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OUR
NATIONAL ORIGIN, PROGRESS,
AND PERILS:

A SERMON,

PREACHED ON

THANKSGIVING DAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1861, IN BEDFORD, PA.

BY
REV. ROBERT F. ^{Belmont} SAMPLE.

PHILADELPHIA:
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606 CHESTNUT STREET.
1862.

BEDFORD, November 30, 1861.

Rev. R. F. SAMPLE:

DEAR SIR—The great pleasure with which we listened to the eloquent and patriotic discourse delivered by you on Thanksgiving day, has induced us to request a copy of the same for publication, that others, who had not the gratification of hearing it spoken, may be afforded the opportunity of reading it. Besides, we believe the wider circulation of the truths it contains will be of no small benefit to the cause it maintains and defends.

Truly yours,

S. H. TATE,
WM HARTLEY,
JOHN DAVIDSON,
JOHN R. JORDAN,

ALEX. KING,
G. W. BOWMAN,
JOHN CESSNA,
GEORGE OYSTER.



BEDFORD, December 2, 1861.

GENTLEMEN—The sermon to which you so kindly refer was hastily prepared in the midst of pressing pastoral duties, and without any expectation of a request for publication. But with the hope that it may, in a limited sphere and to some extent, subserve the interests of our beloved country, at the same time that it will gratify the esteemed friends who have solicited it for publication, I herewith place the manuscript at your disposal.

Respectfully yours,

ROBERT F. SAMPLE.

TO HON. ALEX. KING,
Gen. G. W. BOWMAN,
HON. JOHN CESSNA,
S. H. TATE, Esq, and others.

S E R M O N .



HE HATH NOT DEALT SO WITH ANY NATION.

PSALM CXLVII. 20.

IN compliance with the recommendation of the chief magistrate of our State, we are to-day assembled in this sanctuary of worship, to review the goodness and mercy of God, and to offer thanksgivings for our great social and national mercies. We recognise a divine, superintending Providence. We acknowledge God to be the author of all good. We praise the Lord, for his merciful kindness is great toward us, and his truth endureth for ever.

In reviewing the past year, we find much to humble us; much also to awaken devout gratitude to God. We have had rain and fruitful seasons, seedtime and harvest. The labourer has been rewarded for his toil, and our hearts have been filled with food and gladness. The year has been to us, as a commonwealth, one of peace. The foot of the enemy has not pressed our soil. The din and terror

of battle have not disturbed the quiet of our peaceful valleys.

As a community, we have reason for thankfulness. God has crowned the year with his goodness. He has continued to us the means of grace; has permitted us to enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. He has enriched us with spiritual gifts, imparted strength for life's duties and conflicts, and given us, at times, sweet antepasts of the rest reserved for us in heaven. True, sorrow has darkened households not a few. Death has been among us. The father and the mother in Israel, the hopeful youth, and tender babe, have been taken from us. But though there are vacant seats in our sanctuary to-day, yet, my beloved, we have good reason to hope that the most, if not all of our dear departed, have been taken to everlasting habitations. They are not lost, but gone before.

In our contemplation of recent goodness, which may again claim our attention, let us not lose sight of the mercies of years gone by, which were like seed sown in the ground, now bringing forth a rich harvest of blessings inestimable, to gladden our hearts. Going back to the origin of our existence as a people, let us follow the stream of Divine beneficence, as it issues from the seclusion of the forest, ever deepening its channel and widening its flow—coming to us to-day in the sunlight of a higher civilization, and the glory of national power, unsur-

passed by any of the kingdoms of the earth. Let us call your attention to

I. OUR COLONIAL HISTORY.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century, the first permanent settlements were made in America. The English in Virginia, and Lord Baltimore in Maryland, initiated the colonization of this country; and by glowing descriptions of their new home, induced great numbers to emigrate from all parts of Europe, to a land which, though destined to be the garden of the earth, failed to realize the hopes of the early settlers. It is not my purpose to-day to speak in detail of the establishment of the many colonies which sprung up, as if by magic, along the Atlantic coast, but to direct your attention to the more important of those settlements, and show that we have reason for thanksgiving to-day, that God gave this good land as a possession to men of intellectual distinction, and moral worth—a noble race, whose influence still lives, and, like the circling ripples on the surface of the placid lake, shall widen and extend until the end of time.

