

# THE HOME MISSIONARY.

Go, . . . . . PREACH the GOSPEL. . . . . *Mark xvi. 15.*  
How shall they PREACH except they be SENT ? . . . *Rom. x. 15.*

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## MONTHLY CONCERT DEPARTMENT.

OUR readers will excuse our omitting to insert in this place the usual "*Address adapted to the Monthly Concert for prayer.*" The present number of the "Missionary" will convey to many the first account of the late anniversary of the American Home Missionary Society; and, that other friends of the cause in the distant parts of our country may, in some measure, participate with the multitude who were present, in the interest of that occasion, we have solicited copies of the following addresses for publication. The spirit of the resolution on which the first was delivered is peculiarly adapted to this department of our work, while portions of both may be read with great profit in meetings of prayer for the conversion of the whole world.

## AMERICAN HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

### ANNIVERSARY ADDRESSES.

#### ADDRESS.

*Of the Rev. Charles Hodge, Professor of Orient. and Bib. Literature in the Theol. Sem. Princeton, N. J. in support of the following resolution.*

"Resolved, that the work of Home Missions in this country commends itself to the patronage and prayers of all good men, in view of the peculiar claims of the world upon American Christians."

There is a personality in nations, as in men; and as every individual has peculiar responsibilities, arising out of his peculiar circumstances and character, so have nations and churches. Those of the latter are seldom properly considered, and seldom weigh with due force upon the conscience. The relations, however, in which this country stands to the rest of the world, and the circumstances of its situation, are so peculiar, that they give rise to duties demanding our most serious consideration. As the responsibility of individuals arises in a great measure from their influence over others, so the responsibility of American Christians arises from the influence their country is destined to exert over the rest of the world. The discovery of America, and its great contemporaneous event, the discovery of the art of printing, have changed the whole course of human affairs. The latter discovery has brought the world of knowledge within the vision and enjoyment of the great mass of mankind; and has substi-

tuted force of intellect and truth for the force of arms and authority, as the governing principle among men. But the revolution it is to effect is but partially accomplished. It has done barely enough to apprise the world of its possible influence, while it subjects the government of men to public opinion, and is fast transferring power from the few to the many. The former discovery has been scarcely less important in its results. The annunciation that a new world existed beyond the waters, awoke all Europe. An object of such magnitude was presented to the enterprise and researches of all classes of men, that a new impulse was given to human life in all its departments. Europe had now found her antagonist principle; necessary to the full development of her own powers. A world destined to receive her overflowing population, to be the depository of her literature and laws, to expand her liberal principles and institutions, unrestricted by the prejudices and usages of former ages; and to be the heir of her influence over the human race.

That this influence will not be diminished, but vastly increased, in passing into our hands, may be inferred with moral certainty from the peculiarities of our situation. The physical character of this country, its extent, its resources, and its facilities of communication within itself, and with the rest of the world, certainly place it on a par with Europe in all these elements of

power. In other respects it has immensely the advantage. The influence of the old world has been frittered away from the fact that it never has had UNITY. It is an aggregate of nations of different usages, languages, laws, religions, and modes of thinking. Besides this evil, its institutions have been such as to depress the mass of its population, and consequently to diminish its power. The fact that the little island of Great Britain, with her ten or twenty millions of inhabitants, has probably already had, and will yet have, greater influence on the human race, than all Europe besides, has resulted from her having freer institutions, a more generally enlightened population, from her protestant religion, and her peculiar local advantages. European power in passing into our hands comes to *one people*—the hundreds of millions which must one day inhabit this vast country will be one—having one language, one literature, essentially, one religion, and one common soul. This is a unity which mere political divisions, should they unhappily occur, cannot destroy. That a country thus situated must exert a dominant influence in the world is unavoidable. There is an excitement which goes forth from every nation in advance of others in her social institutions, imparting to them an impulse to which the prejudices and forms of former times must gradually give place. The influence which the popular government and present prosperity of this country has already produced, and is still producing on Europe and on our southern brethren, has escaped no observant eye, and must increase as the country advances in power. The effect of our peculiar institutions being so obviously to excite and develop the minds of the mass of the people, there can be no comparison between the power of the united, homogeneous, enlightened millions of this country and the crowded peasantry of Europe. Our facilities for the acquisition of wealth, of intercourse with all parts of the globe, the restless enterprise of our population, are all so many means by which America will be brought to bear on the character and destinies of other sections of the world. Our very language, which will probably be the language of New Holland, of South Africa, of the Southern Islands, and, without question, of all North America (Mexico excepted) will afford an extent of range for all the productions of our literature, which has seldom, if ever, been enjoyed by any other nation.

It is evident, therefore, that this country from its physical character, from its local advantages, from the character of its population, and the nature of its institutions, must, in the common course of events, have greater influence on the human family than any other nation that has ever existed.

