

AN
ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

CONFEDERATE

SURVIVORS' ASSOCIATION,

IN

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA,

AT ITS THIRD ANNUAL MEETING, ON MEMORIAL DAY,

APRIL 26TH, 1881.

BY

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PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION.

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ADDRESS.

FELLOW MEMBERS :

The Order of the Cincinnati was founded by surviving Officers of the American Army of the Revolution, about the period of its dissolution, to commemorate the achievement of the Independence of the United Colonies. It was an institution of Remembrance, and one of its prime objects was to inculcate the duty of "laying down in peace arms assumed in war for the public defense." A sacrifice of private interests to the general welfare was a leading idea in the minds of the founders of this Society. Hence they selected, as the exponent of their principles and conduct, that grand old Roman who, at the call of his country, forsook his plough to lead his people to victory; and, having achieved the salvation of his nation, voluntarily divested himself of rank and power and returned to the obscurity of rural life that he might testify to all that not personal ambition but the love of country was the ruling motive of his conduct.

By dint of valor, abnegation, and conspicuous devotion, the soldiers of the primal Revolution secured the liberation of the original Thirteen States from British rule. Deeming a country, whose salvation had been purchased at a cost of eight years of warfare and of self-denial, worthy of every preservation, the chieftains of the struggle—then on the eve of retiring to the peaceful pursuits of private life—banded themselves together for the maintenance of the principles for which they had so long and so bravely contended, and for the conservation of the infant Nation whose birthright to freedom had been enforced at such sacrifice.

As the Confederation had been securely formed, and as it was ardently hoped that its duration would last for unnumbered generations, so did they desire that this their order should prove equally permanent. To that end provision was made for a succession of membership in the lineal descent. Thus has it come to pass that the Society of the Cincinnati is not yet extinct within the borders of the original Thirteen States, but, after the lapse of nearly a century, still maintains an active existence. There is no reason why this organization should not be indefinitely perpetuated.

But, my Comrades, how different with us is the expectation of the continuance of our Association! In all the legacies which come



age and patriotism, self-denial, and devotion to truth and right can bequeath, we are rich beyond compare. In the grand names which the Muse of History has inscribed highest upon the porches of her Memorial Temple we are the legitimate inheritors of the proudest. In bold achievements which have attracted the gaze and commanded the admiration of the civilized world our heritage is second to none. In the exhibition of virtues which engendered exalted action, in the adherence to aims and principles of the highest and purest character, in expressions of lofty purpose, and in proofs of brilliant emprise we, as Confederates, yield the palm to no nationality ancient or modern. Than the record which our leaders and brethren have made, none can be found more illustrious. Impartial history will so declare, and the genuine sentiments which inspired the Confederate struggle for independence the coming centuries can neither belittle nor enshroud.

Our Association also, is one of Remembrance. But here the parallel ends. The Confederacy died when General Lee surrendered. Our Battle Flag was forever furled when the sorrows of exhaustion and of disappointment descended like night upon our enfeebled armies. Our institutions were overturned and our patriarchal civilization was annihilated when the thunders of our guns were silenced at Appomattox. From that moment we were remanded to the observance of laws and the support of a government in the formation of which we, as soldiers of the Confederacy, had borne no part. In one sense,—and the import was most pathetic and true,—our country was in its grave and our inheritance turned to ashes. Cincinnatus like we did return to the plough, but the cheering consolation of nation saved and institutions preserved was wholly absent. In the very nature of things there could be for us no order of Cincinnatus. While we accepted the situation and, like men, preserved our faith,—while we betook ourselves, as best we could, to the rehabilitation of a region blasted and scarred by the iron hand of war, and recognized the supremacy of the laws promulgated by the Federal authorities, there was and could be, at the moment, no joy in the present or reasonable hope of contentment and happiness in the future. The sword, by its sharp arbitrament, had decided against us, and we sorely appreciated the stern award from which there could be no appeal.