The settlement of this country furnishes a striking exemplification of the wisdom and goodness of Providence—a commentary on that familiar text, “The wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.” The dispensations of God are often dark and sorrowful in the beginning,

great and blessed in the end. This fact is illustrated in the history of our country. Civil and religious intolerance was the chief cause of the early emigration to America. Men of humble faith, and unwavering devotion to truth, were unwilling to submit to the control of the uncompromising enemies of God and the gospel of his Son, and preferred the wilderness with freedom of conscience, to their fatherland and the cruel domination of spiritual despots. Others, denied the privilege of worshipping God according to their convictions of duty, required to receive a prescribed faith, and adopt certain established forms of devotion, severed their connection with their native country, and sought a home among the unbroken forests of a distant land. These were the French Huguenots and the English Puritans. There came, also, to this asylum for the oppressed, the German Protestants, who emigrated to this country, first from the Palatinate, "whence they were driven by the myrmidons of Louis XIV., who ruthlessly laid waste their country; and then from other parts of the glorious land of Luther."

History informs us that France was the first country where the Reformation, which commenced in Germany and Switzerland, very soon, and under the severest oppressions, found many adherents. No country seems to have been so long, and so well prepared for it as this; and yet here it met the most violent opposition. Nowhere did it occa-

sion such streams of blood to flow; nowhere gave birth to such dreadful and deadly civil wars. And nowhere have state policy, court intrigue, political parties, and the ambition of greatness, had so powerful an influence on the progress and fortunes of the Reformation, as in France.

During the time of Francis I., a dispute arose between two factions, the Bourbons and the Guises; and the latter, in order to the accomplishment of political ends, persecuted the "heretics" with fanatical fury. It was during this earliest religious difficulty that the first colony of Protestants fled from their native land. After a prosperous voyage, they planted themselves on the river May, now the St. Johns, of Florida. A mournful interest is connected with their history. The cruel, bloodthirsty Melendez, executed the commission of his king, in the almost entire destruction of the little colony, gibbeting and beheading some, hanging others on trees, and placing over them the inscription, "Hung, not as Frenchmen, but as Lutherans." The Huguenots who survived the persecutions during the latter part of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, fled to America, and were successful in finding a refuge from their persecutors. "Many," says a historian, "found a shelter in Carolina, the general asylum of the Calvinistic refugees. Escaping from a land where the profession of their religion was a felony; where the preaching of their

faith was a crime, to be expiated on the wheel; where their children might be torn from them, to be subjected to the nearest Roman Catholic relation; the fugitives of Languedoc, on the Mediterranean, from Rochelle and Saintange and Bordeaux, the provinces on the Bay of Biscay; from St. Quentin, Poitiers, and the beautiful valley of Tours; from St. Lo and Dieppe—men who had the virtues of the English Puritans, without their bigotry—came to the land to which the benevolence of Shaftsbury had invited the believer of every creed. From a land which had suffered its king, in wanton bigotry, to drive half a million of its best citizens into exile, they came to a land which was the hospitable refuge of the oppressed.” In the salubrious climate, and under the serene skies of the *Summer Land*, they esteemed themselves the favourites of Heaven. On the broad savannas their cattle grazed, or golden harvests waved. In humble tenements, overshadowed by primeval forests, they dwelt in peace. There they might safely make the woods the scene of their devotions, and “join the simple incense of their psalms to the melodies of the ancient groves.” Let us not forget that these men, who feared God, and loved the gospel of his Son—men of moral courage, genuine piety, dignified bearing, and human excellence—were among the first to subdue the wilderness, and prepare peaceful habitations for their children.

