

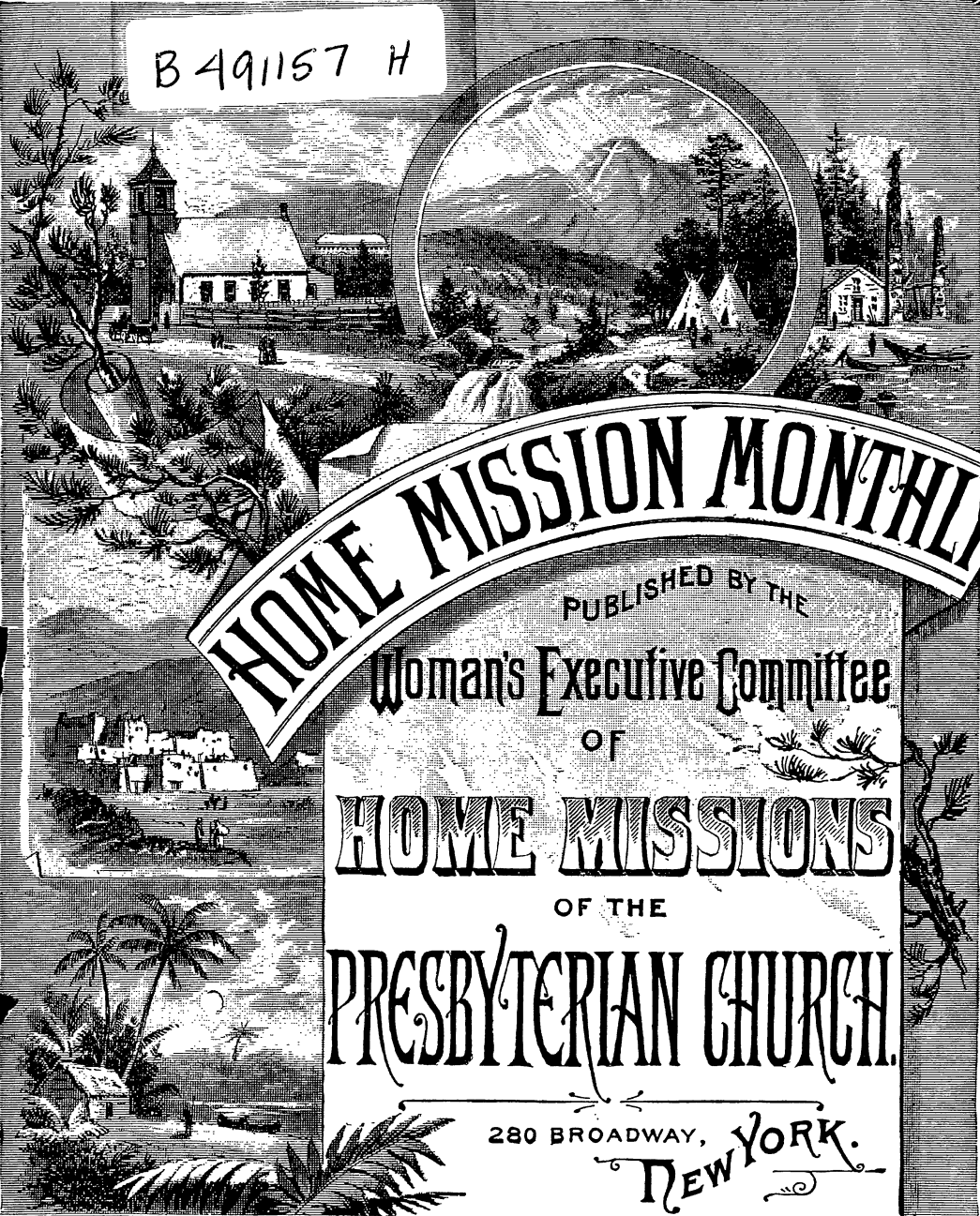
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—“OUR LAND FOR CHRIST.”—



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HOME MISSION MONTHLY.

