Chanksgibing Sermon.

OUR NATIONAL HOME.

BY THE REV. DANIEL MARCH, D.D.

We have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good:
alarge land; a place in which there is no want of
agrining that is in the earth.—Judges xviii. 9, 10.

These words were used in old time to de scribe a broad and fertile plain lying at the fountains of the Jordan; watered by running streams, shaded by evergreen oaks and tere-linth and bay trees, bordered by sunny hills, and bounded in the distance by snow-crowned mountains. Enlarge the original signification of the words a hundred-thousand-fold, and they become a fit description of the great and which Divine Providence has given to he a home for the American people. We have all seen enough of the exceeding beauty and fertility of this land to exclaim, with erer increasing wonder and delight, "Behold it is very good." Some of us have been hurled on railway lines, day and night, with the speed of the storm over its vast expanse westward, in the vain endeavor to eave its eastern half behind, until every erve in our weary frame was ready to ery,
"The land is very large." We have seen its
arts and inventions and natural resources multiply so rapidly, and the merchandise of nations flow in upon its shores with such profusion, that we could indeed say, "This a land in which there is no want of anything that is in the earth.'

This day of National Thanksgiving is a fit occasion to review the greatness and the value of the inheritance which God has given the American people to possess, to cultivate and to enjoy. Not in pride nor in boastful-ness would we survey this broad domain, which is doubly ours, by the gift of Providence and by the purchase of human suffer-We would measure its vast extent and admire its exceeding beauty with such grati-tude and praise as filled the first man's heart, when he surveyed the pleasant trees of paradise; when he saw the silvery streams of Eden flowing forth from their fourfold fount; when he lifted up his eyes to the distant mountains, stored with gold and all manner of precious stones, and when he heard the roice of the Lord God, walking in the shade of the garden, and saying, "This goodly land is given unto thee, O man, to keep, to culti-

Tate and to enjoy."

The voice of the Lord God has spoken many times to the American people, in the providences of our own history, in the agitaions of distant nations, and in the more re-cent thunders of battle, saying, "This great land is all thine own, to be made the home of freedom, the habitation of righteousness, beacon of light and hope to all the oppressed and darkened of the earth."

The inheritance is indeed very great, and it imposes a great responsibility. Let us look at both with gratitude for the trust, and with solemn purposes to keep it well.

After all that has been said upon this pe-

culiar national theme, there are few who know how great and rich and beautiful is this good land of ours. The facts that tell its greatness are poorly told in figures. Let me try to express them by some of the aspects and phenomena of nature which arrest the attention and work themselves into personal experience. The summer dawn is purpling the pines in the woods of Maine, and changing Kathadin to a mountain of gold; while the shades of midnight fall thick and dark upon our western coast. The morning smoke, rising from hunters' cabins on our northeastern frontier, and traveling westward in company with the flush of day, must move over one-fourth the breadth of the habitable dobe, before it casts its shadow upon the Pacific wave. The telegraphic operator at Eastport keeps his office open four hours after dark, and then, before retiring, sends his good-night salutation across sixty degrees of longitude to his associate at the Golden Horn. The message goes in a flash and overtakes the day before it leaves the western coast. And when the play of lightningtude, the operator at New Orleans complains that musquitoes come in with the sultry night air through his open window, and tor-ment him at his work, while his northern associate is shivering with cold before a winter's fire. The depth of snow in the woods of Maine is equal to the stature of a man, while the mocking bird sings in the everglades and the orange groves are all ablaze with howers and fruit in the open air of Florida. The ambitious son of America who would survey his paternal inheritance with his own eyes by walking round its varied outlines of land and sea, would need to walk every working day, through summer and winter, until the year, with all its seasons, had three times completed its round before he could say, "I have seen the boundaries of the nadon's home.

Within the compass of this great domain may be found substantially every variety of surface and of scenery, of climate and of curiosity, of natural production and mineral treasure contained in the storehouse of the universal globe. Many of the natural features of this land are set forth upon a scale of such colossal proportions as to make it seem as if Divine Providence designed this Western world for a mightier race and for deeds of greater magnificence and for a return, in the elements of mental and moral grandeur, to the times of old, when there were giants in the earth, and the sons of God sought al-

