith's Falls, Rev. S. Mylne.....	5 00
Goderich, Rev. A. McKid.....	5 00	Seymour, Rev. R. Neill.....	20 00
Henningford, Rev. J. Patterson...	7 38	Wawanosh, Rev. Wm. Bar.....	2 00
King West, Rev. J. Carmichael.....	10 00	Williamstown, Rev. P. Watson.....	11 00
Kitley, Rev. D. Evans.....	2 00	Whitby, Rev. K. Macleannan.....	8 00
Litchfield, Rev. J. Evans.....	5 00	Wolf Island, Rev. G. Porteous.....	4 00
Lachine, Rev. Wm. Simpson.....	10 00	Valcartier, Rev. D. Shanks.....	2 25
Lanark, Rev. Thos. Fraser.....	3 00		
L'Orignal and Hawkesbury, Rev.			\$335 69
G. Ferguson.....	9 00		

DONATIONS.

St. Joseph Street Sabbath School,		St. Andrew's Association, Perth...	24 75
Montreal.....	6 00	Missionary Association, Perth.....	24 00
A friend.....	1 50	Congregational Association, Perth..	30 97
"A family who have no minister to		Rev. and Mrs. Baridon.....	5 00
give it to".....	3 00		
Rev. L. Baridon.....	5 00		\$120 22
Missionary Association, Cornwall...	20 00		

1861. RECEIPTS.	
May 16th, Balance on hand.....	245 25
Congregational collections.....	429 69
Donations.....	120 22
	\$795 16
Balance in hands of Treasurer.....	280 56

DISBURSEMENTS.	
Postage.....	7 65
Printing.....	2 75
Travelling expenses.....	4 25
Rev. L. Baridon's salary.....	500 00
Balance in hands of Treasurer.....	280 56
	\$795 16

RESERVED FUND.

To assesment for 1860 and 1861.....	13 50	May 16th, 1861, Balance on hand...	144 65
Insurance.....	6 00	Dividends on Bank Stock.....	88 00
One share Montreal Bank Stock		Rents, House in Dorchester St.,	
16½ per cent.....	233 00	Montreal.....	70 00
Balance on hand.....	50 15		\$302 15
	\$302 15		
Balance on hand.....	50 15		
6 shares Montreal Bank Stock at 16 per cent. premium.....	1392 00		
Mortgage on the sale of the Church, Sorel.....	400 00		
			1842 15

ARCHD. FERGUSON,
Treasurer.

Montreal, 23rd May 1862.

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