

**RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN SOUTH
AMERICA, WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO RECENT
LEGISLATION IN PERU,
ECUADOR, AND BOLIVIA**

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Religious liberty in South America, with special reference to recent legislation in Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia by John Lee & John H. Vincent

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JOHN LEE & JOHN H. VINCENT

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RELIGIOUS LIBERTY
IN
SOUTH AMERICA,

With Special Reference to Recent Legislation
in Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia.

BY

JOHN LEE, M. A., D. D.,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

BISHOP JOHN H. VINCENT, D. D., LL. D.



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Dedicated,
WITH SINCERE AFFECTION,
TO MY FRIEND,
THE REV. CHARLES M. STUART, D. D.

PREFACE.

THIS volume contains a brief account of the movement for religious liberty in the South American Republics of Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia. The movement had its inception in an address by the Rev. Dr. John F. Thomson before the Methodist Ministers' Meeting of Chicago, Illinois, on Monday, April 2, 1894. At the close of the address a committee of three was appointed to make representations to the Roman Catholic authorities, and for six years thereafter the agitation was maintained under the direction of this committee. On Monday, April 2, 1900, the Ministers' Meeting, in discharging the committee, adopted the following:

"Whereas, Some six years ago the disabilities respecting civil marriage under which Protestants labor in the various Republics of South America were set forth in this Ministers' Meeting by Dr. John F. Thomson, for many years a missionary in that country; and

"Whereas, At his request a committee consisting of the Rev. John Lee, the Rev. John O. Foster (whose place in the committee was afterward taken by the Rev. W. H. Holmes), and the Rev. M. M. Parkhurst, was appointed to bring the subject to the attention of the authorities in those countries and in Rome; and

"Whereas, The duties of said committee have been most ably and persistently carried out, especially by the chairman, the Rev. John Lee, resulting in a practical victory—no less than the securing of the recognition and registering of Protestant marriages in the Republic of Peru, where their legality had hitherto been most emphatically denied, and in bringing about many important and radical modifications of the laws discriminating against Protestants in the Republics of Ecuador and Bolivia, preliminary to a complete recognition of their civil and religious rights in those Republics; and

"Whereas, It must be deemed a matter of great satisfaction that the attention of no less a personage than that of the Pope of Rome has been elicited, who, through his Secretary of State, has been constrained to reply to the urgent representations of the chairman of the committee, and that the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, cardinals, bishops, and other distinguished personages in Church and State have expressed a deep interest in the work of the committee, as shown by their correspondence with its chairman; therefore, be it

"Resolved, That this Ministers' Meeting express its hearty approval of the work of the committee, and particularly commend the fidelity and ability of the chairman, the Rev. John Lee, whose devotion to the cause of civil liberty in South America and whose earnest and judicious labor in its behalf have been crowned with such distinguished success."

As the work was but partially completed, the author of this volume, who, as chairman of the committee, had been in charge of the correspondence, deemed it advisable and necessary to continue on his own responsibility the work until some definite results had been obtained. In the prosecution of

the work he received valuable assistance from the Rev. Drs. John F. Thomson, Charles W. Drees, Thomas B. Wood, and Henry G. Jackson.

All who love religious liberty will rejoice that on the 27th day of August, 1906, into all lands went the glad news that in Bolivia liberty of religious worship was an accomplished fact. In a letter received from the Department of State, Tuesday morning, October 23, 1906, is inclosed a copy of the Bolivian law amending the Constitution so as to permit "the public exercise of any religious worship."

Religious persecution is thoroughly un-Christ-like. It hurts the Church, the State, and the Nation. The writer firmly believes that the highest welfare of this Republic demands that every citizen shall endeavor to stamp out every vestige of religious intolerance on the American continent. He sincerely hopes that all who read this book may lay to heart the truth expressed by Henry M. Stanley: "A State should not interfere in matters of conscience, for be a man a Pagan or a Christian, Protestant or Roman Catholic, Brahmin or Mussulman, his religious beliefs, or ignorance of religion, should not bias a government, or debar a citizen from the enjoyment of his rights or privileges."

JOHN LEE.

CHICAGO, October 23, 1906.

