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HOME MISSIONS.

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THE pioneers of the Home Mission work in America were those expatriated Presbyterians from Ulster who, two

centuries ago, landed on the banks of the Delaware. Their successive migrations Southward laid the base line of all our subsequent work in the Southern States. They built a chain of churches from the Potomac river to the Savannah, through the heart of Virginia and the Carolinas, which have ever since constituted the Presbyterian stronghold.

It is important to bear in mind that from the beginning this sturdy element was the back-bone of the Revolution. These were the men who settled the historic county of Mecklenburg in North Carolina, and to whom Mr. Bancroft referred when he said that "The first voice publicly raised in America to dissolve all connection with Great Britain came, not from the Puritans of New England, not from the Dutch of New York, not from the planters of Virginia, but from the Scotch-Irish Presbyteriaus of North Carolina." Fourteen months after that memorable action, when, in this city, the Colonial Congress was hesitating to pass the Declaration of National Independence, it was the eloquence of an illustrious Presbyterian their swept the waverers to a decision-John Witherspoon, the only minister of any denomination who signed that immortal document. Later still, in one of the darkest hours of the Revolution, the great Washington himself said that, should all his plans be crushed, he would plant his standard on the Blue Ridge, and, rallying round him the Scotch-Irish, make a final and successful stand for freedom on the Virginia fron-To this sterling strain belongs the unique distinction of tier. being the only race in America that never produced a Tory. In fine, as Dr. DeWitt has well said, while the Quakers were non-combatants and stood aloof from the conflict; while the Episcopalians as a rule were against the colonies and in favor of the Crown; while the Methodists followed the mother Church and imitated John Wesley himself in their denunciations of the revolting Americans, the Congregational ministers

of New England, and the Presbyterian ministers from Long Island to Georgia, gave to the cause of the colonies all that they could give of the sanction of religion. The Presbyterian ministers upheld it in the pulpit, in the press, and on the field, some of them becoming both chaplains and commanders.

HISTORICAL CONSPECTUS OF HOME MISSIONS.

These familiar facts are by no means irrelevant to the history of Home Missions. They gave Presbyterianism her coigne of vantage for evangelizing America. That Church which had been the chief champion of civil and religious freedom, and whose form of government was the mould of the Republic, held a unique place in the affections of the people. Her loyalty to the cause of Independence made it peculiarly appropriate that she should give the Gospel to the new nation and conquer this continent for Christ. The great men who composed that first Assembly saw and seized the opportunity. With but few exceptions they were themselves home mission. aries, and the subject which excited their deepest interest was the work of carrying the Gospel to the outlying districts of the Synods. If the Presbyterian Church has forfeited her empire in America, the reason is that the supreme importance of this subject and its vital relation to every other branch of our work have not been so fully recognized by later Assemblies as by those farsighted patriots of 1789. They knew their work and did it. How wisely they organized and how zealously they labored may be seen in part by the results which can be tabulated to-day, notwithstanding all the sterile controversies and baneful dissensions of their successors. There were 16 Presbyteries then, there are 389 now; 177 ministers then, 8333 now; 419 churches then, 11,212 now; 15,000 members then, 992,305 now. The population of the country then was 3,000,000, now it is 60,000,000. The increase of population in the century, therefore, has been twentyfold, that of our communicants more than sixtyfold. The collection for Home Missions in 1789 amounted to \$400, in 1887 nearly \$900,000. During the century over 3,000,000 souls have been added to the Church on confession of faith. These cold figures alone tell a stirring story of Home Missions.

The brevity to which I am constrained forbids any detailed description of this marvelous growth. But the scantiest resumé of our subject would be incomplete without some reference to that constellation of missionaries raised up in the great revival at Hampden-Sidney in 1788, each of whom itinerated vast regions of country on a salary of \$200 a year; to the men of Redstone, who planted to such purpose that

there are now over thirty Synods in the transmontane West, where a century ago there was but one Presbytery of four ministers; to Thomas Cleland, who preached the first Presbyterian sermon in Indiana in 1805; to David Rice, the morning star of Presbyterianism in Kentucky; to Samuel Doak, who carried the first library across the Alleghenies on horseback to endow his log college in Tennessee. And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of Templeton, and of Hall, and of Cunningham, and of Henderson; of Blackburn also, and Porter, and of many others who through faith preached the Gospel from the Chesapeake Bay to the Mississippi river, and whose names are imperishably associated with the early evangelization of the South and West. Suffice it to say that since the beginning of the century the Presbyterian Church has contributed to this cause over \$10,000,000 and sent into the field more than 50,000 missionaries.