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NO. II.



210,000!

NEEDED FOR THE CURRENT YEAR FOR

WOMAN'S WORK

AMONG THE

**MEXICANS, MORMONS, INDIANS, AND
IN THE SOUTH.**

“HISTORICAL NOTES,” which were necessarily omitted from the July and August numbers to give space for reports and addresses presented at the Annual Meeting, are resumed in this number.

ARCHDEACON FARRAR says that “he who talks of missions as a failure uses the language of ignorant error as an excuse for unchristian sloth.” In most instances those who speak disparagingly of missions have little real knowledge of the work. Those who are most intelligent on the subject are its warmest advocates.

A SOCIETY embracing the most wealthy Roman Catholics of Europe has been organized to establish Roman Catholic colonies in the Western States. It was organized :

1. To provide means for colonizing the surplus Roman Catholic population of Europe in our Western States.
2. To do it in such manner as to create a large demand for articles of European manufacture.
3. To make Romanism the predominant religion of the United States.—*Gospel in All Lands.*

—:o:—

THE Woman's Executive Committee has mission schools in New Mexico among both Mexicans and Indians, but as the topic of the month is “The Mexicans,” only that portion of the work is made prominent.

New Mexico is peopled largely by a superstitious, ignorant race, intensely bigoted, and under the almost absolute sway of a degraded priesthood who have a deadly hatred of the spelling-book and Christian instruction.

For centuries the people have dwelt in isolation, separated from civilization by vast reaches of barren, waterless, cactus-bearing plains. During these centuries they have made no advance either mentally or morally, but have sunk deeper and deeper into the slough of ignorance.

The mission schools established among the Mexicans by the Woman's Executive Committee are centres of light from whence radiate many cheering rays. We have twenty-one schools, and forty teachers among this people, and the work is daily growing more hopeful.

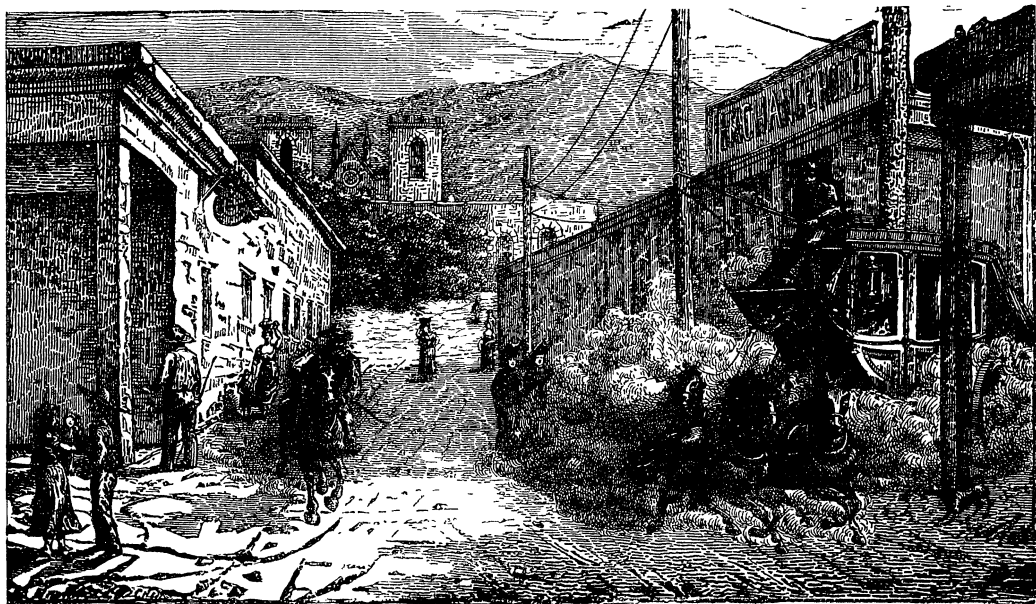
This summer witnessed the closing of the best, most profitable school year that we have had at Santa Fé.

