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Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis

It seems to me that God, with infinite wisdom and skill, is training the Anglo-Saxon race for an hour sure to come in the world's future. Heretofore there has always been in the history of the world a comparatively unoccupied land westward, into which the crowded countries of the East have poured their surplus populations. But the widening waves of migration, which millenniums ago rolled east and west from the valley of the Euphrates, meet to-day on our Pacific coast. There are no more new worlds. The unoccupied arable lands of the earth are limited, and will soon be taken. The time is coming when the pressure of population on the means of subsistence will be felt here as it is now felt in Europe and Asia. Then will the world enter upon a new stage of its history—the final competition of races, for which the Anglo-Saxon is being schooled. Long before the thousand millions are here, the mighty centrifugal tendency, inherent in this stock and strengthened in the United States, will assert itself. Then this race of unequaled energy, with all the majesty of numbers and the might of wealth behind it—the representative, let us hope, of the largest liberty, the purest Christianity, the highest civilization—having developed peculiarly aggressive traits calculated to impress its institutions upon mankind, will spread itself over the earth. If I read not amiss, this powerful race will move down upon Mexico, down upon Central and South America, out upon the islands of the sea, over upon Africa and beyond. And can any one doubt that the result of this competition of races will be the "survival of the fittest?"

Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (New York: The American Home Missionary Society, 1885), 174–75.

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Creator	Josiah Strong, a Congregationalist minister
Context	Territorial expansion by nations throughout the world
Audience	The general public
Purpose	To show the Christian justification for American imperialism

Historical Significance

In his book, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis*, Josiah Strong championed American missionary expansionism by arguing that God had "divinely commissioned" the United States to spread democracy, and "to civilize and Christianize" Central and South America, Africa, and beyond. In China alone, American Protestant missionaries grew from 436 in 1874 to 5,462 by 1914.