What then, as Survivors of the struggle, could we do in recognition of a holy past, in conservation of our identity, and in aid of a future whose horoscope was maimed, and its forecast disfigured by the skeletons of dead hopes and crushed expectations? I make no inquiry, my Brethren, of our obligations as citizens of a restored

Union, as members of society and of the Body Politic with duties manifold and important resting upon us. I ask simply what could we do, as Survivors of the Confederate Armies, in maintenance of our individuality, in perpetuation of the memories of a heroic past, in recognition of solemn ties which possessed no binding force save within the confines of loyal hearts, and in acknowledgment of our mutual dependence for aid, sympathy, and fraternal friendship? Only what we have done, associate ourselves together not as a potential factor in the politics of the hour, not as enemies of the new order of affairs, not as the supporters of antagonisms born of disappointment and hate, not as dreary mourners over a dead past, oblivious of the duties which appertain to the present and the future, but as *brethren*, survivors of one of the most gigantic defensive wars ever conducted in maintenance of national independence and vested rights, for the preservation of property, and to perpetuate the privileges of home rule,—as *comrades*, knit together by a bond which can never be renewed,—a bond indissolubly linking the living with the dead,—allied by memories which embrace all that was brave in purpose, self-denying in action, patriotic in impulse, and chivalrous in arms,—as *companions*, sharing in common a heritage of disappointment and yet claiming a legacy of honor, of valor, and of glory bequeathed by noble leaders and brave compatriots.

The purpose of this Association was and is, while we live, to reverence and defend the traditions of a Confederate past, to venerate the graves of those who gave their loves and their lives to the cause of Freedom, and to confess the pride we cherish in the manly fact that when our beleaguered land called upon her sons to form for her defense we shrank not from an exhibition of that allegiance which is due to Country and right. One of our professed objects is the consolidation of friendships begotten of hopes and trials, triumphs and disappointments, fealties and dangers which can never be revived. Our peculiar province is, by this Association, to provide for at least the partial relief of our comrades who may chance upon want and distress; and, in the end, to see that suitable rites of sepulture are observed when they are summoned hence. Peculiar is the tie and most potent the bond which unites us the one to the other. We are without succession, and our ranks are thinned year by year by the Last Enemy. As the Confederacy perished when General Lee sheathed his sword, as Survivors of the war between the States we cannot felicitate ourselves upon the consummation of our hopes, or expect from the future any pledges born of the aspirations of the past. As ex-Confederates we have lost the nationality for

which we strove, and with its demise perished all hope of recognition, in an official capacity, of service rendered and military honor achieved. Our sons inherit from us only the manly traditions, the brave shadows, the stately memories which belong to mortuary shafts, to family annals, and to the pages of history. The rest is silence. For us there can be no survivorship in the persons of those who come after us. The only bequest we can make is limited to a transmission of precious memories, brave resolves, and valorous attempts.

In a few years at furthest the longest liver of us will set out upon the *iter tenebricosum*. Confederate memories will take their place in history, will crystallize in marble and in bronze, and will be told in story and sung in some grand epic poem, but we will be gone, and this Association will have passed into the realm of shadows.

And what, my Comrades, should be the effect upon us of this reflection as pathetic as it is truthful? Manifestly its influence should be to unite us all the more closely together, and to incite us to the conservation of friendships and the efficient discharge of duties which will soon have an end.

In the cultivation of the relationship by which we are distinguished, and in the hearty recognition of the obligations which we have assumed, there is and can be nothing savoring of compulsion. Privileged is the companionship, and when we cease to esteem it as such, we may well anticipate our speedy dissolution. The moderate dues contemplated by our Constitution are barely sufficient to answer the needs of our Association, and are, in the main, consecrate to a solemn purpose:—the relief of our members in seasons of distress and the rendition of suitable funeral honors when comes the “Eternal Sleep.” As year by year our numbers will decrease, and as age will necessarily bring with its advance increasing feebleness and inability to conduct with success the great battle for subsistence, it is evidently our duty now, while our ranks are full, by prompt payment of these dues to endeavor to accumulate a fund which will answer the requirements of the Association even to that closing period when this Hall shall have become well-nigh deserted and when those who shall here assemble will be few and feeble.

I have preferred, my Friends, to give to my remarks to-day a practical turn, for the continuance of this Association, upon a proper basis, lies very near my heart. Profoundly do I realize the fact that because we have no recruiting ground, and because our membership diminishes yearly, we should in the present so order our affairs that we may impart to them reasonable pecuniary permanency,—a permanency which will be commensurate with the probable duration of

our Association. I therefore submit, for your judicious consideration and sanction, the propriety of investing, from time to time, as accumulation occurs, a portion of our funds.