The Misses Rowland and Carothers were the teachers in the academy. We accept their resignations with sincere regret.

Their positions will be filled in time to re-open school.

CALIFORNIA.

Los Angeles.—We have but one school among all the Spanish-speaking people of Southern California. Miss Ida L. Boone is the teacher, bravely and cheerily doing her work. We are glad to note that the Los Angeles Presbyterian Society are preparing to build a chapel school house.



A STREET IN SANTA FE.

MISSION WORK IN NEW MEXICO.

NEW MEXICO is a vast and, to a large extent, uncultivated section of our country, covering an area of 120,000 square miles, equal in extent to all the New England States, together with New York and New Jersey. The population is about one person to each square mile, exclusive of the Indians, who are not citizens.

The climate is delightful and generally healthful. There is a rainy season during the months of July and August, but there are few days that we do not have sunshine.

People of all classes and characters are coming into the country, some to remain and make homes, others, with the restless spirit of the West, to move on and on.

The average Mexican is thriftless and unprogressive, ignorant and superstitious, and is taught implicit obedience to the priesthood. Many changes are now being wrought where for centuries customs and habits have remained the same. The people are awakening to a sense of their degradation, and give evidence of their desire for improvement.

Many are anxious to learn English and to have their children educated. A little plain furniture, such as chairs, tables, and beds, is finding its way into their houses, and more attention is paid to dress and cleanliness. They are imitative, and are copying the vices as well as the virtues of Americans.

The prevailing religion is Roman Catholic, which with them, as in old Mexico, is but a round of ceremonies and image-worship. The walls of their houses are lined with pictures of saints and images, and every day in Santa Fe these sad-faced, poverty-stricken people can be seen kneeling upon the floor of the cathedral, before some image, in adoration.

One of our merchants, who collects and offers for sale Indian and Mexican curiosities, obtained an image about four feet high from a Pueblo and placed it on exhibition, with other articles, at his store door. He told me the Mexicans collected in such threatening crowds around it that he feared for his life, and quietly removed it out of sight into a back room, where it was when I saw it. They sometimes destroy the old images by burning them, but sacredly preserve the ashes, with which they make the sign of the cross upon their foreheads as a charm against evil. In the little church at Santa Cruz, where our Woman's Executive Committee has lately opened a school, there is an image of the Virgin Mary which the Mexicans will tell you, and which they firmly believe, fell from heaven.

The Penitentes are a sect of the Roman Catholic Church, numerous in New Mexico, who believe that by self-torture they atone for their sins and become holy. Aside from this belief, I have not been able to find out much about their tenets of faith, from the fact that these are kept as strictly private as possible. The only outward sign of the order is their processions during Holy Week. Their lodges or churches are found in retired places, built sometimes in the shape of a coffin, with one small door and a very small window, too high from the ground to admit anyone seeing in from the outside. Here the unhappy penitents meet to prepare for their scourging. Their bodies are bared and scored with sharp stones until their backs stream with blood.

As the procession starts on the march up some mountain side they are flanked on either side by other Penitentes, and the

whipping begins. The whips are of cactus or of the thorny soap-weed, and the blows are laid on with force. Light whipping is not allowed; and if anyone falls from exhaustion the whip is taken by one of the attendants and the blows continued. Some carry heavy crosses, which are sometimes driven full of nails and bound to the body. Others crawl on bare knees the entire distance, the way being strewn with stones and cactus. The torture is so great that death sometimes results.

The Bishop of New Mexico issued an order to the priests to stop these heathenish practices, but they seem unable to do so, so deeply imbedded is their superstition.

But, as has already been mentioned, many are seeking for light. There is a spirit of inquiry among the Mexicans and a readiness to read the printed page.

