

THE

Thirty-first 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, 1868.

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1868.

"several conversations with a liberal priest, who has become separated from the Church of Rome, and has a distinct congregation of his own. He is more advanced than others, though not yet fully enlightened on many important points—still cleaving to some of the erroneous dogmas of Rome."

Whilst it is yet a day of small things with this mission, the labourers are encouraged to go forward. "Upon taking a general view of our work, we think we can say with truth, that our prospects never seemed brighter than at present. Much of the old prejudice is gradually passing away, even among those who were thought to be of the fanatical party; general education seems to be on the increase, and this we are sure will be to our advantage; there is also perhaps more inquiry upon the subject of religion and on the part of some a steady advancement."

Since the report was written, the property alluded to has been purchased. It is in a central position and admirably suited, with a small outlay, for a chapel, school, etc. This will increase the influence and power of the missionaries among the people, enlarge the number of their hearers, and show to all that the mission is permanent and aggressive.

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. Alexander L. Blackford and Rev. Francis J. C. Schneider and their wives; one native colporteur.

SÃO PAULO: 280 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. Hugh W. McKee and his wife, Rev. E. N. Pires, and Rev. Jose Manoel da Conceicao.

BROTAS: 160 miles N. E. of Sao Paulo; missionary labourers—Rev. R. Lenington and his wife.

In this country: Rev. George Chamberlain.

This mission has suffered a great loss in the death of Rev. Ashbel Green Simonton, which took place at Sao Paulo, December 9th, 1867. He was the first missionary of our church to Brazil, and laid the foundations of the work in this extensive empire. His mastery of the language, his energy, devotion and zeal, and his intellectual qualifications gave him great influence among the people, and a corresponding success in his labours. Not a few were directed to the Saviour by him, while others were comforted and cheered in their Christian course. His removal is mourned over by many. If one has been taken from toil others have been added to the workers. The Rev. Hugh W. McKee and wife reached Rio Janeiro, August 19th; the Rev. R. Lenington and wife and Mrs. Schneider arrived at the same port, January 24th.

The Rev. Jose Manoel de Conceicao, who had been suffering for some time, has been part of the year in the United States for the benefit of his health. He has spent most of this time in Illinois, preaching to the Portuguese. He will soon return to his appropriate work in Brazil, where he is highly respected and has great influence. The Rev.

George Chamberlain has devoted most of the year among the churches, collecting funds for the erection of a chapel in Rio Janeiro. In this period he has done much to awaken an interest in his mission field, and has collected a considerable amount among friends of the cause.

Preaching.

This has continued a prominent agency of the mission. At Rio de Janeiro divine service has been held twice every Sabbath, and on Thursday evening of each week, in the large hall hired for this purpose. Another weekly service has been kept up in different parts of the city. In September, a Sabbath-school for children was commenced, which meets in the morning. At Sao Paulo the same number of religious services has been maintained. In addition to these, regular services were held in the suburbs, and several who united with the church were the fruit of these meetings. A Bible-class and Sabbath-school were regularly taught.

Owing to the small force in the field, Brotas was not occupied by a missionary. It was visited however several times by Mr. Blackford. The Rev. E. N. Pires spent four months preaching and visiting the people, and a young man as colporteur and Scripture-reader was among them about seven months. It is expected that the Rev. R. Lenington will be stationed at this place. The state of the work here continues hopeful and cheering. Many are desirous of making a profession of their faith, not a few of these are prepared; others are constantly coming under the influence of truth. A church building is greatly needed at each station.

Additions have been made to each church during the year as follows:

CHURCHES.	ADDITIONS BY		TOTAL COMMUNICANTS.
	Exam.	Certif.	
Rio de Janeiro.....	14	5	67
Sao Paulo.....	7	..	29
Brotas.....	7	..	67
Total.....	28	5	163

The Press.

Another important agency for the moral and spiritual good of the people is the Press. The *Imprensa Evangelica* is issued regularly twice every month. "We cannot but regard this as one of the very best and most useful instrumentalities employed for the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom, not only here, but also in Portugal and Madeira, to both of which countries several copies are regularly mailed to persons who distribute them as they have opportunity. Besides this, it is not at all rare to hear of persons who have come

to a knowledge of the truth by reading our paper, to whom we could not have had access by any other means." The daily press has also been used for the promulgation of truth. "Discussions and articles published in the public journals are influencing the public mind to a favorable extent throughout the province of Sao Paulo." The Word of God has been sold and distributed by colporteurs in the employ of the American Bible Society.

Itinerant Labours.

Beyond the mission stations the word of life has been carried, and thousands have heard it from the living preacher. Messrs. Blackford and Conceicao made a preaching tour into the northern part of the province of Sao Paulo, and visited several important towns; another was made by Senhor Conceicao into the southern part of the province of Minas Geraes; others were undertaken and carried out successfully by other brethren who were enabled, in towns never before visited, to proclaim a full and a finished salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

In May, three young men commenced a course of study, with a view of preparing for the Gospel ministry. They will devote part of the year to active religious work.

A larger hall for preaching was obtained in May last. The one occupied was too strait for the congregation. This is more than full at times. It is on the second story, but has a brewery below it, which is a great drawback to their work. They long for a chapel free from such hindrances.

The country is everywhere open to missionary labour. Several interesting points where churches could soon be organized await occupancy, and an appeal to the church to seize upon these places is made.

The different countries of South America, are, by the wonderful developments of divine Providence, brought more prominently before the church. A highway is opened up into many of them, and freedom given to the Church's labourers to do what they can, to publish the Gospel of the Son of God. Into two countries have we entered, and no restrictions are imposed upon any evangelistic effort. Much more could be done, if the resources of the Board were greater. Calls for help and helpers multiply. The outlay for these two missions is already considerable, but for the next year a larger sum will be needed to meet the appropriations already made for chapels. It is hoped, that with the increasing interest in this great field of labour, more funds will flow into the Church's own treasury, so as to prosecute the work at Bogota and in Brazil with greater vigour.