The bigotry and intolerance of the British Government, and the Established Church, though Protestant, were overruled to the great advantage of these United States. The Puritans were not infallible men—*humanum est errare*. But they were inferior to none. “They were exiles for religion, men disciplined by misfortune, cultivated by opportunities of extensive observation, equal in rank as in rights, and bound by no code but that of religion, or the public good.” These persecutions were the result of their unwillingness to yield submission to the celebrated act of conformity, published by Queen Elizabeth, requiring all Englishmen to observe her ecclesiastical regulations. During the reign of Elizabeth the Puritans were treated with great rigour and severity. Under James I. they hoped to enjoy undisturbed their own opinions, and to adopt their own form of worship. This was all they asked. But they were disappointed. Said that weak-minded mannikin, in the conference at Hampton Court, “I will have none of this liberty as to ceremonies. I will have one doctrine, one discipline, one religion, in *substance* and in *ceremony*. I will make them conform, or I will harry them out of the land; or else worse—I will hang them.” At length the Puritans were resolved to seek somewhere, anywhere, a refuge from persecution. Their attention, also, was directed to America. There

they hoped to enjoy freedom of conscience, and liberty to worship God, as they believed most in accordance with the teachings of his word, and the practice of the apostolic Church. Trusting in God, they made ready for their departure. A solemn fast was observed. "Let us seek of God," said they, "a right way for us, and for our little ones." God was with them. In the Mayflower they crossed the broad Atlantic in safety; for He

"Who rides upon the stormy wind,
And manages the sea,"

brought them to their desired haven. In December, 1620, they stood on Plymouth Rock. On the margin of rivers, and on rugged hill-sides, they built their cottages, and erected their altars. They dwelt in tranquillity; they toiled with gladness, and gathered the fruit of their labours with thankfulness. As the resources of the country were developed, and the population increased, the sons of the Pilgrims came forth into the broader arenas of life, and proved themselves sufficient for the higher duties and graver responsibilities of the council and the court.

Still, others came. The Dutch found a home amidst the deep forests which skirted the Hudson river. Exiles for conscience' sake, gathered from valleys along the Rhine, and the shores of the German sea, from the solitudes of Alpine moun-

tains, from the lochs and glens of Scotland, and the Emerald Isle, came to

“A world of darkness
Beyond a world of waves,”

where they might enjoy domestic quiet and religious freedom. As some one has beautifully said, they escaped from Egyptian bondage to the wilderness, that God might give them the pattern of the tabernacle. Like the favoured Evangelist, the exiles, in their western Patmos, listened to the angel that dictated the new gospel of freedom. Overwhelmed in Europe, popular liberty, like the fabled fountain of Arethusa, gushed forth profusely in remoter fields. To these men, under God, we are chiefly indebted for the civil liberty and religious freedom we now enjoy. To them we owe it that the United States occupies so high and honourable a position among the nations of the earth. The character of the early settlers went far to determine the character of their numerous progeny; and the colony foreshadowed the future greatness of the nation. Truly, we, the descendants of the Puritans, Huguenots, and Waldenses, have reason to praise God to-day, who seemed, as Cotton Mather said, to have “*sifted* the nations of the Old World, in order to bring the *best of the wheat* to the New.” *He hath not dealt so with any nation.*

We come now to notice the revolution which resulted in the independence of the Colonies, and

the inauguration of our national greatness. The scattered colonists were cruelly oppressed by the mother country. They were weak, and successful resistance seemed impossible. For a time they bore the yoke which a powerful nation imposed; but, when wearied with oppression, they sought redress. They resorted to argument, to respectful expostulation, to humble supplication. All proved unavailing. Revolution seemed the only alternative. This resort they felt was justified by their wrongs. Then, in the council chamber, and on the battlefield, stood forth men of unsurpassed sagacity, fearless hearts, and determined will, to inaugurate and carry on the war; men who, amid misrepresentation and danger, fire and smoke, were true to their purpose; men who caught up the words of the noble Henry, and shouted them through the land—"Give us liberty, or give us death!" The great and good George Washington became the commander-in-chief of our little army. Charles Lee, who had "commanded Cossacks, and fought with Turks," whose military renown and unquestionable patriotism had secured the confidence and admiration of the colonists, devoted himself to the holy cause of liberty. Israel Putnam, Cincinnatus-like, left his plough in mid-furrow, that he might join the feeble army in their effort to cast off a foreign yoke. The eccentric Ethan Allen—let not his name be forgotten—with his Green Mountain boys, rendered important ser-