WORK AMONG THE NEGROES.

But, with this hurried glance at our earlier missionary operations in the South and these brief statistics of our work in establishing and extending the Redeemer's kingdom throughout the country, I must pass on to speak of our work for the blacks and of our mighty task since the emancipation of the slave unfettered the South and opened the way for the unparalleled expansion of the last twenty-three years. That Dutch skipper who in 1620 landed the first cargo of African slaves on the shore of Virginia, meant evil against those helpless savages, but God meant it unto good, to preserve much people alive, as at this day. Sold by the States in which their labor was not profitable and bought by the States in which it was apparently profitable, they were inevitably massed in the South, and thus our special work in the department of Home Missions was cut out for us and laid to our hands. The manner in which that work was accomplished will reflect eternal honor on the Christian people of the South. Never in the history of the world, with perhaps a single exception, has a nation been lifted from a plane so low to a plane so high in the same length of time. Compare for a moment the native African with the American slave of 1863. In that very year Sir Samuel Baker wrote in his journal the following estimate : "Human nature viewed in its crude state, as pictured among African savages, is quite on a level with that of the brute, and not to be compared with the noble character of the dog. There is neither gratitude, pity, love, nor self-denial, no idea of duty, no religion; but covetousness, ingratitude, selfishness, and cruelty." And in 1872 he adds: "The treachery of the negro is beyond

belief. He has not a moral, human instinct, and is below the brute. How is it possible to improve such abject animals?" Such were the degraded savages who were brought to our shores over two centuries ago, and for whose salvation the Christian men and women of the South have labored all these years. And with what result? In 1865, of the four million slaves in the Southern States, belonging to the same brutal race described by Baker, "all had been brought under the influence of Christianity, and half a million were members of the Church of Christ." The highest authority on this subject in the world has said that "the astonishing progress made among the colored people since their freedom was made possible by what had been accomplished for them before their freedom."

But the loss of \$3,000,000,000 invested in slavery, and of four successive crops, the devastation of the country, and the struggle against starvation, made it impossible for the Southern people to do for the negroes after the war what they had done before. At this juncture, however, the Christian people of the North took up the work and carried it on with such vigor that since the emancipation over half a million more have been added to the various denominations. I would not imply that the South has neglected this work since the war. Years ago our General Assembly organized the work among the negroes as a distinct department coördinate with Sustentation, Evangelistic Work, and Ministerial Relief, and in 1876 the institute for the training of colored ministers was established at Tuscaloosa, Alabama. This was the first step in this direction taken by any Southern denomination. In the meantime, as we have seen, the Northern Church also had been pushing the work, and now reports 15,880 communicants, six higher institutions of learning, enrolling 1800 students, and 103 parochial schools, with a total attendance of nearly 10,000 pupils. Both South and North have done nobly.

But, after all, the proportion of professed Christians among them to-day is but little larger than it was in 1865, and the number of those who honor that profession is notoriously small. The race is rapidly multiplying. There are now, probably, 8,000,000 of them. One-fourth of this number are improving. Three-fourths are little better than heathen, and in some parts of the South they have been steadily retrograding since the war. Illiteracy is on the increase among them, the last decade showing an increase of 300,000 ignorant blacks. Of their 2,000,000 children of a school age, 1,103,000 are out of school, because there are no schools for them. These are startling facts. Here are these millions of semi barbarians, ignorant, immoral, superstitious. They are here to stay; for.