This reference to the future power of our

common country is not made with any view of exciting our natural vanity, but of bringing home to our consciences the great responsibility which presses upon us. If we are to have this controlling influence on the destinies of other nations, it is a question of unutterable importance, what is to be the nature of this influence? If this country is to be the hot-bed of infidelity and vice, then will it be the widest and most desolating curse the world has ever known; but if the Gospel is to form our character, and guide our power, we shall be a fountain of life to all nations. The decision of this question, involving not only the temporal and eternal welfare of our own children, and of the countless millions who are to come after us, but the welfare of all the millions over whom the direct or indirect influence of this country is hereafter to extend, depends, under God, mainly on the men of this generation. It depends on us. We live at the forming period of this great nation. We are now in our infancy. Now, if ever, our national character must be formed for God. Neglect the intellectual and moral culture of an individual in youth, and you find it exceedingly difficult to mould his riper years. His character is fixed. The difficulty is far greater in nations; because the field of operation is so much larger, and because they must themselves be brought to engage in the work for which, under the circumstances supposed, they will have no disposition. The population of this country is increasing with so much rapidity, there are now so many of our new settlements, and extended districts, growing up in ignorance, that the work which we have to do is appallingly great, and if neglected now, its accomplishment will be next to impossible in the generation which is to follow us. Living, then, as we do, at this crisis of our country's history, the formation of her future character being to such an extent thrown on us, and this character being of such unutterable importance to the world, it may be questioned whether a generation ever lived on whose fidelity so much depended.

This is a responsibility which we cannot throw off. In other countries it rests with the government to supply the means of moral and religious instruction to the people. Here it rests with individual Christians. Jesus Christ has here called his people to a work most gloriously difficult. They have to support the gospel among themselves, and send it to the rising millions who must perish without it. This constitutes the great peculiarity of our situation. It is here to be determined whether the religion of Christ has power enough to sustain and extend itself, unaided by legislative interference. This is an experiment on which the eyes of the world are fixed, and in the result of which, the destinies of generations are involved. It is for us to

say whether this experiment shall succeed or fail; whether this country is to be infidel or Christian; whether all her influence shall be given to God, or Satan; whether America is to accomplish the glorious purpose for which she became a nation or not.

There is a peculiarity in the origin of this country, which ought ever to be had in remembrance. This land was first settled to an extent sufficient to give a dominant cast to its character and institutions by that extraordinary race of men, the English Puritans. Men in whom the love of God, and the love of the rights of men, were united in one firm and indomitable principle of action. Men who saved to England her constitution and her protestant religion; who, having excited in their own country the spirit which led to what Englishmen are accustomed to call "their glorious revolution," sought a wider and more congenial home on this side of the waters. And for what purpose did they come? Was it to found a kingdom? No! It was to extend the cause of Christ. This, is, therefore, from its birth, Emmanuel's Land, consecrated from the first to his service. This was its destination in the minds of our fathers, and we hope and believe in the eternal and efficient purpose of Jehovah.

How is this purpose to be accomplished? How is all the great influence of this country in the scale of nations, to be secured for God? Not by miracle. For God works by means. How then is our national character to be so formed that we may accomplish the work to which God has called us? It is by the diffusion of knowledge. Not such knowledge as is taught in schools, but the knowledge of God, of Jesus Christ, of redemption and eternity. This knowledge, of all others, has the most powerful effect even on the *mind* of man. It cannot enter it without enlarging it. It frees the soul from a thousand shackles, and by its sanctifying influence raises the whole man to the highest point of his being. The great work, therefore, to which American Christians are called, if they would accomplish their high vocation—if they would save their country from being a curse to the whole world—is to bring this knowledge to bear uniformly in the formation of the character of every district, family, and individual in the land. We are all agreed upon this point. We all know that men, left to grow up without the influence of the Gospel, grow up either in scepticism or superstition. And distinguished and observant statesmen of other countries have predicted with the utmost confidence, that the population of these United States is destined to be divided into infidels and Catholics. But, sir, these statesmen have left out of view the power of the Gospel. They have taken it for granted that Christians will not do their duty; that they will make no adequate

exertions to maintain the institutions of religion. This we do not believe. We do not believe that such a dreadful blot is to be cast on the religion of Christ. That it is reserved for America to prove, that the Gospel cannot support itself. We ask for no church establishment; we need no aid from government. We only wish this subject to be brought in its true light before the Christian public;—that they should be brought to feel that it depends on them, whether the millions of this country shall have the Gospel or perish without it. And if they do not send it to them, then, indeed, infidels would have some ground for saying that the religion of Christ is too weak to accomplish the purpose of its Author; that the love of Christ had lost its constraining power; and Christian benevolence and sense of duty ceased to govern the children of God.

But, sir, how is the Gospel to be brought to bear with sufficient constancy in the formation of the character of every section of our country? The distribution of Bibles, and Tracts, and the establishment of Sunday schools, is not sufficient. When Jesus Christ arose from the dead, and set his disciples to the great work to which he has now called us, the conversion of the world, he commanded them, "Go preach the Gospel." And in making permanent provision for this object, he gave some Apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, and the edifying of the body of Christ. It has pleased God by the foolishness of *preaching* to save them that believe. Faith cometh by *hearing*. But how can they *hear* without a *preacher*. It is then the ordinance of God, that the great object which we contemplate should be effected by the regular *preaching* of the Gospel. And the experience of every age and section of the church, proves that where there is no ministry, there is no Sabbath, and no diffused and permanent religious influence.