Our missionary, Rev. Dr. Menaull, of Laguna, New Mexico, is sending out large numbers of religious tracts in the Spanish language, which are eagerly read by those who can read. In 1880 the number of Mexicans of ten years old and upward who could neither read nor write was over 52,000.

One of my pupils, a young man, told me of a trip he had taken of three or four day's travel from Santa Fe. He stopped over night with a family who numbered grandparents, parents, children, and servants, fifty in all, a common way of living among the Mexicans. In this family there was but one who could read, and he a boy who had been in school a very short time. My pupil had a copy of the Gospel of St. Luke in his pocket. He asked permission to read to them. They were pleased to have him do so and listened far into the night to the word of God. Do you not think they are hungry for the bread of heaven? Such incidents tell you something of the mental and moral condition of the people to whom the Board of Home Missions is sending preachers and teachers.

The work for the evangelization of this people is gaining ground, as may be seen in the good our mission schools are accomplishing.

The Presbyterian Mission of Santa Fe had its origin in the year 1866; its effect upon Santa Fe can be plainly seen to-day.

I began my work in this school June 1, 1881. After I had been three years in the day school I was fully impressed that the *best* way to permanently benefit this people was to take their children from the demoralizing influence of their homes, surround them by Christian influences, teach them *how* to live, teach them the truths of the Gospel, having it so permeate their hearts and minds that it will mould and control their future lives.

Permission was granted me by the Board of Home Missions to take a limited number of girls as boarding pupils as an experiment. The result of training these girls in domestic work was most satisfactory. As the years have gone by the boarding department has increased in numbers and efficiency. The pupils come from different parts of the Territory, and range in age from seven to fifteen years. Some come from the lowest and most degraded of homes, others from well-to-do Mexican families.

These girls, in addition to their school studies and spiritual instruction, are trained in all kinds of housework. All have made commendable progress. Who can measure the influence of the knowledge they have gained upon their future lives? Some of our number have been graciously converted; others are steadily advancing toward light.

Listen, friends. We are happy; we are well; we are growing; but we are like the boy who has grown too large for his coat, and not only that, but the coat is worn out. Come with me to that old adobe house, the same that sheltered our first missionary and teacher twenty-one years ago. Look at that pile of crumbling mud walls; see the water come dripping through the mud roof; look out through the cracks around worn-out window and door frames, or brush away the snow or sand that has drifted in; see us crowded into our little dining-room so that it is necessary to be seated one at a time, in order that all may get in; see how our

dormitories are crowded. Pass into the main school-room, where fifty or sixty children are crowded together, three in a seat. Listen to the cry that comes from other souls uncared for, and for the sake of our common Lord and Master help us to a new and comfortable house, in which we may gather and train three or four times our present number.

Encouraging reports come from nearly all the churches and schools in New Mexico. Hopeful conversions were reported among pupils of our day and boarding-schools. At Las Vegas, through the untiring devotion of Miss Speakman, they have added to their large day school a boarding department for girls and boys.

At Mora the boarding industrial school has grown into one of our most important and flourishing schools. The hearts of the workers there have been cheered by many accessions to the church this year. A great change has been wrought in that region through the influence of our missionaries. Taos is one of our most hopeful missions. Our schools there are full to overflowing.

Our Woman's Executive Committee has other schools dotted here and there over this large Territory, all of which are a power for good to all who come in contact with them.

I want to speak a word for the teachers who are placed in little Mexican towns, isolated from all congenial society, far from railroads and post office, where they seldom hear the Gospel preached, except by a native evangelist in the Spanish language. Can you imagine the depths of loneliness to which they are consigned? They are burdened by duties which it is impossible for their busy hands to accomplish, yet there is not one word of complaint. Their hearts and minds are so filled with their work that there is no thought of self.

Christian friends, when in your homes, surrounded by loved ones, think of these teachers and do what you can to brighten their lives. Write them a good, cheery letter. Give of your sympathy, your prayers, your support.

M. A. ALLISON,