while there is little doubt that the ultimate purpose of God in bringing them to America was the evangelization of Africa, it is equally plain that the great body of them will remain in this country as a base of operations for that sublime mission. Hence, self-interest and patriotism, as well as love for souls and the honor of our Redeemer, conspire to emphasize our duty to these heathen at our doors. And, as Judge Tourgee has said, "It is the grandest mission ever yet laid on the heart and brain of a Christian nation." Where, even in the foreign field, can we find a work of more importance or more promise? There are here no difficulties of language, no barriers of ancestral idolatry, no necessity for long and laborious years of sowing without reaping. All this preparatory work has been done; these people are no longer savages; many of them are being educated; and thousands of them are thirsting for Their rapidly developing race-pride and desire for relitruth. gious independence only enhance the value of our opportunity. If we are seeking that investment of our work and money, which offers the minimum of risk and the maximum of profit, here it is. One of the most earnest and intelligent negroes in Virginia says that, "If the colored people of this Southland are ever to be elevated intellectually, morally and spiritually, the Presbyterian Church must have a distinguished part in bringing it about." He is right. The type of piety most needed among these impressionable people, whose religious services too often consist of senseless harangues and wild excitement, is that sober and intelligent type developed by the Presbyterian Church. What shall be our record for the coming century? What shall be our influence upon the future of the American freedman, and upon the destiny of the Dark Continent?

GROWTH OF THE SOUTHERN CHURCH SINCE THE WAR.

Church extension among the whites was, of course, arrested by the civil war. Then came the horrible saturnalia of Reconstruction. The fortune of the South had consisted chiefly of slaves and land. The war obliterated one part of this property and depreciated the other to a degree, which, in many cases, made it a burden rather than a support. Under such conditions, impoverished and crippled, the Southern Church began her career as a separate organization; and yet, as we contrast her strength to-day with her strength then, we have abundant reason to thank God and take courage. Her growth has been wonderful. When organized in 1861 the General Assembly included 47 Presbyteries, 700 ministers, 1000 churches and 75,000 communicants, about 10,000 of whom were negroes. It includes now 69 Presbyteries, 1173 ministers, 2236 churches and 150,398 communicants. The number of both churches and communicants has more than doubled. And this is but the beginning of our growth, merely the big drops before the shower, as I shall now endeavor to show.

THE OUTLOOK IN THE SOUTH.

In 1776 the primacy of Virginia among the colonies was undisputed. In 1860 she had been reduced to the fifth place among the States, two of her superiors in wealth and population having been carved out of her own north-west territory. Do you ask the explanation? It was the curse of African slavery. The largest crop of cotton ever produced under that system was less than 5,000,000 bales (1859-'60). In 1882-'83, only sixteen years after a desolating war, the magnificent total of 7,000,000 bales demonstrated the superior efficiency and fruitfulness of hired labor. The meaning of these facts is this: The slave was not so much shackled by the South as the South was shackled by the slave. And when she sought political independence by secession God gave her instead industrial independence, not through victory, but through defeat, and for proof we point to her phenomenal progress since 1865. "The new South" is a reality, notwithstanding the attempt of an able, but reactionary, minority to expel the phrase and deny the fact. But the new South, while by no means a replica of the old, is yet the creation of the same forces, and demonstrates to the world what that great people is capable of when relieved of the paralyzing incubus of slavery. It is chiefly the enterprise of her own citizens which has lifted the South out of the ashes to which the war consigned her. Her prosperity has every promise of permanence. The pyramid is no longer on its apex, but on its base, for while cotton is still king-in an important sense-we have learned that the \$400,000,000 annually received from that crop will make us truly prosperous only when the supplies which produce it are home raised, and when our own vast natural advantages for spinning and weaving our staple are utilized. So that just as the political power, which was wielded by an oligarchy before the war, is now diffused among the people, so the wealth which was then congested into one plethoric channel is now widely distributed by means of diversified crops and home manufactures. Not less marked and full of promise are many of the changes in the people themselves. The severe privations endured for a few years after the war developed a frugality unknown before, and the laissez jaire of the typical ante-bellum Southerner has been transmuted into the activity and push which were once thought peculiar to the people of the North.

Of course we still have among us croakers who remember that the Virginia sunsets before the war were much finer than they are now, who deplore the loss of "individuality" ou the part of the South and see only evil in the cosmopolitan cast of our civilization, who publish periodical Jeremiads over the influx of "Northern ideas," and can demonstrate to their own entire satisfaction that the South is growing poorer every day. But the battery of facts is gradually thinning the ranks of even When they speak of mortgaged farms in these pessimists. Georgia, it can at least be answered that the mortgages on the farms of ten of the "prosperous" Western States aggregate \$3,422,000,000, Ohio leading the list with an aggregate of \$701,000,000. The statistics show that of the fourteen Southern States there are only four in which the capital invested in new enterprises in 1887 is not double the amount invested in 1886. What do these facts mean? Why, in connection with the balmy climate and boundless resources of the South they mean unexampled wealth, population, and influence. And to us they mean that here we should make our largest investments of labor and money for domestic missions. We are told by Humboldt that one of the soldiers of Cortez sowed the first wheat in America. He had but three grains, which had been found in their supply of rice. But those three grains he planted in the right place, and in 1880 our wheat crop was 460,000,000 bushels. Such were the dividends on that judicious investment.

