

THE

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OF THE

BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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a suitable dwelling-house and chapel. There is now no convenient place for holding public religious services; and the missionary's family live in a rented house—an arrangement objectionable on the ground of expense and for other reasons.

MISSION IN BRAZIL.

RIO DE JANEIRO: the capital of the country; population variously stated up to 400,000; occupied as a mission station in 1860; missionary labourers—Rev. Ashbel G. Simonton; one native assistant missionary; one native colporteur.

SÃO PAULO: 220 miles W. S. W. of Rio de Janeiro; chief town in the province of the same name; population 22,000, occupied as a mission station in 1863; missionary labourers—Rev. Alexander L. Blackford and his wife. **RIO CLARO,** among German settlements in this province; occupied for missionary labour in 1862; missionary labourers—Rev. Francis J. C. Schneider and his wife.

Under the direction of the Mission—three native colporteurs, supported by the American Bible Society and the British Bible Society.

The ordained missionaries in this country are the same as reported last year. The removal by death of Mrs. Helen Simonton, wife of the Rev. A. G. Simonton, at Rio de Janeiro, on the 27th of June, was a deeply afflicting event not only to her husband and other relatives, but it was a sad loss to the mission, as she appeared to be admirably qualified for the work to which she had devoted her life. Her last hours were eminently peaceful. The missionary work in the capital has received a valuable assistant labourer in an ex-priest, to whom reference will be made further on. The Rev. F. J. C. Schneider was united in marriage at Sao Paulo, on the 22d of March, 1864, to Miss Ella G. Kingsley, late of Baltimore, Md. Mr. Schneider spent several months at Rio, engaged in missionary service, but returned to his former sphere of duty in April.

A general survey of this country as a field of missionary labour presents no specially new features of interest, but it shows the door to be remarkably open for judicious evangelizing efforts, and it also shows that these efforts are greatly needed in view of the spiritual condition of the people; while the history of this mission for the last year furnishes pleasing evidence of the Divine blessing on labours of this kind.

For particular statements, reference is made to the reports of the brethren as published in the missionary periodicals. Their work has been two-fold—that of preaching, and the circulation of Divine truth by means of the press. The expediency of opening a school at Sao Paulo has been much impressed on Mr. Blackford's attention, and he hopes to have one commenced at an early day.

In Rio de Janeiro, the religious services mentioned in former reports were kept up, but on the 4th of December the English service which had been held once on the Sabbath was discontinued, owing to the pressure of work for the natives of the country. This English service enjoyed clear proofs of God's blessing, and was relinquished with mutual regret by the missionaries and the little company of English and American worshippers. The Portuguese services were well attended, and repeatedly the place of worship could not hold all that came. Twelve

persons were admitted to the communion of the church, all converts from Romanism excepting two, who are English. The list of native church members embraced thirty-three names, and their Christian deportment is commended. In Sao Paulo, an English service was maintained for nine months, and as one of its fruits the conversion of a young Englishman is mentioned. The Portuguese service was held from February onward, attended by from four or five to over thirty persons. Weekly meetings and a Sunday-school were also held, and visits were made by Mr. Blackford to two settlements twenty or thirty miles distant. Three or four persons gave evidence of having accepted Christ as their Saviour, some of whom would soon be admitted to the church. Among the German settlements, Mr. Schneider has resumed his self-denying labours, and though he encounters opposition and reproach, because he will not administer the sacraments to persons who give no evidence of piety, and who often live in the practice of gross immorality, he nevertheless has reason to believe that his services are gaining influence, and that the Word preached is not spoken in vain.

The hopeful conversion of the priest referred to above has caused lively joy to our missionary brethren. Mr. Simonton speaks of him—“As one whose talents and character make him a fit instrument for good to his countrymen. He had long been convinced that the Church of Rome was corrupt, and was striving as he could to preach evangelical truths, and on this account had made himself loved by the people, and with equal heartiness disliked by the authorities of that church. When Bro. Blackford was led to visit him, and to inform him of the beginnings of an evangelical movement in Brazil, the door was open that he had long wished for.”

The employment of colporteurs, most of them supported by the British and Foreign and the American Bible Societies, but labouring under the supervision of the missionaries, has been marked with continued encouragement. They visit many families and hold religious conversations with them, while prosecuting their direct work. The Sacred Scriptures thus distributed, and the religious publications circulated by the missionaries, are in this country peculiarly important as a means of spreading a knowledge of the true religion. To these has been lately added the publication of a semi-monthly religious newspaper, called *Imprensa Evangelica*, or *Evangelical Press*. It will extend the influence of the mission, and reach many persons not otherwise accessible. Its success has already become much greater than was expected, and the brethren are considering the expediency of having it published weekly.

Mr. Simonton thus concludes his report: “More opposition has been developed, which is a proof that progress has been made. The signs are hopeful. Either the Gospel or Infidelity must win the day. The Papacy and Progress are more and more seen to be at war with each other. The great danger is that the nations will be flattered and deceived by the false progress, which is divorced from the virtue, morality, and piety inculcated alone in God’s Word, and produced alone by his regenerating Spirit.”