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ADDRESS

AT THE

DEDICATION

OF THE

SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' MONUMENT,

UTICA, N. Y.,

OCTOBER 13, 1891.

By J. R. HAWLEY.

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ADDRESS OF J. R. HAWLEY

AT

THE DEDICATION OF THE SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS'
MONUMENT, AT UTICA, N. Y.

OCTOBER 13, 1891.

*Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Soldiers' Monument
Association of Utica:*

Many pleasing memories of the people and places of Oneida and Madison counties, and especially of this goodly city of Utica, led me to receive your invitation to speak upon this interesting and memorable occasion as a command, to be obeyed as a duty and honor. All old soldiers and sailors, all their families and friends, all lovers of the good cause and the dear old flag, look toward you to-day with love and gratitude for your good work in raising this noble monument to your soldiers of the Union.

Comrades and Fellow Citizens: How wonderful the story is! Sometimes we plod along in the drudgery of our tame and common life for weeks or months, the memories of the war out of mind. Suddenly, perhaps the sight of a maimed soldier, perhaps the roll of a drum, the call of a bugle, even the leisurely rustle

of the old flag peacefully rustling, brings back in a tumultuous rush the recollections of that magnificent and awful time.

In our previous history there had been many skirmishes with Indians, the unsatisfactory but not altogether inglorious war of 1812, and a short struggle with Mexico: but we thought of war,—real, great, glorious, desperate, prolonged war, straining the full energies of thirty or forty millions of people and marshaling armies by the hundred thousand,—as something of which substantially the last had probably been seen under Napoleon. How many boys read and read of great battles, and wondered and wondered how it would seem! As their pulses leaped at the description of the great thunderings of cannon, the rattle of musketry, the wild yelling cheers of the charge, they asked:—“Could I go through a battle? How should I feel? How do wounded men look and act? What do they say? And the long night march, the bivouac on the wind-swept plain or in deep woods! I wish I could see it all,” said many a lad.

At half-past four on the afternoon of April 12, 1861, a cannon-shot of devilish malignity, speeding from Morris Island, South Carolina, toward Fort Sumter, “slapped the face of Liberty.” The lightning carried the news. Suddenly arose 75,000 men—300,000—300,000 more—a million on one side only of a great war! Dying men by the hundred thousand, blood in streams, debt by the thousand million, a nation’s life trembling in the balance, black clouds of sorrow and despair covering the whole land! The boys who doubted their own hearts forgot to ask questions. They stood up by regiments,

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brigades, divisions, and grand armies, and the world never saw braver soldiers nor more terrible battles. It was an indescribable, astounding revelation of the true soul of a nation.

It was THE CAUSE—the dear land we love—the Flag—the Declaration—the Union—the foremost Republic in the world's history—the grand experiment of government by the people—a continent dedicated to Liberty—a nation set apart of God to work out the great problem of self-government, of free government, education, peace, justice, equal rights—good will among men—all leading mankind toward a future nobler than our richest dreams! Should this vision of unutterable glory be blotted out? Should we have disunion—two republics—a dozen—with petty ambitions, factions, revolutions, repudiation, dishonor, anarchy—a wretched, crushed continent, begging for kings to take all and give peace? For answer the grand “FALL IN!” rang and rolled day and night. The air quivered, hummed, thrilled, and shuddered with multitudinous drumming. By hundreds of thousands, young men, dropping all works and thoughts but of war, stood erect, shoulder to shoulder. From valleys and rocky hills, prairies and towns, fresh from studies and shops, grimy from mines and furnaces—they came down in long swinging ranks, with the “clash, clang, and roll of stormy war music,” to right the great wrong.

The wife thanked Heaven that her husband was a man and a patriot. The mother asked God's blessing upon her boy, and proudly and tearfully sent him away. The children knew they would not be ashamed of their

fathers. It was worth a century to live in those four years.

