

THE

Twenty-ninth Annual Report

OF THE

BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

PRESENTED TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN MAY, 1866.

New York:

MISSION HOUSE, 23 CENTRE STREET.

1866.

Another missionary it is expected, will soon be sent out to this field. A chapel and mission premises are very much needed. A desirable property, at a reasonable rate has been offered by the authorities; which, if the necessary funds can be raised, will be purchased and will do much to give our cause a name and a standing in that region.

Mr. Wallace closes his report by saying, "it is not what perhaps, the Church at home would regard as flattering, or perhaps even encouraging. But we who are here, and can see the change that is being wrought on the minds of the people, are greatly encouraged and have high hopes. We have no right to complain, as Isaiah did, "I have laboured in vain. I have spent my strength for naught."

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 and *Rev. Jose Manoel da Conceicao*; 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.

Missionary operations have been continued steadily in this country during the year, and with increasing favour. The blessing of the Lord has accompanied the efforts put forth in the proclamation of his truth, and not a few have been added to the Church. The lives of all have been mercifully preserved, and no part of the work has been arrested by the failure of health.

Mr. George W. Chamberlain was appointed an assistant missionary by the Committee in October last. Having been on the ground and engaged for some time in kindred work, he has been enabled to enter at once upon direct evangelical labour. He has made good progress in the study of the language, and will soon be licensed by the Presbytery of Rio de Janeiro to preach the Gospel.

Two preaching services and a Bible Class have been regularly maintained on the Sabbath, as also, preaching every Thursday night. The attendance on these services has been most cheering, being limited, at times, only by the size of the hall. A Sabbath-school was maintained a part of the year. The Lord's Supper was regularly administered every two months, and, with one exception, there were additions to the Church. On these interesting occasions, all who were admitted to sealing ordinances on profession of their faith, were from the Romish persuasion. The Church embraced at the last report, thirty-three names; to its membership have been added fourteen on profession, and one by certificate. Fifteen adults and seven children were baptized.

In Sao Paulo and the adjoining regions, the truth has been proclaimed, and many have heard it from the lips of the preacher and through the printed page. A Church was organized in March, and six persons received on profession of their faith. These were all converts from Romanism. Thus far, their lives have given satisfactory evidence of their sincerity. Some five or six others have shown such steady and active interest, as to induce the belief that they have experienced a thorough work of the Spirit in their hearts. An encouraging and a hopeful field in connection with this station, is the village and district of Brotas, 170 miles in the interior, and on the very borders of civilization. In this parish, Sr. Conceicao formerly laboured as a Romish priest, and here with the other brethren, he spent a part of the year visiting and preaching. At the late visit of Mr. Blackford and the ex-priest, a Church consisting of eleven members was organized. Others have expressed their desire to profess publicly their faith in Christ. In that community the Gospel is making most decided progress. Rev. Mr. Schneider will devote a portion of his time and labour to this field.

The work at Rio Claro has been as usual, mainly among the German settlements. Mr. Schneider has been assiduous in his endeavours to lead his countrymen and others, from a cold formalism and chilling faith to the spirit of the Gospel, and to a cordial reception of its saving truths. Though labouring amidst trials and discouragements, he has the evidence that his strength has not been spent wholly in vain, as some have been and are interested in the great salvation.

Colportage has been employed as an agency in circulating God's truth, and much good has been done. The colporteurs and missionaries have visited many towns and villages (in the Western and Northern parts of the province), and have put into circulation altogether over 1,100 copies of the Scriptures. Another agency for good, is the publication of a semi-monthly religious paper, called the *Imprensa Evangelica*; of which, 450 copies are circulated. This sheet has carried truth to many who would not otherwise have heard it, and it has done something to nurture a feeling of toleration among the people, and to make them better acquainted with the character of Protestantism, as well as some of the evils of Romanism.

In December last, the members of the mission formed themselves into a Presbytery, called the "Presbytery of Rio de Janeiro," which is to be in connection with the Synod of Baltimore. *Jose Manoel da Conceicao* was ordained, after examination, to the full work of the Gospel ministry.

The brethren in their preaching tours, have found no obstacle to their work. Many listened with interest to the simple message of salvation. Though Romanism is the dominant and state religion, yet infidelity abounds, and upon the masses, the Papacy has but a feeble hold. Few advocates of the system are found. The Constitution, while decreeing that the religion of the Empire is, and shall

be Catholic, or Apostolic Roman religion, yet tolerates other religious beliefs—excepting that which denies the existence of God, or the immortality of the soul, and prohibits the erection of Churches having the exterior form of a temple. A wide construction is given to this latter restriction, and chapels have been reared by Protestant settlers, of a plain exterior, but everyway suitable for public worship. The great want of our mission in Brazil is, a chapel in Rio de Janeiro, and in some other localities. The work is reaching that stage, in which a building better than some small and inaccessible hall should be had, to show both the growth and the permanency of the mission.

The influence of the United States upon Brazil, is every year increasing, and there is a growing disposition upon the part of thinking men, and those in authority in that land, to look into the reasons of the greatness and rapid development of the United States. This opens the door wider for the missionary; hence, “the separation of Church and State; the Sunday-school, the Christian Sabbath and the Bible in the hands of all the people, are topics upon which the missionary, and, above all, the American missionary can, with far more ease than formerly, secure hearers.”

“We enter upon the New Year,” says Mr. Blackford, “with most hopeful prospects, a wide field rapidly opening up, the people famishing for the bread of life, and the cry for help sounding from many parts. There is reason to believe, that in nearly every place where the Word of God has been carried, there are some who embrace and love it.”

MISSIONS IN WESTERN AFRICA.

Liberia Mission.

MONROVIA: Rev. Messrs. Amos Herring and Thomas H. Amos; Mr. B. V. R. James, teacher.

KENTUCKY: Rev. H. W. Erskine; Mr. D. C. Ferguson, teacher.

HARRISBURG: Mr. Simon Harrison; Mr. F. A. Melville, teacher.

MOUNT COFFEE: Mr. Thomas E. Dillon, licentiate preacher.

SINOUE: Rev. James M. Priest; Mrs. Mary Parsons, teacher.

MARSHALL: ———.

SETTRA KROU: Mr. Washington McDonough.

The Rev. Thomas H. Amos arrived in this country in July, on a visit for his health. A short time before leaving Liberia, he was called to part with his wife by death. Regaining his health, and having again entered into married life, Mr. Amos returned with his family, embarking for Monrovia in the latter part of March. The Rev. A. Herring has relinquished the charge of the church in Monrovia, of which, for several years, he was the “Stated Supply;” he will hereafter fulfil the duties of a colporteur in that city and vicinity, as far as his advanced years permit.

The church in Monrovia has made a unanimous call for the