

He entered Yale College, but was expelled after two years, and before graduation, for a trifling offense. We shall notice this further on, for it was an act of cruel injustice and had a marked influence on his character and future life. He pursued his theological studies in a private way with a pastor, as theological seminaries were not yet established. He was licensed to preach at the age of twenty-six. Declining several urgent invitations to settle in New England, and a highly flattering one from Long Island, he deliberately and solemnly devoted himself to missionary work among the Indians scattered among the several colonies. And having once put his hand to the plow, he looked not back, but gave himself, heart and soul and mind and strength, to his chosen mission, with unfaltering purpose, with apostolic zeal, with a heroic faith that feared no danger and surmounted every obstacle, and with an earnestness of mind that wrought wonders on savage lives and whole communities, but which in four years broke down his health and consigned him to an early grave.

We cannot appreciate the choice he made, the kind of life he lived, or the work he accomplished, unless we look at the times and the circumstances in which he lived and wrought. It calls for no great sacrifices, in our day, to be a missionary to the heathen world. There is now a widespread and grand missionary spirit and sentiment existing in the church. Thousands have gone forth to labor in distant fields. The eyes of the Christian world are upon them, the sympathies and prayers of the great Christian brotherhood follow them. They go for the most part in groups, and carry home and Christian society and civilization with them. They know that behind them, watching and deeply interested in them, sustaining them, and praying for them, are great national societies, thus giving dignity, character and importance to their missionary work.

But how different was the case with reference to Brainerd and his times! It was before the birth of modern missions. Christian missions had then no standing in the American church. There was little or no faith in them. No prayers were offered for them, either in public or in the closet. There was no public sentiment calling for missions to the heathen and pagan world. Not a dollar was contributed or pledged to the support of missionaries. The few hundreds necessary to Brainerd's support in the mission which he undertook came from over the sea. It was a little *foreign* society, organized in Edinburgh, Scotland—too far away to extend effective sympathy to its distant missionary—that undertook to "hold the ropes" while he made the venture. So little missionary interest existed in this country that even seventy years afterward, when the first American missionaries were sent out to foreign parts, the money needed to defray expenses was sought abroad.

And then Brainerd had to undertake and carry on the work literally *alone*; he had no associate or helper. Although authorized by the