

MONTHLY NOTES

ledge was established; and three years later in 1701, the third and present S. P. G., the "society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts. Both were due to the zeal and energy of Dr. Thomas Bray."

But neither of these noble Societies, the glory of our Church to-day, was, in its inception, a distinctively Missionary Society; nor for 100 years of its existence prosecuted the aggressive duty of evangelizing the heathen in foreign parts. Their work abroad was directed to the instruction of the heathen within the British possessions, and by 1799 it had attained but small dimensions.

In glancing at the causes which immediately led to the formation of the C. M. S., our attention is arrested by the events of the year 1786, in which year the crusade against the slave trade was entered upon by William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson and Granville Sharp; the evangelization of India came into prominence through the commencement of David Brown, the E. I. Chaplain's, work in Bengal, the idea of a great mission to India put forth by Charles Grant, the E. I. company's official in Calcutta, the proposal of William Carey, afterwards the first English missionary to India, to his Baptist brethren to consider their responsibility to the heathen, the visit of Schwarz, the S. P. C. K.'S Lutheran Missionary in South India to Tinnevely; and the strong appeal made for the evangelization of India by Dr. Thurlow, Bishop of Lincoln, in preaching the annual sermon for the S. P. G. Bearing still more closely on the origin of our Society was the discussion, for the first time in this year, at a fortnightly meeting of the Eclectic Society of Foreign Missions. All these, among other events, were preparing the way. But the discussions of the Eclectic Society were the more direct leading cause. It is instructive to note the steps by which they advanced to wider views of the great subject. In 1786 the question discussed was, "what is the best method of planting and promulgating the gospel in Botany Bay?" In 1789, "what is the best method of propagating the gospel in the East Indies?" In 1791, "What is the best method of propagating the gospel in Africa?" Meanwhile the Baptist Missionary Society was formed in 1793, and Carey himself went out to India. In 1795, two Clergymen and some Presbyterian and Independent Ministers founded the London Missionary Society which began by sending out a large party, chiefly artisans and their families, to the South Sea Islands with the assistance of Samuel Marsden. The next year 1796, saw the formation of two small Missionary Associations in Presbyterian Scotland.

All these movements quickened the interest of the Eclectics. In this same year Charles Simeon proposed the question, "with what propriety and in what mode can a Mission be attempted to the heathen from the established Church?" Here is a great advance; it is no longer Botany Bay, or India, or Africa but "the heathen" and the duty of the established Church is recognized. But, three more years were to elapse before any action was taken. Many of the brethren were doubtful and hesitating. At length, in 1799, on the 18th March, John Venn once more brought the question before the Society in a new, form, "what methods can we use more effectually to promote the

knowledge of the gospel among the heathen?" not now, "what ought the Church to do?", but, "what can we do?" Simeon urged, "there is not a moment to be lost." It was resolved to form a new Society immediately. On April 1st, a meeting was held to prepare the rules and a public meeting was summoned for April 12th. It took place in a first-floor room of the "Castle and Falcon in Aldersgate Street, in which their earlier meetings had been held and the London Missionary Society was founded four years before. It was not an influential meeting. Only 16 Clergymen and 9 Laymen were present. The most distinguished names of the promoters are absent from the list. John Venn took the chair; a committee and officers were appointed, Henry Thornton treasurer and Thomas Scott, secretary. It was strangely overlooked to adopt a name. Six weeks after, the name was settled as "the Society for Missions to Africa and the East." But not until 13 years had elapsed was the title adopted "The Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East."

From such small beginnings was this now mighty organization launched upon its world-wide mission.

It is not my purpose to trace its progress beyond saying that it was for a long time very slow. At the end of ten years the Society had sent out only five Missionaries, of whom one had died and one been dismissed, leaving 3 on the roll.

To pursue the interesting story of its onward march would be rather to glorify the Society and the honoured men, Directors and Missionaries, who have been raised up by God to carry it onwards by the consecration of their gifts, their lives, not unfrequently their blood. If we would estimate what great things God hath done through them, the most striking way is to overleap these 100 years and turn suddenly to contemplate the field of their work to-day. A few words will suffice to draw this picture, such vivid contrast to the first. The Missionary map of 1899 shows us missions of this Society established in west Africa (Sierra Leone, Yoruba, Niger); in eastern equatorial Africa, (Uganda, Mombosa, &c.); in Mahomedan lands (Egypt, Palestine, Persia and Baghdad); in India; in Ceylon and Mauritius; in China and Japan; in New Zealand and Canada. (\$91,000 were spent by the C. M. S. in Canada last year.) Thus throughout the world are planted 483 stations. Its European Missionaries number 1,096; native Clergy 340; native lay Agents 5,757, making a band of 7,193 Christian workers. The native christian adherents number 240,876. As an evidence of present growth, the baptisms of native ADULTS, carefully instructed and tested, averaged, in 1897, eighteen for each day of the year.

The Society's total receipts last year were \$1,618,060.

If we would know to what this large measure of blessing which has followed the Society's operations is attributable, we must look upon the foundation principles on which they have been conducted. These guiding rules were formulated at the very outset by the Rev. John Venn; 1. Follow God's leading. 2. Begin on a small scale. 3. Put money in the second place, not the first. 4. Choose spiritual men for spiritual work. 5. Look for success only from the spirit of God. It was the constant pursual of these scriptural