There is another matter to which I deem it proper to call your attention. Our Constitution and By-Laws provide for the prompt payment of the initiation fee and quarterly dues. The former should accompany the application for membership, and its prepayment may well be regarded as a condition precedent to election. While I would be the last within the ranks of this Association to debar from the privileges of companionship any worthy member whose necessities are such that he is really unable to pay these dues, respect to the Association and a proper regard for its regulations demand that an honest statement should be made and manly excuse rendered for the default. Voluntary and privileged as this Association is, born of an allegiance so peculiar, and partaking of characteristics so unusual, there should exist in all our intercourse and transactions nothing savoring of indifference, mock-modesty, or hesitation. We are brethren by a sacred tie, and from each other can expect nothing save the most fraternal consideration. The welfare of our Organization should be uppermost in our thoughts, and we should esteem it alike a pleasure and a duty to respond faithfully to all the engagements we have assumed. Mutual forbearance, and a prompt compliance, as far as our individual ability extends, with all the regulations of our Association, are essential to its successful and healthy maintenance.

With regard to the colossal Chimney of the Confederate Powder Works,—to-day the most imposing relic of all the public works builded under the auspices of the Confederate Government, and standing, as a monument of things that were, as enduring as any human structure can be,—I desire to remind you that upon the application of this Association the City Council of Augusta, on the 2nd of June, 1879, committed it to our charge to be inscribed and cherished as a Confederate Memorial. While the ownership of this Obelisk Chimney and of the ground from which it springs resides in the City, its custody has been confided to this Association. It remains with us to guard it from all harm, to place a suitable inscription upon it, and to have a care, while our organization lasts, that it remains intact in remembrance of a fallen Nation, in illustration of the skill of the Confederate Engineer, and as a monument to the heroic dead who perished during our memorable struggle for independence. Already are manufacturing establishments, extensive and attractive, springing into being within its very shadow. Busy

feet are treading paths lately deserted and marked by ruin. The memories of the place, whilom so silent, are even now supplanted by the sounds of industry and the activities of a utilitarian present. Day by day will this locality, recently so isolated, fall more completely within the compass of our increasing population and become surrounded by edifices begotten of the enterprise and substantial progress of our citizens. This Chimney is already within the curtilage of the Sibley Manufacturing Company; while, in its immediate front, pass the Augusta Canal and the track of the Augusta and Knoxville Railroad Company. But for its towering altitude and robust proportions, its identity would be imperiled by the massive structures clustering about it. No longer removed from the ebb and flow of the tide of life, it will year by year confront the gaze of the increasing multitudes that will visit and abide in our City.

Mindful of its qualified cession to our Association and of its dedication to the purposes to which we have alluded, the City of Augusta, in conveying its lands to the Sibley Manufacturing Company, expressly reserved this structure and a space of ten feet each way around its base. It is expected of us, as the custodians of this Obelisk Chimney which, as I am informed, will not be in any manner rendered subservient to the purposes of manufacture, that we will inclose it with a protecting railing and insert in one of its faces a memorial tablet with suitable inscription engraven thereon. Here may we link the name of our Association with the memories of a heroic past and the evolutions of a future to the potentialities of which no bounds may in reason be assigned. As this towering structure has already survived the rise and fall of a gallant nation, so will it dominate in unrivaled strength and altitude over this plain long after the last Survivor of the Confederate Armies shall have fallen on sleep. Grown venerable with age, it will proclaim through unborn centuries the aspirations and the labors of a dead Confederacy, and perpetuate the recollection of those who died in support of that glorious Banner which

"Will live in song and story
Though it's folds are in the dust."

Fidelity to ourselves, to our mission, to our former allegiance, and to the memory of our Confederate Dead demands that we give early and positive expression to our desire in this regard, already made public, and sanctioned by the general approval of this community.

I therefore respectfully and earnestly suggest that a committee be raised whose duty it shall be, with all convenient dispatch, to sur-

round this Chimney with an appropriate railing, and to insert in its face, most open to the public gaze, a memorial tablet bearing a suitable inscription.

Our Lot in the Public Cemetery, under the judicious supervision of our Committee, has been enclosed, partially ornamented with shubbery, and kept in becoming order. One interment within its precincts has occurred during the past twelve month. As our means will permit, this last resting place may well claim at our hands further protection and decoration.

All our pecuniary obligations have been promptly met on presentation, and our efficient Treasurer, Captain Coffin, reports a balance on hand, to the credit of the Association, of about two hundred and fifty dollars.