vice in the time of our country's greatest need. To these we add the honoured names of Green, and Schuyler, and Sullivan, and Sumter, and Wayne, whose memories shall ever live in the hearts of a grateful nation. Then, too, our cause enlisted the sympathies of noble men beyond the sea. Baron Steuben, who had won for himself a name on the battle-fields of Europe, who had been aid-de-camp to Frederick the Great, came to America to discipline our army, to fight our battles, to crown himself with immortal glory. Kosciusko, the youthful, generous Pole, of noble birth, educated in the military schools of Europe, left his father-land, came to our shores, sought an interview with Washington, and, to the inquiry of the commander-in-chief, "What do you seek here?" promptly replied, "To fight for American Independence!" De Kalb, the veteran soldier, long employed in the French service, joined the patriot band, and grew not weary in the noble strife. Lafayette exchanged the grandeur of courts, and the comforts of wealth, for the tented field and the hardships of war, consecrating his life and treasures to the cause of American freedom.

We need not trace the progress of the Revolution. Its history you know. But it is a fitting time, when our liberty is endangered, and wicked hands would demolish the work of our patriot fathers, to consider what our freedom cost, that we cast not

away the precious boon, but rouse ourselves to manly effort for the preservation of our Union, and the perpetuation of our national institutions. It is well, too, to call to mind the dealings of God with us as a people in times past, that gratitude may be awakened, and hope encouraged. *He hath not dealt so with any nation.*

We come now to speak of our

II. NATIONAL ORIGIN, PROGRESS, AND PERILS.

The declaration of independence was a national act. It was not the act of separate colonies, but of a Congress which derived its existence from the people, and dissolved our political connection with Great Britain, in the name and by the authority of *the people* of the colonies. But by the celebrated articles of confederation, there was a reservation of certain rights to the States, involving the principle of State sovereignty, along with the recognition of a common nationality. There seems to have been an effort to unite antagonistic principles in a confederation, which, after an experiment of twelve years, proved itself utterly inadequate to the necessities of the country. Disorder, disintegration, and the destruction of American liberty, seemed inevitable under a government so imperfect as that which then existed. External war had served to bind the colonies together, but in peace the States disregarded the authority of Congress, and instead of one great

nation commanding the respect of the world, and securing the safety and prosperity of the people, were thirteen independent sovereignties, sacrificing the public good to an impracticable principle, and endangering the life of all. "I do not conceive," said Washington, "we can exist long as a nation, without lodging somewhere a power which will pervade the whole Union, in as energetic a manner as the authority of the State governments extends over the several States. To be fearful of investing Congress, constituted as that body is, with ample authorities for national purposes, appears to me the very climax of popular absurdity and madness."

In the midst of the perplexity and fear arising from this condition of things, there originated, in the quiet counsels of Mount Vernon, the idea of a common nationality, embodied in our present constitution. There had been an indefinite recognition of this principle before, as we have already intimated. To the obscure vision of the American people, "men had appeared as trees walking." Clearer light, more definite action, and a closer union, were necessary to the life of the nation. Then Alexander Hamilton, the patriot, and the statesman, suggested a remedy for the existing evils, and, chiefly through his influence, Congress recommended a general Convention for the express purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation, and making such alterations as should render the Federal Con-

stitution adequate to the exigencies of government, and the preservation of the Union. Congress at the same time expressed the conviction that such a Convention would be the most probable agency for the establishment in the States of a "FIRM NATIONAL GOVERNMENT." The Convention met. It was composed of such men as Washington, Franklin, Madison, Roger Sherman, Edmund Randolph, and others, who framed the noble Constitution of the United States. By this Convention the doctrine of State sovereignty, as we understand it, was set aside. This appears from the preamble of the Constitution, which reads, not "We, the SEVERAL STATES," but "WE, THE PEOPLE of these United States, ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." This appears, also, from the objects had in view in the framing of the Constitution, which were, "to form a *more perfect union*, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquillity, provide for the *common defence*, promote the *general welfare*, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

At the close of that Convention, whilst the members were appending their names to the Constitution, Franklin, directing their attention to the representation of the sun, at the back of the President's chair, said, "I have often, and often, in the course of the session, and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at that sun

behind the President, without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting; at length I have the happiness to know it is a rising, and not a setting sun." God grant that the sun, which then emerged from the dark and threatening clouds which hung over our beloved land, may never set.