The enemies of free government looked with grim delight for the coming fulfillment of their prophecies. They said we had certainly thriven as to mere numbers. They said we could fight like a mob; we were the descendants of uneasy and rebellious colonists; our land was the refuge of the enemies of all government. They said we had no history, no historic consciousness, no cohesion. They said we were only a loose congeries of States that would fall apart upon a quarrel, with no central commanding power to compel organization and obedience. They said we had lost faith in human nature; we believed all men purchasable; we worshiped the dollar; we hungered for sensual and material things. They believed that no democratic nation could impose heavy taxes, create great debts and pay them, or long endure self-imposed sorrow and pain. We asserted that there is no power on earth equal to that of a free people; that all men together know more than one man; that whatever is to be done by a whole people can best be done by a free people. It was for us to show how a free people can carry on a long war, and to exhibit unity, submission, organization, discipline, obedience, perseverance, devotion, self-sacrifice, not because a king commanded, but because we felt and willed it.

The struggle was of infinite importance, because the failure of this Republic would have delayed the world a century. There is not a year or page of subsequent European history that is what it would have been if we

had failed. There is no measuring the influence of this Republic on other nations. Our wonderful growth in population, social, material, and educational development, trade and commerce — our small standing army — have been making their impress on the people of the Old World. No graces of rhetoric can add strength to the statistics that prove our material prosperity, our elasticity, our burden-bearing and debt-paying capacity. Call other governments what you will, public opinion is rapidly coming to rule them. It will be more and more felt as intelligence spreads; and intelligence and intellectual growth cannot be stopped. We were fighting the battle of the centuries. It was not for the North; it was not against the South. It was not for the southern slave or the black man or the white man, nor against the slaveholders. It was *for* the North, *for* the South, *for* the slave, *for* the master, for the whole people and *all* people. It was the battle of the World and of Humanity.

Not all men reasoned elaborately about it. That combination of truths and traditions, feelings, beliefs, intellectual and moral discovery and growth that we call civilization, compelled us. The common soldier felt it in his soul and gloried in the drama, without waiting for philosophic speculations.

The contest was worth all it cost. The world could not have afforded to let it end otherwise. A divided republic, several republics, would have meant eternal war. And the nation determined to end the question of unity then and forever.

The day of enduring peace is far away. Conflict is

the law of the universe. The mystery of the Divine Government is beyond our comprehension. Everywhere there are duality and strife. There are up and down, right and left, heat and cold, light and darkness, day and night. Growth and decay, good and evil, contend for the mastery. There is no rest. The good cannot rest if it would. The bad is falsehood, selfishness, hatred, malignity, destruction. They are the stronger peoples who live where there is a well-balanced struggle with nature. There will be peace only when all evil shall have vanished. It is well said that "nothing is settled that is not right," and that "unsettled questions have no pity for the repose of mankind."

What is this terrible and inevitable thing called war? It is the sudden and violent disruption of all peaceful industries. The air becomes tremulous with the roll of drums, the resonant notes of bugles, and the clang of bells. There come the marshaling and arming of myriads of men, the rumble and chuck of ponderous artillery and endless trains of wagons. There come the sundering of families, the weeping and the blessing of fathers, mothers, wives, and sweethearts, the high flush of noble emotions of pride, patriotism, and devotion. And again the hasty instruction, the marching and camping under blazing suns, or in frost and snow; the delving in mud; some morning the quick sharp shots of the skirmish line; combats now at dawn, now in darkness; and, in time, the full battle array; the rattling, swelling, and diminishing volleys of musketry; the irregular boom of cannon; the whistling, humming rifle ball; the satanic screech of heavy shot and shell; tumultuous shouts and

yells, now near, now far. There come hospitals, crowded by the wounds of battle, and the more deadly wounds of disease; populous grave-yards; the muffled drum and mourners going about the streets; debts, private and public; rags, starvation, and cripples.

War is an unspeakable calamity, and the wickedest thing in the universe is a selfish and wicked war between wicked rulers and peoples, unless it be a *cowardly peace* — a peace that will see justice and liberty stricken down and stand by silent and idle. Wrong and oppression are a challenge to Heaven and all just men. War rouses men to great thoughts and deeds and calls men to *sacrifice*. Unbelief in human nature grows in peace, fostering a conviction that all men are selfish. With war and sacrifice comes a sense of the value of the country. Our soldiers learned the incalculable worth of regularity, fidelity, courage, cheerfulness, and the beauty of absolute obedience to orders because they *are* orders, which is next to doing right because it *is* right. Victor Hugo says the soldier and the priest are at heart the same: one is devoted to his country down here; the other to his country up there.

