

# **HEROES OF THE MISSION FIELD**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649290031

Heroes of the mission field by W. Pakenham Walsh

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

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**W. PAKENHAM WALSH**

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BY THE RIGHT REV.  
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BISHOP OF OSSORY,  
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London:  
HODDER AND STOUGHTON,  
27, PATERNOSTER ROW.

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MDCCCLXXIX.

## PREFACE.

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My object in writing the following papers (which were prepared by request, for the members of the Church Homiletical Society, and published in the *Clergyman's Magazine*), was to exhibit not only for the benefit of clergymen, but of laymen also, a broad and connected view of missionary effort from the earliest ages of the Christian Church down to the close of the last century. A very prevalent idea seems to exist that after the first two or three centuries had passed by, there was a total or nearly total cessation of missionary work until a period very little removed from our own time. The sketches here presented will help to remove such a false impression, and to show that in all ages there have been some

efforts made for the extension of the gospel, varying indeed in value with the amount of light and spirituality possessed by those who made them, but contributing, even in the darkest days, to the welfare of the world and the salvation of men.

My plan has been to select prominent and typical characters, around whom the missionary efforts of their own or after-ages seemed to revolve, and by whom such efforts were either initiated or sustained.

If it be not pretentious to say so, my aim has been to exhibit the progress of the Christian Church from a missionary stand-point, and to show how the various nations and peoples of Christendom received their knowledge of the Christian faith. By grouping the circumstances connected with its diffusion around central characters, one was enabled to do more justice to those individuals who have been selected from the illustrious roll of Missionary Heroes, and at the same time to throw something of the interest which attaches to individual life



over the wider ranges of ecclesiastical history.

The writer makes no pretence to originality of thought or to freshness of historic discovery. The facts which he has gathered into so small a compass are culled from the pages of ancient and modern writers; and he can only claim the credit of having brought them together in a connected, and he trusts, instructive, form. The works of Eusebius, Bede, Neander, Merivale, Macclear, and many others who have written the lives of individual missionaries, or sketched the progress of the Church at large, have been ransacked, and their information appropriated; and if I have not in every instance quoted my authority, or acknowledged my obligations, it was only because the character of my work did not render it necessary, and the space at my command did not render it possible. Most of the sketches were written amidst the pressure of new and onerous duties, and I am only too conscious that they necessarily bear upon them the marks of haste and imperfection.

To some who may read these pages, the very names of some of my Missionary Heroes will be strange. If so, I rejoice in giving a wider fame to men who deserve to be better known. Other names, however, will be missed which seem equally deserving of high memorial; but it must be remembered that this is not a history of all Missionary Heroes, but a selection of the most typical amongst them, and of those, moreover, who were sundered far from each other not only by time, but by distinctive peculiarities of work, and position, and character. It will be seen, moreover, that one or two names have been introduced which some might think had better have been omitted, but in my judgment they were necessary to the completion of my plan.

I have not ventured into the records of the present century, because in them the names of Missionary Heroes are so abundant and so distinguished that it would be impossible to make suitable selections, and it would be better to relegate all mention of them to a separate volume. Besides, my

design was attained when I had once linked the story of apostolic missions to those of our own times, and the history of the latter is so much better known than that of preceding ages that it did not stand in the same need of an interpreter.

If a perusal of these pages serve not only to diffuse missionary information, but to excite a missionary spirit, and to enlist or increase the sympathies of a larger number in the cause of Christian Missions, my highest ambition in the matter shall have been attained; and if one and another be led through the example of those "Heroes of the Mission Field" to devote their own lives to the same glorious enterprise, my most fervent prayers concerning this humble effort shall have been answered.

THE PALACE, KILKENNY.

*December 1878.*