

and the Reformed Faith, joint product of the prayers and tears of Huss and Knox, Wyclif and Calvin, Jerome of Prague and Savonarola of Florence, found its full development under the monk of Erfarth. Surely another great birth-hour was reached when William Carey led the way at Kettering, in 1792, in organizing a society for exclusively foreign mission work, and the next year himself in a nobler sense led the way by going to India.

Here again prophecy linked hands with Providence. More than three thousand years before Carey God had called another man—Abraham—"alone,"* and promised that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. Christ had distinctly foretold that the Gospel must first be preached as a witness among all nations before the end should come. And now again events converged and pointed to the time as at last arrived for world-wide evangelism. How any candid and careful student of history can doubt that the nineteenth century was distinctly indicated by God as the new century of missions passes comprehension. The whole historic horizon was aflame with an aurora borealis of splendid signals, which even at this distance are still startling and dazzling. The decay of evangelical doctrine and holy living, which made the first half of the eighteenth century seem like a sepulchre of faith and piety, had given place to one of the mightiest revivals of religion the world ever knew under such men as Wesley, Whitefield, Edwards, and a score of others like them. Those trumpet blasts had gone forth from the two Northhamptons, summoning all disciples to united prayer for a speedy and world-wide effusion of the Holy Spirit, and the new openings for effort in the South Seas and Asia challenged the Church to fulfil her Lord's last command. Corruption in the Church had constrained the remnant who had not bowed to Baal to call mightily on God; and the new life in the Church demanded vent in missions. William Carey could not but be a missionary and an organizer of missions, for the new birth hour had come, and this was the Divine issue.

Has another great birth hour come to us? Who of us discerns the signs of the times? While we begin to celebrate this centenary of missions, there are Divine signals on the world's horizon more startling than any which fixed Carey's eye on the signs of the times. It may be doubted whether in all history there has been such a convergence of testimony that the fulness of times has come for the prosecution of God's work.

During this century there has been world-wide *exploration*, so that now the map of the world is complete—there is no untraversed sea, no undiscovered land. We know what the "whole world" is which is to be evangelized and possessed. There is also world-wide *communication*. There are no nations, new afar off—the whole world is brought into one neighborhood by steam carriages and vessels, the telegraph, the postal union, etc. Man is in contact with man the world over. There is likewise world-wide *fraternization*. Nation is not arrayed against nation. There are friendly

* Isaiah 51: 2.