liance with the children of men.
We do not need to visit the Old World to and objects in nature or scenes of historic interest to inspire the imagination or move the heart. The Thames bears the commerce of the world upon its waters, and yet an America can schoolboy would not name so insignificant a stream in reciting the rivers of his native land. Poets have written rhapsodies of admiration upon the waterfalls of Switzerland, and yet all the cataracts of Europe might be poured into the current of Niagara without sensibly increasing the volume of its flood, or deepening the voice of its thunder. We now cross the ocean, and incur the cost and weariness of long travel by land, that we may see the everlasting snows of the Alps, and climb the wild ravines where the glacier's cold and restless stream ploughs its way slowly down to the edge of the grassy plain. But let us wait a little for the iron track to be laid, and seventy hours of travel, within our own territory, will whirl us along the edge of precipices where Alpine goats would fear to climb; it will bring us under the shadow of mountains, whose cold tops are higher than the cloud-cleaving eagle ever flies; and the coar of the rushing train, as we pass in the valley below, shall be answered by the louder thunder of the avalanche loosened from the snowy heights above. In the Old World men gather hay with reaping-hooks, and portion the earth into hand breadths for tillage, and make food grow for man or beast wherever there is soil enough to catch the sunshine. The wheat field of a Western farmer would cover the inheritance of a thousand families in France. Let the valley of the Mississippi in France. Let the valley of the Mississippi be subjected to such economy of cultivation as a practised in Belgium, and it would support a greater population than now lives on the face of the whole earth. In the Old World the difficult problem is to find land for the subject of the whole when the face of the whole whole earth. In the Old World the difficult problem is to find land for the subject of the land to the l

poverished and dependent province of some mightier people. I will not presume to say whether or not there may be reasons for such calculations, but on this side of the ocean the calculations, but on this side of the ocean the constant problem with economists and statesmen is, how to bring into more rapid use mineral treasures and natural resources which all believe to be exhaustless. When all the iron of this continent has been smelted into bars, and all the coal of our hills and mountains has disappressed in smalls and flower tains has disappeared in smoke and flame, surely the earth itself will be ready for the final conflagration, or the race of man will be prepared for a new heaven and a new earth.

I am not afraid of saying too much in praise of this great and good land which God has given to the American people. It is due to the Infinite Giver that we shall task ourselves to describe and appreciate the greatness of His gift. And no fastidious critic, native or foreign, shall make me ashamed to glory in this great inheritance. glory in this great inheritance, which Divine Providence has given to us to keep, to cultivate and to enjoy as truly as Paradise was given to Adam, and Palestine was given to Israel. I have read what Moses wrote by Divine inspiration, in describing the little land given unto his people. And I have seen that he exhausts the power of language in the property of the state praising their responsed land to the tribes of Israel, and teaching them to exalt it above all other lands of the earth, that thus they might learn to love it and keep it as the gift of God. And for the same purpose will I ever praise and exalt and magnific this great and exalt and magnific this great and exalt and magnific this great and exalt and magnify this greater and richer land which God has given unto the American people. Every time I survey this vast inheritance, already dedicated to God and liberty, by the faith of every true American Christian I region that it has a line of the control of the co Christian, I rejoice that it has skies purer than Italy, valleys richer than Egypt, rivers greater than the Rhine or Ganges, mountain ranges longer and higher than Alps or Apperaises to find the first terms of nines, natural resources sufficient to feed and clothe all nations

And I would thus glory in this great and good land of ours, not in any narrow spirit of boasting or national vanity, but in gratitude to Him who has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined for each the bounds of their habitation. And it makes a great difference where the bounds of our habitation have been determined for us. Families of Swiss peasantry live for successive centuries in the same rude cabin, extorting a meagre subsistence from the same few rods of earth, living within a prescribed line of hard necessity upon the verge of fatal want, and obliged to walk as bircumspectly within that line, as they would upon the edge of an Alpine pre-cipice, knowing that a single misstep would be destruction. There Providence has given them their habitation, and there they must live without power to remove or to rise in the social scale; there they must remain, bound to their cold mountains by ties that they cannot break. So with the disfranchised and landless peasantry of many nations; so with the millions of poor, stifling and starving in the great cities of the Old World. They cannot endure their cramped and fettered condition, and yet they have scarcely a hope that it can ever be made any better. In their desperation of spirit they feel that the bounties of heaven and the charities of man are all exhausted before reaching their lowly con-

How different all that from the high career of adventure and improvement open for all classes in this country. To the American people, the voice of God's Providence is ever saying, as it said to Abraham in old time:—"Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed forever. Arise! walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it, for I will give t unto thee.

This is our National home which keeps solemn thanksgiving to God to-day. In all the sanctuaries and by all the firesides of the people it is meet that there should be congratulations and festivities of joy, even though tears mingle with our gladness and occasional clouds dim our sunshine. I do not forget that I am speaking at a time when the throes of recent revolution have shaken the foundations of our most cherished institutions, and they have not yet had time to settle into firmness and form. The ship of state has outridden the storm, but it is still tossing on the ground swell of the sea. I know that the baleful fires of rebellion have not yet burned out, but I will rejoice that, when they shot up their highest flame, they did not reach our eagle in his eyrie. I know that the claims of justice are not yet fully answered in behalf of the poor and conversed but their manhood is admitted. oppressed; but their manhood is admitted, and their fetters are broken. I am not surprised that the work of re-establishing order and unity and good understanding proves to be hard and long. Lam not discouraged because there are diversities of feeling and opinion as to the mode in which the work paid for. That of Marengo has a neat parshould be done. Delays and hindrances may only help us to wiser and better conclusions. A thousand years scarce serve to form a State. The millenial age of righteousness and peace must dawn before a nation can be born in a day.

