

THE
MISSIONARY REVIEW OF THE WORLD.

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I.—LITERATURE OF MISSIONS.

PROTESTANT MISSIONS A HUNDRED YEARS AGO
AND NOW

RESPONSIBILITY AND ENCOURAGEMENT.

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In our pamphlet, "A Century of Protestant Missions," we fixed on the year 1786 as the period of their commencement, and we have seen no reason to alter that date as a fair approximation. Four of the greatest missionary societies in the world can trace their origin to within a few months, if not to that very year; not in the formal organization of their outward framework, but to what is the true birth of missions, the union of spirit for prayer on behalf of the heathen, and the earnest desire for their conversion by the preaching of the Gospel. Not only the fathers of the Baptist Missions, but the founders of the Church Missionary Society, and the London Missionary Society, had their spiritual birth at that time; and the Rev. Dr. Coke was sent out to found missions among the heathen in our colonies in the West Indies that year by Wesley and his fellow laborers.

Missions, like their Master, are born from above. Born of the Spirit, and that was the period of the Epiphany of the missionary spirit, which is ever latent in the Christian Church, though it may long lie dormant, and even seem to die.

It has often been in my heart to follow up that pamphlet, "Century of Protestant Missions," which was of set purpose written to arrest thought on the great work which still remains to be done in the vast unoccupied fields of the heathen world, by another, showing the means for a much greater work in the future, and the encouragements to prosecute it with new vigor and hope. "A Century of Christian Progress," which came out in an incomplete form, owing to the pressure of other duties, was confined to one aspect of the subject; and the limited time at my disposal will only allow me now to put together a few facts, which may, with God's blessing, stimulate and strengthen the Churches of Christ; in the words of Carey, "to attempt great things for God, and to expect great things from God."