

## Mission Field

### Motives for Missionary Effort.

The story is told that a certain ship sailing in the South Atlantic Ocean was overtaken by a storm and driven far out of its course. The compass was broken, and for many days the captain had not been able to take an observation. The sailors knew not where they were. To make matters worse their water failed, and at last, while food was in abundance, they had not one drop to drink. A vessel comes in sight. Joyfully they steer towards her, and, running up their flag ensign down as a signal of distress, they add the signs, "Water—we want water." Answering flags are seen flying from the mast of the other ship; but how strange the answer! "Dip it up," the answer ran. Dip it up? What? The sea-water? They cannot drink that; there must be some mistake. They signalled again. "Water—we have no water." A second time the answering flags flutter in the air, "Dip it up." What does it mean? Can the hard-hearted men want them to drink salt water and die raving? Try once more. "Water—can you give us water?" And the third time the answer comes, "Dip it up, dip it up." Then the captain says, "I cannot understand," and a sailor says, "It will be no harm to try." A bucket is lowered, water drawn up and tested, and lo, it is fresh! They are sailing on a sea of fresh water, and for want of knowing it are dying of thirst. The explanation is simple. They had drifted into the mouth of the river Amazon, whose mighty volume of water, a hundred miles wide, drives back the salt waves, and rushes undiluted for many miles into the ocean itself.

r. How many there are in the world utterly adrift! They know not whence they come nor whither they are going. If they ever had a course they had lost it now. They are tossing hither and thither. And all the while they thirst. Restless, craving, unsatisfied; food of a kind there is in the world; but what is there to satisfy the thirst of their souls? It seems, nothing!

And round about them there is the ocean of the grace of God. The River of the Water of Life flows on either side, the very Divine Life which God gives to satisfy the soul of man is close at hand, and they do not know it.

It is ours to tell them. The Church goes forth in her Master's name to tell of Salvation, and, more than that, to bear with her the gifts of grace. She goes bearing the Sacraments: Baptism to give the regenerating life of God; Confirmation, to strengthen with spiritual gifts; the Blessed Sacrament of the

Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, to feed and sustain the given life with Bread from Heaven. It is hers to say to thirsting souls, "The life of God is all around you, put out your hand and take it—Baptism, Confirmation, the Holy Communion, what you will; it is all here, and all for you." Strange that we can be indifferent when we have such a work, such an opportunity, such a gift to offer; that we should be content to let men and women perish thirsting because in slothfulness or indifference, we do not care to raise the signal in answer to their cry and tell them where they can "stoop down and drink and live."

It seems much more strange when we think that those to whom the call to missionary work comes are men and women who have tasted the powers of Divine grace. How, if we have ourselves known what it is to thirst and find the things of the world unsatisfying, and to turn and find all we need in God, how can we be content that others should remain in ignorance? If we have been brought from darkness to light, if we have felt the power of the grace of God changing us, purifying us from old sin, helping us against present temptation, shall we not be earnest, nay, eager, that others shall share our blessings?

Think of what that is which we call grace, think of what grace can do, remember what grace has done for you and find in all this a motive for missionary work.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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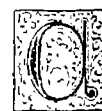
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