In the adoption of our noble Constitution, the capstone was laid upon the temple of American liberty. And although clouds gather around its dome to-day, it rises still in undisturbed majesty, and above the darkening gloom it is bathed in the sunlight of heaven.

The efforts which have recently been made for the overthrow of the government have not succeeded, and, we firmly believe, will not prosper. With regard to this great rebellion, we maintain that it is irrational, ungrateful, and wicked. The Constitution provided for the redress of wrongs. The people who framed, may alter the Constitution when the interests of the nation require it. The Constitution even opens the way for the withdrawal from the Union, of such States as desire to dissolve their connection with it. Had South Carolina sought a disconnection consistent with the provisions of the Constitution, and the common safety, she could have obtained it, though, in granting it, the nation would have mourned her strange infatuation. But to recognise the right of secession, is to strike at the very foundation of our nationality—is to

destroy our national life. That all the States constitute one nation, and that there can be no dissolution of the Union, excepting by the consent of the people, is not the distinctive tenet of any political party. It has been held by all parties from the beginning until now. From a Southern city, for a time the seat of a migratory government, came, half a century ago, such noble and truthful utterances as these: "No man, no association of one State or set of States, has a right to withdraw from the Union of its own account. The same formality which formed the links of the Union, is necessary to dissolve it. The majority of the States which formed the Union, must consent to the withdrawal of any one branch of it. Until that consent has been obtained, any attempt to dissolve the Union, or distract the efficiency of its constitutional law, is *treason—treason to all intents and purposes.*" The doctrine of secession was denounced as the grandest heresy of the age. A Southern statesman declared, that the withdrawal of South Carolina on such a principle as *that*, would indicate "stupendous madness." And even before our present Constitution, which was intended to bind the States in a still closer union, was adopted, the territory in the Northwest was received by Congress with the distinct and expressed understanding, that the States formed therefrom should for ever remain a part

of the confederacy, providing for a separation by common consent only.

The course pursued by the people of the South is as detrimental to their interests as it is violative of the Constitution. It is not probable that this government would have ever, by any legislative act, excluded slavery from the territories, where the *laws of nature* would have admitted it. The very next election for the presidency would have been, doubtless, on a principle to which the South could have offered no valid objection. But they have, in violation of their solemn covenants, risen in rebellion against the government, and in doing so, have acted in utter disregard of their present interests and future good. In the event of an early restoration of peace, slave labour will, to a great extent, lose its value. India will cultivate cotton for the manufactories of Manchester and Paisley, and our trans-atlantic Mother will rejoice in her independence of the Gulf States of America. May it not be, though we have not sought such a consummation, that the fears of a Southern statesman will be realized, who said to the people of South Carolina, that, in the event of secession, he should "consider the institution of slavery doomed, and that the great God, in their blindness, had made *them* the instruments of its destruction."

Suppose the independence of the Southern States should be recognised—what then? A confederacy

formed on the principle of secession, would contain in itself the elements of disorder, decay, and death. Might not South Carolina, before a decade of years, secede from the new confederacy, and Louisiana follow her example? Admitting the right of secession *without* the common consent, the government could make no opposition. Thus State after State might withdraw, until the whole confederacy would be resolved into petty sovereignties, to be subjugated by some foreign power—their last state infinitely worse than the first. Then, too, such a recognition as we have indicated, would involve our own government in ruin. New England might claim a privilege which had been granted to the Southern States, the Northwest organize a distinct government, and thus the process of disintegration continue, until the prediction of foreign foes would be fulfilled, “Leave them to themselves, and their government will soon dissolve.”