If we mean that the house of the nation's liberties shall stand, we must take time to build it well; and we must not lose heart or hope if it be longer in the construction than the Temple of Solomon, which was destroyed, or the Pyramids of Egypt, which stand. The engineer who would span a mighty stream with piers and arches and roadway for the flying train, lays his foundations deep and broad; and, if once or twice his work be shattered by flood or storm before its completion, the delay and the disaster only insure a firmer structure in the end.

This is not a service in which to express there is little need of either to one who studies our condition in the light of history, and who believes in the Divine Providence which has always delivered us in our greatest peril. The great price at which the whole land has been repurchased for the people is a new guaranty of united and permanent possession. Every dollar in the crushing millions of National debt confirms the right of every American citizen to call the whole land his, own. The Chancellor of the English Exchequer has been congratulated upon diminishing their national debt half as much in a whole year as ours is diminished regularly every week. The nation which can walk erect with three thousand millions of

the difficult problem is to find land for the people; in the new, to find people for the dying love for the whole land and an unconduction of the people in the new, to find people for the dying love for the whole land and an unconduction of the people in the new, to find people for the land and an unconduction of the people in the new, to find people for the new to

It has become a Parliamentary question in England, how long she can live upon the natural resources stored within the narrow bounds of her sea-walled home. Her statesmen and economists have begun to calculate the time when the failure of ore in her mines shall silence her hammers and forges; the exhaustion of her coal-fields shall put out the fires in her furnaces; the loss of commerce shall leave her ships idle on the sea, and the once proud sovereignty shall become an imdeed of impetuous valor, every example of heroic endurance, every act of self-denying devotion which the great conflict has inscrib-ed in the nation's history, is a pledge to all the world that the heritage so dearly bought shall be kept and transmitted in full succession to coming generations. The thanks-giving which we offer to the God of our fathers to-day must be understood as a renewal of our solemn league and covenant, that in all this land citizenship shall be the birthright of manhood; righteousness shall be the inspiration of public law; brother-hood shall be the bond between man and man, and the welfare of the human race shall be sought equally by the policy of the Gov ernment and the prayer of the people.

Aur Church in the West.

SYNOD OF IOWA.

FOR THE YEAR ENDING SEPT. 11TH., 1866.

One minister of this body has died-Rev. Asa Martin, a worthy member and Stated Clerk of Chariton Presbytery, which may account for no report being sent either to the Assembly or Synod from that Presbytery. Mr. Martin was an invalid when last appearing in the Synod at Newton, and has since gone to the grave with consumption. As a faithful, modest, and unassuming man of God, his memory is precious.

Two ministers have been dismissed; three ministers have been received, and two licensed to preach the Gospel. Two ministers have been installed as pastors, with high hopes of usefulness and permanence. One church has been lost by change of ecclesiastical relations, and the majority of ing angels," bringing peace when flesh and another; while four churches have been added to the body, and one from the other Presbyterian branch, and another from the Free Synod, have been united with ours

with harmony of feeling.

The Synod now consists of six Presbyteries, fifty-four ministers, two licentiates and four candidates, with forty-nine churches and two thousand three hundred and fiftyfour communicants. The whole increase reported for the year past is three ministers, two licentiates, and two hundred and sixty-eight communicants.

REVIVALS.

Revivals, more or less extensive, have een enjoyed in the churches of Winterset, Des Moines, Waterloo, Cedar Valley, Marengo, Atalipa, and at an out-station of Vinton. The Churches of Winterset and Waterloo have experienced to a remarkable degree the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, resulting in fifty hopeful conversions in each congregation, and large additions. Some conversions have occurred in nearly all the churches of Des Moines Presbytery which have ministers. Prayer-meetings during the week, monthly concerts with collections, Sunday-school concerts, young people's and female prayer-meetings, are held with increasing interest.

SABBATH-SCHOOLS.

The observance of the Sabbath and attendance upon public worship is also progressing in most congregations and commu- the death and resurrection of the Lord nities. Sabbath-schools are assuming more importance, particularly those in out-of-town stations, as at Keokuk, where our Church has a mission school of two hundred attendants, and generally in Des Moines Presbytery, where ministers preach at outposts. In all our churches the Sundayschool cause is gaining in interest, and the numbers in attendance are large. At the Soldiers' Orphans' Home in Cedar Falls, till lately under a superintendent who is an Elder in our Church, Sabbath-school instruction has resulted in several conversions of the young orphans. The total Sunday-school membership reported is

CONTRIBUTIONS.

