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OUR DEBT, OUR DUTY, AND OUR DESTINY.

[EDITORIAL, A. T. P.]

The obligation to prosecute home missions finds illustration in three important texts of Scripture, at which we shall glance, in their application to this great theme.

I. "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5 : 8).

II. "Thy gates shall be open continually ; they shall not be shut day nor night ; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles" (Isa. 60 : 11).

III. "I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth" (Acts 13 : 47).

We do not claim that these passages refer to the subject to which we apply them ; but they serve as biblical expressions of our threefold relation to home missions, or the evangelization of our land.

1. A **DEBT** owed to a national family and household.

2. A **DUTY** owed to a nation's guests—the strangers that are within our gates, destined to become children of the nation.

3. A **DESTINY** connected with our providential history and mission to the world as a missionary nation.

1. **THE DEBT.** The nation is a larger family, and of this larger family the household is the type. In an emphatic sense we have all one Father. We have as a nation a common origin. The nation had its birth-hour and birth-throes. The history of its nativity is written in blood and tears, and we are proud of it. We are bound by peculiar ties that make the whole family one. The very configuration, conformation, and physical features of the republic's domain proclaim our unity. The great mountain ranges and river systems run north and south like backbone and breastbone and nervous and circulatory systems, and forbid division such as was attempted in the Civil War of a quarter century ago. Our history is one, and our interests are common. Here is one great household, in one great home, with a common tongue, common wants, and a common supply. We are under one beneficent system of household laws, where due regard is had to the liberty and rights and development of each. A paternal government of mingled freedom and restraint is over the household.

However widely scattered, we shall find, literally, that we are all one