

other places, and began to punish offenders and put the law in more strict execution, which God Almighty prosper.' The first meeting of the founders of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the eldest of the missionary societies of the Church of England, was held on March 8, 1698-9; and it would seem that the entry in Evelyn's diary referred to this Society, unless he had in mind what a late secretary of the S.P.C.K.¹ described as its 'direct antecedents.' These were religious societies founded in London and Westminster in connexion with the Church of England about 1678, and societies for reformation of manners, including both churchmen and nonconformists, about 1691. It is interesting to recall that Part I of the 'Pilgrim's Progress' was first published in 1678, and Part II in 1684. In 1701 the S.P.C.K. gave birth to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, to which the work of providing clergy for the plantations was handed over. Under date May 3, 1702, Evelyn entered in his diary, 'Being elected a member of the Society lately incorporated for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, I subscribed £10 per am. towards the carrying it on.'

The most prominent among the founders of the S.P.C.K. was Dr. Thomas Bray.² He was born in

¹ *A Chapter in English Church History*, S.P.C.K. Minutes and Correspondence, 1698-1704, edited by the Rev. Edmund McClure, M.A., Preface.

² See the account of Dr. Bray given in the *History of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*, 1698-1898, by W. O. B. Allen and Edmund McClure, pp. 15-16, etc. See also *Public Spirit illustrated in the Life and Designs of the Reverend Thomas Bray, D.D., late Minister of St. Botolph Without, Aldgate, London*, 1746, B.M. Biographical Tracts, London, 1719-46, 491, c. 18. The author was Samuel Smith, L.L.D., Rector of All Hallows, London.