One church only, that of Lyons, has contributed to all the objects of benevolence recommended by the General Assembly; that of Wheatland to nearly all, and others are gaining in systematic giving. The whole amount contributed in all the churches of the Synod, as reported, for benevolent objects and for congregational miscellaneous purposes, is \$31,932. Our churches are thus becoming somewhat of a money power in the State and world, as fears or to indulge in lamentations. And well as a moral and religious institution among men.

> The cause of temperance in some parts of our bounds has been much advanced. In Iowa county, one liquor seller has been prosecuted and fined by the court \$600, and druggist \$360. In Polk county similar fines have been inflicted. But in Linn county, the climax of moral and legal reformation has been attained—fines to the amount of \$3000 have been imposed on sundry violators of the liquor laws; and in one case, for repeated acts of violation of the laws, a liquor saloon keeper has been fined in all \$600, and has been imprisoned thirty-five days for his offences. There is yet much need of labor by Christians and moral citizens for the further suppression of intem-

> > REVIEW.

each other as to destroy the bands of society and defeat the ends of civilization.

It has become a Parliamentary question in the family circle, of some far disbreak in the family circle, of some f the world, as instruments under God. SAMUEL STORRS Howe, Chairman.

ENGLISH HYMNS OF THE ELIZABETH

Few of the hymns of the Elizabethan

NARRATIVE OF RELIGION FOR THE

CHURCH EDIFICES. Four congregations have paid all debts on their church edifices—Cedar Rapids, Wyoming, Lyons, and Cedar Falls; while the shurch of Marshalltown, perhaps the best edifice in our Synod, has been completed and dedicated. The congregations of Des Moines third, Janesville, Nevada and Steamboat Rock are erecting church edifices. paid for. That of Marengo has a neat parsonage nearly paid for. Individuals of the Cedar Rapids Church, to prevent the frequent removals of their minister, have erected a dwelling for his express accommodation.

TEMPERANCE.

In review of the year, therefore, the revivals of religion, the spirit of prayer, the and. If our thirty millions were sprinkled querable purpose to keep it and defend it increase of ministers, churches, communication over our whole territory, it would seatter individuals and families so far from patriotism will be kindled anew to-day in cants, Sunday-school scholars, with the re-

success, while we pray him to send forth laborers into this harvest, and to pour out his Spirit from on high, thereby enlarging the peace and prosperity of our Churches, as well as of all the Evangelical Churches of every name in all our new borders, by far too wide for us to do all the work of saving our commonwealth, our country and

AN ERA.

era live in our knowledge, and fewer still n our affections. On the whole, they are Divine poems rather than hymns, and as such, are to be judged rather by the intellect than by the heart. There is something hard and unloving about them, and the voices in which they speak have a strange, unfamiliar sound. The Ambrosian midnight hymn, "Hark! 'tis the midnight cry," stirs the Christian heart after a lapse of fourteen centuries, and the hymns of two Bernards of the twelfth century are living tones in the Church of the nineteenth century, with power to thrill living hearts. The Latin hymn writers being dead, yet speak. But Spencer's fine "Hymn to the Saviour," Gascoigne's morning and evening hymns, and the various sacred verses by Ben Johnson, Shirley, Wotton, Withers. Herrick, and others, are more like fossilized specimens of a religious life wherewith we have little kinship, than tongues singing of our own faith in our own language. The hymns which make our church-roofs ring, which soothe the sick-beds of princes

heart fail, and falter forth from dying lips wherever our tongue is spoken, were not indicted by the mighty masters of verse, but by humbler men, whose songs gushed warm from hearts which the love of Jesus had touched. To such in all ages the Church has decreed the crown of sacred song. Aloof as the Elizabethan hymis are from the religious life of our own day, it is hard to conceive of them as having been even in their own the property of any but

and peasants, which come like true "sing-

an educated few. Their doctrine was laboriously orthodox, but their manner was as fantastic as that of the hymns of the later monkish hymn writers. There is, indeed, little enough in the

Elizabethan hymnology to warrant its res-storation It is mainly interesting as indicative of the prevailing form of religious thought during eighty years; thought occasionally expressed in vigorous language, but lacking poetic beauty and the fervor of an enthusiastic devotion. It might be that, though the old sensuous and emotional creed had lost its hold on men, the new faith, in all its glorious vitality of love and hope, was not, as in Germany, fully received; "the abundance of the heart was lacking," and so the mouth spake not. It was not till a later day that the Church in

gladness, and put on her robes of festival, on awaking into the realization of the "glorious hope" which was hers through esus Christ.—London Sunday Magazine

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