

THE MISSIONARY MOTIVE

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The missionary motive by Various

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE study of foreign missions has been greatly extended during the last seven years since the wide-spread adoption of the small-circle method, and there has grown up a considerable literature intended primarily for the use of study-circles. It is now possible for a group of people who wish to study any of the great mission-fields, to find a text-book written specially for their purpose and giving in small space an admirable account of the nature and history of the country and the progress of Christianity within it. With the progress of missionary study, however, there has become evident a tendency to concentrate attention upon the externals of missionary work, and the immediate setting of the missionary need, with the result that the essential spiritual forces which have always animated missions and missionaries have slipped somewhat into the background.

This tendency is only a special case of a wide-spread danger which represents the defect of the qualities of modern missionary organization. We live in a day when missionary conferences and committees, missionary literature and campaigns cover the ground, and an immense amount of single-hearted labour is being put into the double task of assisting the work of

missionaries on the field, and awakening and sustaining the missionary passion in the Church at home. Yet there is in all this a peril lest amid our activities we forget God; lest in our insistence on the crisis and opportunity of the present time we shift the ground of missions from the eternal love and mercy of God to the temporary exigencies of a single race or generation.

We need to define anew the missionary motive, for our own souls' strength and for the sake of those to whom the missionary appeal is made to-day. This book is a slight contribution to the task. It is not complete within its own limits, still less is it a history of missionary work. Several typical epochs have been chosen, and in them the writers have tried to show how the missionary motive presented itself to devout and faithful souls. No criticism of methods has been attempted, and where controversial matters have been touched, as it was inevitable they should, the endeavour has been made to put the reader *en rapport* with the best and noblest in each type of religious devotion and expression, without criticism of the remainder. It should be added that this book springs out of corporate thought and prayer, although all the contributors heartily wish there had been more time and opportunity for such preparation, and it is hoped that it may be read and discussed in the same spirit.

Though the book is written primarily for

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missionary study circles in universities and colleges, it is hoped that it will be widely used for private reading and that its public will not be confined to the colleges. A set of Suggestions to Leaders and Outline Programmes will be supplied free to all registered college circles, and to other circles at the cost of sixpence.

The editor wishes here to tender his most sincere thanks to the contributors to this volume, who have shown unwearying patience in completing the work in spite of many other claims. It should be mentioned that the final chapter was to have been written by the Rev. F. Lenwood, M.A., who was unfortunately prevented from completing it, and the author is indebted to him for valuable material.

W. P.



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