Then, again, call to mind the measures proposed in Congress, even after the secession of the Cotton States, to win back the wandering sons of the South. Both Houses pledged themselves against any amendment of the Constitution, which would militate against the interests or abridge the rights of the South; and many of the States repealed personal liberty laws, so obnoxious to their Southren brethren, and returned their fugitive slaves without the least hesitation. And when the authority of the

Government had been defied, "its soldiers betrayed, its forts and arsenals assailed and plundered, its ships seized, and its treasuries robbed," a forbearance unparalleled in the history of nations was exercised toward our sinning brethren; and not until all hope of return was extinguished, and the war became an absolute necessity, did the Government gather her armies, and rise in her majesty and power to protect her rights and guard her life.

Then, how ungrateful and wicked to seek the destruction of the Government, for the establishment of which our fathers toiled so long, and sacrificed so much of treasure and life—the Government which, according to Alexander Stephens, is "the most beneficent the world has ever known"—the Government which has extended the shield of its protection over our wide domain, securing peace, prosperity, and happiness to all—the Government which has been the wonder and the admiration of the world, its principles regarded as the perfection of political wisdom and justice! How wicked the attempt to terminate our national life—to tear down that noble edifice of national unity and greatness, over whose portal is inscribed the significant motto, *E PLURIBUS UNUM*—*that* a history in itself, indicating, not the principle of State sovereignty, but American nationality; how wicked, we say, the attempt to destroy that noble structure, tearing out stone after stone from its appropriate place, leaving

it what the Temple was after the siege of Titus; what the Parthenon is to-day, a melancholy ruin, never to be rebuilt!

We shall apply no opprobrious epithets to the people of the South; we do not impute the guilt of inaugurating a suicidal, fratricidal war, to the whole population of the seceded States. In our humble judgment, corrupt politicians, unwilling to yield to the will of the majority, and influenced by motives of personal aggrandizement, have deceived and misled the people—have rent in twain a national, conservative party, that the election of a “sectional candidate” for the Presidency might furnish a pretext for disunion—have greatly exaggerated wrongs that existed, (from which no human government is or can be free)—have accumulated fictitious pleas for national dismemberment; and thus they have opened up the flood-gates of a rebellion which, for a time, endangered our national existence, and seemed just ready to sweep over and desolate our fair heritage.

Doubtless there are many in the South still loyal in heart to our Government, who, when this reign of terror shall end, and the protection of our arms be extended to them, like the men of Accomac and Northampton, will throw off an unwilling yoke, and stand up in their might for the maintenance of our Government, the perpetuity of our Union! For this hope we praise God, as we do also for that

patriotism which has prompted six hundred thousand of our brethren to jeopard their lives in defence of our national existence. War is an evil of fearful magnitude, and sincerely to be deprecated; but there are greater evils than *that*. And the war in which we are now engaged, being forced upon us, and its successful prosecution being necessary to the preservation of our national life, the value of which none can fully estimate, we have reason for thanksgiving that so many have come voluntarily forward—not *impressed* into the service—to fight, and, if need be, die for the nation. From New England and the Northwest, from States bordering on the river St. Lawrence and the Lakes, thousands of patriots come, “surging onward like the waves of the sea,” whilst our own loved State redeems every pledge, and pours forth her sons from cities and hamlets, from humble cottages on the mountain side, and luxurious homes in fertile valleys. And as thus they come, the judge from his bench, the farmer from his plough, the mechanic from his workshop, the student from his books, and the pleasure-seeker from foreign lands, “one spirit animates all hearts; it is the sentiment of loyalty; it is the sacred fire of patriotism; it is the instinct of a common nationality, now threatened with destruction.” They come, clad in warrior’s dress, and bearing aloft the banner of freedom, resolved to conquer or die in the holy strife; and this, not that

they love their misguided, erring brethren less, but their native country more.