Montesquieu declares that "Climate is the most powerful of all empires, and gives guaranty alone of future development." In Dakota last winter 113 persons perished in a single blizzard, some of them within a hundred yards of their homes. Is it not certain that the intolerable climate of the North-west will eventually turn the tide of immigration to the soft and salubrious South? In 1882 that immigration reached the enormous total of 800,000 souls. Thirteen States in the Union have less population than that, and seven of the thirteen are in the South. A Philadelphia orator has recently said that, "The land for the homes of our future growth is not in the West, nor in the East, nor in the North; it is in the South, where there are more unimproved and improvable acres than the present total improved land in all the States of the Union excepting Illinois." This testimony is true. Yet very few even of well-informed people are aware of the vast extent of our territory. How many of you are taken by surprise when I announce that there are eight States in the South larger than Pennsylvania, and yet not one of them has half the population

of Pennsylvania! One of those eight States has an area of 274,000 square miles, that is to say, it is larger than all New England, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana combined. Texas is not only the grazing ground of a continent, but has "a rich and diversified soil, producing wheat as in California, corn as in Illinois, and eotton as in Egypt." These data, taken in connection with her genial climate and uniform temperature, explain the fact that in fifty years her population has increased fiftyfold. In 1838 it was about 50,000. It is now over 2,000,000, though "not one-fifth of the area of Texas is yet occupied or utilized."

Again, the three principal lumbering States in the Union are Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. The timber area of the South is four times as great as theirs, affording lumber of equal quality and more numerous varieties. Arkansas alone has 30,000 square miles of forests, an area equal to two-thirds of Pennsylvania. The same State has 12,000 square miles of coal fields and between 3000 and 4000 miles of navigable streams—more than any other State in the Union. When I add that her fine fruits carry off the premium in competition with California, you will be prepared for the statement that her population has doubled in the last decade.

Such facts are the logical foreground of our calculations for the future. But why should I attempt here a description of all the crowned States of the South? In agriculture, in mining, in manufacturing and in lumbering, if not in stockraising, the South is destined to excel every other part of our country. And why should she not compete with the North even in commerce, when the teeming products of both West and South shall eventually seek the ocean by the shortest line of land transportation? A glance at the map with this thought in mind will suggest a great future for our seaboard cities. In short, your veteran statesman, Judge Kelley, was right when, in his recent book on the South, he said: "She is the coming El Dorado of American adventure."

It is a notorious fact that the railroads built up the West. In 1840 Illinois land glutted the market at \$1.25 an acre. In 1880, when she had a mile of railroad to every seven square miles of territory, her lands averaged from \$30 to \$50 an acre. Now, when the fertile South is gridironed in that way, who can estimate her wealth? And the time is not far off. In 1880 the United States built more miles of railway than all the world beside. Many of these lines are reaching Southward, and farmers, tradesmen, capitalists and mechanics are beginning to move, as if by instinct, to the future seat of empire. For instance, a vast tide of immigration is pouring into Northern Alabama and the contiguous territory, outstripping

the means of grace and appealing to the evangelistic agencies of the Church. That tide will continue to flow without an ebb for many years. Mining and manufacturing towns are springing up in every direction, and the day is not distant when the iron crown of Pennsylvania shall adorn the brow of Alabama. The gentleman who is at this moment speaking in the adjoining hall, and who is recognized as an authority on the subject of Home Missions, says that a field promising larger and more immediate results is open in Northern Alabama than is to be found in any part of the West with which he is familiar. But even in the older States there are vast populations absolutely unreached by us. In 1884 there were said to be 42 counties in Virginia without Presbyterian preaching, in North Carolina 34 and in Kentucky 50. These, remember, are our strongest Synods. Then what must be the destitutions elsewhere? A recent report to the General Assembly states that "in most of the Presbyteries the unoccupied territory far exceeds what has been occupied."