To establish a pastor in every neighborhood, therefore, is the only effectual means of giving the Gospel its proper and necessary influence. And this is the work of Home Missions. This is a work on whose success depends, to a great extent, the future character of this vast country; the success of our free institutions; the fate of our own children, and of the millions who are to dwell here; and the nature of our national influence over the world. If this work fail, then must the honour of religion be deeply stained; then must infidelity and superstition hold their joint reign of horror over this wide land of promise; then must our Bible societies perish, our Missionary stations be given up; and America become the curse and opprobrium of all lands. Let the churches once feel the magnitude of this subject—let them once be brought to

know what a solemn thing it is to be an American Christian; how much depends on our individual exertions; to what a glorious work Jesus Christ has called us, and this cause cannot fail. It will be seen that the Gospel is indeed the power of God. This work, therefore, commends itself to the prayers and patronage of all good men. To their prayers, because of our absolute dependence on God, and to their patronage, because God has determined to accomplish his purposes by human instrumentality. Let us then feel that a deep and peculiar responsibility rests on us, as American Christians—living at this particular period when good and evil are so obviously striving for the mastery in our land.

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ADDRESS

*Of the Rev. J. Van Vecten, Pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church, Schenectady, N. Y. in support of the following resolution.*

“Resolved, that the unequal distribution of ministerial labour in the United States, calls for the united co-operation of Christians in the older states, to supply the comparatively destitute states and territories of the south and west, with the preached gospel.”

I present this resolution, sir, with the greater cordiality, because it involves a principle which comes recommended to us by the most interesting form of a divine sanction, and because it contemplates measures which bear directly upon the vital interests of our country.

How often and how emphatically did our Saviour pray that his disciples might be united, and propose this as the result, “that the world might believe that thou hast sent me.” The conversion of the world, then, depends on the union of Christians. As soon as the church shall flow together, the nations will flow unto her. It is most notorious, that all the assaults of her enemies, have not been half so injurious to her prosperity, as her broils at home. I know not but infidelity may ere long obtain the ascendant in our country; considering the symptoms in the public mind which a recent state-paper has awakened—considering the many threatening monsters, which the warming sun of that paper has brought to light,—I know not how long we shall be permitted to celebrate our anniversaries in peace; or how long that noble edifice, your Bible depository, or your Tract house, will be permitted to stand, or how long your ministers will be permitted to officiate in public; but I do know, that if such calamities should befall us, they would do less injury to the cause of Christ, than is now done by the division of Christians.

Yet there are not wanting those who contend that more good is done by sepa-

rate than by united operation: as if that were an undesirable state of the church for which our Lord prayed so fervently, and on which he has suspended the conversion of the world! and as if emulation and strife were better principles of action, than love! Nay, sir, a divided house must necessarily be weakened. We all acknowledge this, when we pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Now, when we pray thus, should we not embrace the whole of Jerusalem, and contemplate her interests on that large scale on which God has placed them? Oh, how much point and force there is in the saying of an old English bishop: “Division of tongues must needs slacken any work; happy were the church of God, if we all spake but one language!”

The friends of division, sometimes compare the separate movements of different denominations to those of the twelve tribes, marching in orderly procession through the wilderness. They might rather have compared them to the journey of brethren, who are continually falling out by the way; or to the movements of allied armies, which are foolishly annoying and weakening each other, by mutual jealousies and broils, instead of uniting their whole strength against the common enemy.

But, sir, the church is escaping from this error. She is learning that on the Catholic, as well as on the Sectarian scale, in the native language of my own church, *KENDRACHT MAAKT MACHT*—union is strength. She is learning that love is a *stronger*, as well as a holier principle of action, than rivalry. In her march onward, she is forgetting her internal jealousies, and those little discrepancies which have engendered them; and she will not much longer waste her energies, or mar her beauty, in contending for worn-out forms and useless incumbrances. She is moulting her feathers, and, in her renovated strength and beauty, she will soon mount up with wings as eagles.

In our free country, especially, I trust, she will have full scope for the operation of her Catholic principles. In Europe she may not, for centuries, become disenthralled from her legal establishments. But here she is brought into a large place, and can walk at liberty. And surely no danger is to be apprehended from that liberty wherewith Christ doth make us free. Our religion, is at once the root and the offspring of our civil liberty. As long as the two remain blended, the republic is safe; but no longer. It is not possible for our mild government long to outlive our religion. It requires the iron hand of despotism to rule a people who have cast off the fear of God. No republican institution can stand before such reckless beings as an excited populace of irreligious men, who are perfectly conscious that all the power of the state is in their own hands. Un-