For the success of our arms, we thank God. True, we have had reverses; and they were, we believe, the just penalty of our sin, bringing defeat and disgrace to those who disregarded the binding obligations of the Sabbath—binding in war as in peace. But, with a Christian patriot at the head of our army, who will prevent, if possible, the repetition of such acts, we hope for better things. And now the day is brightening. The sunlight which all the while rested on the cloud, though unseen by us, is breaking through the dark folds which shut it out. God evidently intends the preservation of this government. He doubtless has great purposes to accomplish through the instrumentality of this nation. This fiery trial is for our good—a merited chastisement, a necessary discipline—and, through God's blessing, will prepare us for the work he has appointed. Soon, we trust, the noble banner which waves to-day over the very cradle of this rebellion, and in sight of battered Sumter, shall float from every fort, and fortress, and State capitol in the land; and prodigal sons, having squandered their portion of goods, returning to their allegiance, shall receive the welcome of a magnanimous nation, which seeks, not revenge, but self-preservation, and the good of her deluded and erring children. It is befitting, then, with our humiliation and confession, to join

the voice of praise, that our country still lives; that light is breaking along the horizon, where, through long months, dark clouds have lowered—a light which promises the speedy return of a peaceful and more glorious day, that awakens a hope which God will realize, if we are only true to him, and in his name set up our banners.

We shall detain you but a little longer. The proclamation which has convened us here to-day, also recommends that prayer be offered for our country, and the success of our arms. Patriotism is a Christian sentiment. Prayer is a Christian duty. In this day of national trial, by every consideration of our imperilled nationality, by every hope we have cherished of national glory and blessedness in the future, by every interest of civil liberty throughout the world, and the still higher interests of that kingdom which is spiritual in its nature, and eternal in its duration, we should feel ourselves impelled to do and suffer anything and everything, to which duty calls, in order to maintain our Government, preserve our Union, and perpetuate our civil and religious institutions until the last setting sun. It is a time to work; a time to pray. It is a time to bring our offerings to our national altar, to gird ourselves for the conflict, to die, if need be, for the salvation of our country. May God preserve us all from the guilt and condemnation of Meroz, and the inhabit-

ants thereof, which came not up, in olden time, to the help of the Lord against the mighty!

We love our country. It is God's gift to us. Ours is a goodly land, a pleasant heritage. It is the Canaan of this western world.

“My native country! thee,
Land of the noble, free,
Thy name I love;
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills:
My heart with rapture thrills
Like that above ”

We love our national banner; the symbol of our nationality, the representative of great and imperishable principles, the history of conflicts past, the prophecy of future good. And as patriot hands fling it to the breeze, and it proudly floats over our homes, our temples, our camps, and fortified places, we behold it with gratitude and pride.

“Long may it wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave!”

And shall we not bring our gold, consecrate our sons, give ourselves at our country's call, and for our country's deliverance? Shall we not pray, that the Author of our national life may preserve us from national death? That the Temple of American Liberty, which our fathers reared, baptized with their prayers, and cemented with their blood, may outlive the storm, and stand for ever? And whilst

we pour out our treasure for the support of our countrymen, who to-day jeopard their lives in the high places of the field for the maintenance of our Government, for *our* safety and peace, for the defence of mighty interests in coming ages, shall we not pray God to strengthen their hands, to cover their heads in the day of battle, and give them the victory over every force that opposes itself to our national existence? Do we not believe that our success depends on the presence of God with our armies? Shall we not, like Jehoshaphat, when confederate armies were gathered at Engedi, direct our eyes unto God, that like him we may see the salvation of the Lord? From every heart let fervent prayer ascend. God bless our native land, and turn this shadow of death into morning! God protect and preserve our armies! God arrest, through them, the progress of anarchy, return the rebellious to their allegiance, and thus, and speedily, if it be his will, terminate this effusion of fraternal blood, and establish our American nationality on an immovable foundation.

Finally: let us praise God for his goodness to us as a people. *He hath not dealt so with any nation.* With geographical unity, a homogeneous population, and all the elements of a common nationality, God has given us an honourable place among the nations of the earth. He has made the little one a thousand, the small one a strong nation.

He has made the wilderness like Eden, and the desert like the garden of the Lord. He has lengthened our cords, strengthened our stakes, and extended the curtains of our habitation. He has, moreover, given us a revelation of himself in the gospel of his Son, and bid us look for a better country, that is, an heavenly, where the day shall never darken, over whose wide domains are every where exhibited the emblems of righteousness and peace, and from which there shall be no more going out for ever. Therefore, let us praise God to-day, praise him ever! Sing unto God, sing praises to his name; extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him. And let all the people say—AMEN!