What shall be our response to these calls of God's providence? Shall we allow the newspapers to say of us at the end of another century as the New York *Times* says now, that the Presbyterians "have constantly missed their opportunity, while the Methodists, Baptists and others have been quick to see it?" Or shall we justify its prediction that this centennial will mark a new departure in the practical activity of the Presbyterian Church?

THE NEEDS OF THE WORK.

Permit me, in conclusion, to present briefly a few of the more pressing needs of this great work:

1. It needs more men. The gravest problem confronting the Presbyterian Church to-day is the problem of ministeral demand and supply. The most alarming fact in our history is that even in the most prosperous periods of the past we have been unable to give our people a sufficient number of educated ministers. The difficulty is chronic and increasing. 1881 the Southern Church had six less ministers and licentiates than in 1880; in 1882 there was a further decrease of twelve; and in 1883 a still further decline of six, showing a total loss of twenty-four ministers in three years-the aggregate for 1883 being the same as that of 1877. In these six years there was a gain of two hundred and ten churches and about fifteen thousand communicants without the gain of a single minister. In 1872 we had two hundred and five candidates for the ministry, in 1882 only one hundred and sixty. And in that year the pastoral letter of the Assembly made this startling announcement: "The decrease of ministers, if not remedied, must paralyze the Church. Her work must cease for lack of instrumentality to carry it on." If it is objected that we have taken our figures from a time of exceptional decline, we reply that the present ratio of increase is nearly four additional churches for every additional preacher. In the last thirteen years we have gained only one hundred and seventeen ministers-an average increase of only nine a year, or less than one per cent per annum. At this rate it will take more than a hundred years for the number to double itself. After citing these disheartening facts, the most influential paper in the Southern Church said last year that "three alternatives were open: either the Presbyterian Church must train more ministers-or, other denominations must do the work of evangelization which God has entrusted to us-or, the land will relapse into practical heathenism." The same danger threatens the North; in a recent year the net increase of ministers in the Northern Church was only eleven.

What are the causes of this fatal deficiency? Can any one consider the facts I have stated without reaching the conclusion that hundreds of our young men are called to the ministry who do not respond? Unfortunately, a superstitious and unscriptural view of the nature of this divine call, having the support of great names, has been largely adopted and taught in our branch of the Church, so that many of our young men do not know what a call to the ministry is. This is undoubtedly one reason for the deplorable scarcity of candidates among us. But is it the only reason? Have we not enforced too rigidly the requirements of our standards for ministerial education? And shall we ever overtake our vast work so long as we continue to debar from the ministry multitudes of sound and earnest men, simply because they have not received a full education? To what purpose have we studied the history of the Old and New Sides, if we are to continue this suicidal policy? Shall we not rather renounce it, and, while retaining, and even elevating our standard of scholarship, as the times undoubtedly demand, yet also utilize more freely these neglected forces-these men of piety and power, whose only deficiency is a lack of scholastic training? Henceforth let our motto be-More men for Macedonia, as well as stronger men for Greece.

2. It needs more money. Our increasing destitutions and our lagging revenues foreshadow a shameful failure. Mr. Gladstone is not wrong in saying that "America is the wealthiest of the nations." Much of this wealth is held by members of the Presbyterian Church, and it is a pleasure to acknowledge that their gifts to the Lord are larger than those of any other denomination. The average annual contribution in the Southern Church is about \$10.00 per member. In the Northern Church about \$16.00. It must not be forgotten, however, that more than two-thirds of all these funds go to the support of our own home churches, and a very small proportion to Domestic and Foreign Missions. Our largest Synod, Virginia, contributes for Home Missions, outside of her own territory, only two-and a-half cents per member, and Kentucky, our banner Synod, gives for evangelization, beyond her own bounds, but ten cents per member.

