

**MISSIONARY MAGAZINE;**

**OR**

**EVANGELICAL INTELLIGENCER.**

THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S

MISSIONARY MAGAZINE;

OR

EVANGELICAL INTELLIGENCER:

FOR 1805.

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WILLIAM P. FARRAND, EDITOR.

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VOL. I.

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AN INTRODUCTORY ACCOUNT OF MISSIONS.

THE design of "*The Assembly's Missionary Magazine or Evangelical Intelligencer*," has been stated to be "the advancement of the interests of *vital godliness*," by the edification of its readers, and the increase of funds to aid exertions for carrying Gospel Intelligence to the heathen.

With these objects in view, we begin with giving a general, but brief account, of the most important missionary efforts, so far back, as to exhibit, at least, some indistinct view, of the extent and progress of the christian religion, at the time of the Reformation. We must, of necessity, pass over many circumstances, which we should gladly notice were we not imperiously forbidden to do it, by the nature of our work.

But to exhibit the encouragement held out to those who wish to extend the religion on which their own hopes are grounded, we offer what may be denominated A SKETCH OF MODERN MISSIONS.

The Roman Pontiffs, have, at different periods, since some time in the thirteenth century, engaged in vigorous measures to establish the Papal-Church among the heathen. The orders of St. Dominic, St. Francis, St. Augustine, and the Jesuits, have each laboured to extend their own order under the banners of the Pope. Their early efforts were among the Chinese and Tartars. And though they were not without success, yet renewed zeal and efforts, at different periods after, were barely sufficient to support their

declining interests until near the commencement of the fifteenth century. At this period, wars broke out between the Chinese and other nations in Asia, which almost eradicated the faith which the papist missionaries had inculcated.<sup>4</sup> Near the end of the fifteenth century, as the spirit of naval enterprise increased, the doctrines of popery became extended. They were taught in many parts of the East, and inculcated in the new settlements in the West-Indies, and on the continent of America. They also reigned triumphant in the civilized parts of Europe.

Early in the sixteenth century, in the midst of papal influence and authority, commenced the *Reformation in Europe*. Its doctrines were propagated with zeal, and their extension gave a severe shock to the influence of the Pope. A variety of expedients, were ineffectually used to support his declining cause. In France and England, these expedients were not only unsuccessful, but often undoubtedly operated to defeat their own design. Henry the VIII. THE DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, withdrew from the Romish Church, though he still remained a papist.—In Scotland the reformation gained great accession under John Knox.—On the continent, Henry the IV. passed the Edict of Nantz, tolerating the protestants in the free enjoyment of their religion. Under such concurring opposition at home, the Catholics turned their particular attention to foreign countries. The Jesuits, a learned and politic society, were specially devoted to the interest of the church abroad. Many of them became missionaries and propagated the faith with great zeal and success.

About the middle of this century the PROTESTANTS began first to consider the importance of missions, and to feel the duty incumbent on professing christians to co-operate in the support of them. They first sent fourteen missionaries from Geneva to America. The English, also transplanted protestant principles to their new colonies. The Sweeds were equally zealous in extending the borders of the church in Finland and Lapland. The Dutch also began to be actively engaged in establishing the reformed doctrine in their numerous foreign possessions. They educated ministers with this view, and first established a church at Batavia, From this, other Congregations were formed, and Schools were instituted among the natives of Formosa, Columba, Timor, and on the coast of Coromandel; and by the close of the century religious establishments were made in most of their settlements.

In the seventeenth century a missionary association was also formed in England, which received a particular encouragement from Parliament, by an act of organization, and afterwards by donations and other benefactions. But, notwithstanding this particular encouragement from the government, the success of their missionary operations seems to have been very limited.

In the eighteenth century, till near its close, little alteration appeared in the success of Dutch or English missions. William the III. patronized them in England.—In 1771, the Dutch translated the Bible into the Singalee tongue.—Frederick IV. of Denmark, in 1706, planned and sent missionaries to the coast of Malabar. But after all their exertions, little progress, has been made in civilizing and instructing the savage nations, “millions of mankind never heard of the Bible, and the majority never saw it.” And, of the eight hundred millions of inhabitants on the Globe, little more than fifty millions are now of the protestant church. Lately, however, more than fifty different societies, for the last several years, have been actively engaged in promulgating the doctrines of christianity. Each of these societies have from one to thirty missionary settlements. Of these, several are in Asia, far removed from each other;—several on the frontier and inland parts of Africa;—a number in the West-India Islands; Greenland, on the coast of Labrador, and a great number dispersed along the frontiers of the United States. Hence appears the extent of our subject. We see, though thousands are yet in darkness, perhaps grounding their future hopes on annihilation, that thousands have heard the sufferings and death of a Redeemer proclaimed by the christian brethren who have visited them. This will doubtless gladden the heart of the philanthropist, but while it does so, let him extend his view, and, if possible, realize the number who are yet ignorant of the glorious and consoling promises of the Gospel. Let him reflect on the importance of the object before him. Let him even contrast the hardships and sufferings of the savage with civilized refinement; certainly his sensibility will compassionate them. But if he contrast his awfully important situation, who is without God and the means of knowing him, with that of an enlightened christian, to what exertion will it not stimulate?