

The remark was made by one of our excursionists, that eight hundred millions of our race were interested in this enterprise; and a little calm discussion satisfied those who heard it that the assertion was not extravagant. Its effect will be quietly but surely to revolutionize China and Japan; Russia, at the remotest and most torpid extremity of her vast domain, will receive a new and better life; it will restore Mexico to order and civilization; it will greatly affect all Western Europe; and certainly our own people are deeply interested in it. In fact, the entire northern hemisphere, from the equator to the frozen zone, will feel the effect of this new avenue of commerce, this new highway over which Empire is to march.

“Subdue it,” said the Almighty, when he placed man upon the earth. Subdue what? The earth, certainly; but instead of doing so to any effective extent, men turned their hands against their fellows, and put forth their mightiest energies to subdue each other. The feeble powers of isolated individuals were engaged in the one work; the combined energies of tribes and nations and empires were enlisted in the other; and the miserable record of the latter makes up the staple of nearly all ancient and much of modern history. Now, thank God, we have found a more excellent way. Now our nation sends forth armies, not to butcher their fellow-men, but to subdue the earth — to remove obstructions which lie in the way of the universal brotherhood of man — to clear away the barriers that obstruct our progress — to prepare highways over which the Prince of Peace may go in his own appointed way to bless the nations. And there is something impressive in the fact that this greatest of all national efforts is put forth just as the most formidable barriers to human progress to be found on the globe — the Rocky Mountains and the systems of mountains beyond — were reached by the advancing tide of humanity westward.

The feeble hands of private and individual men could subdue the forests of our Atlantic border, and they did it; but when they came to what lay beyond the Missouri, and the ever-reverberating command was heard, “Subdue it,” a whole nation stood ready to yield obedience to the mandate and execute the work.

SHERMAN’S “March to the Sea,” although he necessarily marked his track with devastation and blood, was glorious; and men and women will speak of it and sing of it for a long time to come; but the time is coming when PERRY’S March to another Sea, strewing his pathway with blessings and benefits, will claim and receive tributes of eloquence and song loftier and more enduring. The victories of War — sometimes a sad necessity — are always exhausting, always shrouded in sadness and tears; while those of Peace, however expensive, are always profitable, making rich those who achieve them, and adding no sorrow.