If it be true that, where a man's treasure is there will his heart be also, then, arguing conversely, the hearts of our people are not in this work. Why not? Will any man dare to assert that it is simply because they are unfaithful stewards? I do not believe it. I am persuaded that the chief reason for this delinquency is the failure of the pastors to inform the people of these vast destitutions and to impress upon them the paramount importance of the evangelistic work. The contributions of the Southern Church to Home Missions last year varied in different Presbyteries from one-and-a-half cent up to seventy-seven cents per member; and, in the same Presbytery, of two churches, not differing much as to ability, one contributed five times as much as the other. Obviously this is not so much the fault of the people as of the pastors. And this shameful inadequacy of means must continue so long as we fail to recognize that, for Home Missions as for Foreign, facts constitute the strongest appeal, and that facts draw funds just in proportion as they are presented.

3. It needs more effective cooperation. Not for the purpose of obtruding my views upon this Assembly, but merely to prevent misapprehension, permit me to say that in my humble judgment Organic Union is at present impracticable. But that is no reason why we should fail to establish a cordial and fruitful cooperation between the Home Mission agencies of the two Assemblies. We have been preparing some humiliating chapters of Church history since the war by our wasteful and irritating competition in the border States. The attempts to sustain two Presbyterian Churches in communities where only one was needed have been a fruitful cause of our failure to secure enough men and money for the frontier. The people have long been asking when these ruinous rivalries shall cease. Hundreds of ministers are now asking the same question. Can we not dismiss the animosities of the past without sacrificing its principles of truth or its examples of valor? Can we not rise from a provincial to a continental view of the crisis that is upon us? At a time of great danger to the nascent union of the colonies, Patrick Henry uttered these noble words.

"The distinctions between Virginians, Pennsylvanians, New Yorkers, and New Englanders are no more. I am not a Virginian, but an American." My brethren, has the time not come when each of us should say, "I am not a Northern man or a Southern man, I am a Presbyterian?" At a time of extreme bitterness and jealousy between the East and the West, Daniel Webster proved his patriotism by saying of the Louisville Canal Bill: "I look to the magnitude of the object, and not to its locality. I ask not whether it be east or west of the mountains. There are no Alleghenies in my politics." Has the time not come when we too should rise to a policy which is not sectional in its scope but national, and roll away our reproach by declaring to the world that there is no longer a war line in our work? The time has come. And not even the courtiers of Canute were guilty of greater folly than those who imagine that this tide of fraternity which is rising in obedience to heavenly forces can be stayed by the command of any mortal, even though he be a king. And as for the rest, let us remember that on a critical occasion in the seventeenth century, while the Scotch Presbyterians were quarreling, within sight of the foe, over points of Church discipline, the Battle of Bothwell Bridge was lost. Let us remember, too, that in the seventh century, while the eastern Churches were "wrangling over Monothelite subtleties" the scimitar of Islam was subjugating their territory.

Such is our history. Such our opportunity. Such our needs. Oh, for the faith and foresight of the fathers! In Philadelphia's great park stands a colossal statue of one of those founders of organized missions. His name and the names of his contemporaries are luminous in our history, and we are here to day to honor their memory and celebrate their wisdom. But no marble, however noble; no history, however faithful; no eulogy, however eloquent, can adequately honor their glorious work. Deeds alone can worthily commemorate deeds like theirs. In their day a great Frenchman said of our country: "It is the hope of the human race." They accepted the responsibility involved in that belief, and labored wisely and earnestly for the evangelization of the country in the outset of her career. In our own day a great Englishman has said: "America holds the future." That remark ought to thrill the people of God like the blast of a bugle, for it is the measure of an unequaled opportunity and an awful responsibility. Sir Walter Scott tells us that in the early days of Scotland, whenever Clan Alpine was going forth to battle, a flaming cross dipped in blood was sent in the hands of a runner to every home in the clan, and at that signal all the warriors mustered to the appointed rendezvous, ready to fight for

their country's weal. And whoso disregarded that battle signal and failed to repair to the gathering of Clan Alpine was branded as a coward and cursed as a traitor. To-day the Church of God sends her signal to all her members—the cross bathed in the Redeemer's blood—and by this token she summons us all to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. We are the last reserve of the world for God's work. America will determine the destiny of the race. What shall be said of those who, professing allegiance to Christ and holding membership in His Church, living in such a country at such a time, yet disregard this solemn signal and neglect this supreme opportunity? Are they not traitors to the most sacred cause in the universe? May God avert from us the curse of Meroz. Let us obey this summons. Let us rally to this standard. Let us secure *this* country. And thus let us win the world for God.