Six times since our last annual meeting have we, with draped colors and uncovered heads, rendered funeral honors to departed comrades.

RICHARD W. HEARD, Private, Company A, 63rd Regiment, Georgia Infantry, died on the 12th of June last.

ISAAC H. JOHNSON, Private, Washington Artillery, died on the 12th of last July.

JOHN D. COLVERT, Sergeant, Company E, 10th Regiment, Florida Infantry, died on the 16th of August last.

ALBERT R. SHAW, Private, Company I, Cobb's Legion of Cavalry, Hampton's old Brigade, died on the 19th of August, 1880.

HUGH B. HARRISON, Sergeant, Company D, 14th Regiment, South Carolina Infantry, died on the 12th of October last.

WILLIAM B. LAMKIN, Private, Georgia Light Guards, 48th Regiment, Georgia Infantry, died on the 18th of November last.

On the 9th instant our Flag appeared at half mast in mournful commemoration of the sudden and afflictive demise of one of our honorary members, Major General MARTIN WITHERSPOON GARY. To many of us he was personally known, and to not a few was he knit by the ties of acknowledged friendship. So frequently was he present and welcomed in our midst that we almost claimed him as an inhabitant of our fair City. There are some too, within this Hall, who have seen the flash of his knightly sabre in the shock of arms and who have followed him in the gallant charge. In all our hearts his unexpected death causes genuine sorrow and fraternal grief.

Brave and manly in his impulses, fearless and instant in his advocacy of Southern Rights, ardently attached to South Carolina among whose prominent and favorite sons he may fairly be numbered, eloquent in his utterances, firm in friendship, the incorruptible

defender of home rule and honest government, the successful advocate, and the trusted legislator, he was a marked character in his State and a leader of his people. During the Confederate struggle for independence his valor was conspicuous, and his devotion to Country and Freedom most pronounced. To the support of the Confederacy at the earliest moment was his allegiance given, and his fidelity to the cause,—tested amid smoke and carnage and danger and disaster,—faltered not even when came the bitter end. His name and fame are intimately and honorably associated with the glorious record achieved by the Cavalry of the Army of Northern Virginia.

As an officer of the memorable Hampton Legion, as a Brigadier General, and as a Major General in Confederate Service, he was on all occasions distinguished for his ability, energy and intrepidity. In the language of another, “No knightlier soul ever went forth amid the ranks of war. No cavalier ever wielded a brighter and better blade in defense of his section and his principles. No braver warrior ever led troops into the thickest of the fray.” And, when the war was over, and that period of reconstruction supervened,—the realities of which were darker, more galling, and scarcely less disastrous than the demolitions wrought by the overmastering conflict,—his was the proud mission to liberate his beloved and manacled Commonwealth from the usurpation and the ruthless domination of the stranger, the uncivilized, and the plunderer. Long will his brave deeds and loyal acts be cherished in grateful remembrance ; and now, on this Memorial Day, when the sentinel palmettoes of his native South Carolina are bowing their heads above his new-made grave, behold our Georgia oaks, clad in solemn mourning, are uttering a heartfelt requiem for the departed hero.

And so, my Companions, have we completed another year of our existence, and advanced a step nearer to that “belt of darkness

* * where the life to come
Touches the life that is.

* * * * *

What is there beyond ?
Hear what the wise and good have said. Beyond
That belt of darkness still the Years roll on
More gently, but with not less mighty sweep.
They gather up again and softly bear
All the sweet lives that late were overwhelmed
And lost to sight, all that in them was good,
Noble, and truly great and worthy of love ;
* * * All are raised and borne

By that great current in its onward sweep,
 Wandering and rippling with caressing waves
 Around green islands fragrant with the breath
 Of flowers that never wither. * * * *
 As it's smooth eddies curl along their way
 They bring old friends together; hands are clasped
 In joy unspeakable. * * * *
 * * Old sorrows are forgotten now,
 Or but remembered to make sweet the hour
 That overpays them; wounded hearts that bled
 Or broke, are healed forever. In the room
 Of this grief-shadowed present there shall be
 A present in whose reign no grief shall gnaw
 The heart, and never shall a tender tie
 Be broken."

When, my Friends, the Flood of Years shall bear us hence, may
 that blissful companionship and beatific peace be ours.