See that young man as he enters the ranks, fresh from the plow, the workshop, or counting-house. It may be that at first his manly spirit rebels against the sharp, peremptory order of an officer his equal, and nothing more, at home. He shrugs his shoulder in reluctant obedience. He may grumble over his hard-tack and weary of the endless round of camp duty. But as the months roll on, see him salute with head erect and flashing eye. With what alacrity he springs to duty, wher-

ever and whenever he finds it — proud now of submission, obedience, and self-sacrifice. He has learned to OBEY, he is ready to do and die. And that is the lesson we taught two million boys — a grand lesson to be learned, even amid the carnage of bloody war. Nor did it end there.

There was with some a feeling of dread — born of the old world's history — of the time when these soldiers, trained in the rough routine of military camps and accustomed to deeds of blood, should be turned back upon society. But when the discharge came, the veterans quietly stepped back into the ordinary vocations of life, resuming its peaceful duties, all the better fitted because of the sacrifices they had made. Multitudes to-day are better citizens for having been soldiers.

They are to be found in every field and corner of the land from shore to shore, such as I see before me, in all employments, professions, and grades, staunch lovers of liberty, law, and order, worshipers of the glorious ideal of what this land is to be. They have spread through every distant territory, ever the truest and foremost among the founders of future States.

Everywhere they stand a solid wall guarding the civil power. So loving the country that they could die for it in the storm of war, they are not the men to destroy its institutions.

It was a just war and no other was ever conducted like it. Read the story of great European campaigns, save as modified at times by special relations and to an increasing degree by our example. "Fire and sword" was the cry. Desolation followed

the soldier — not that the enemy might be starved into defeat, but that the invader might divide plunder as a legitimate portion of his pay, and an additional motive for his service. The capture of cities was followed by insane orgies trampling upon order and discipline, robbery, nameless outrages upon the defenceless non-combatants, fire, and brutal murders of the defeated enemy. On the other hand, save where, as in the Shenandoah, or in Sherman's march, the subsistence of the army was drawn from the country, or the destruction of the support of the enemy was demanded by military policy, the army of the Union carried with it protection to property, protection to life and person, and the punishment of disorder. As various regions came again under the old flag, the starving were freely fed from the army supplies, teachers and preachers opened churches for a gospel free to all, and the Freedmen's Bureau took charge of the black man, free, surely, yet owning nothing but himself. With the flag went fair play and fair wages to all men. The Sanitary Commission and the Christian Commission marched with, or upon the heels of, the army, carrying blessings without reservation or distinction. Never before did war accompany its horrors with so much of the mitigations of a christian civilization.

The political history of a few months that immediately preceded the war are instructive if not flattering. They were full of doubt and dread. So much did loyal men love peace and union, and so much, it must be confessed, did they doubt the great hearts and high courage of the loyal millions, that

they offered terms of settlement which one wishes could be forever blotted from the record, save that they acquit the States that stood by the Union of the crime of desiring war. And it was long before the nation was driven, under the chastening hand of the Almighty, to lift its hand against the underlying cause of its calamities, the belated barbarism, human slavery struggling for a permanent entrenchment in the republic, and in despair striving for its destruction.

But as the poet hath it :

“Above the bayonets bloom the lilies and palms of God.”

With the restored Union came universal liberty. And of the terms granted our conquered brethren of the South, Gen. Lee said: “Gen. Grant’s treatment of the Army of Southern Virginia is without a parallel in the history of the civilized world.” Confiscation ceased. There were no executions for treason. No ungovernable army remained to dominate the government and justify the prophecies of our enemies, nor did roving bands of guerillas harrass a weary people. It was indeed a great war, and in nothing greater than in its close, and in the results that justify it. Its gigantic labors, sorrows, debts, and deaths won something, and whatever was thus won is to be preserved and maintained. Upon this much we can all agree:

An indissoluble union was restored. The theory of secession appealed to the last dread tribunal within the reach of man. It lost, and it is dead, as a rule of possible action. No man asserts to the contrary.

Universal liberty was established. Human slavery vanished. No man is heard to lament it, and most of its former champions rejoice.

By constitution and statute, the equality of rights has been established, for the ballot box, the jury box, the witness box, and the cartridge box. There are mourners, but they are helpless.

There is but one theory of political society. In theory, at least, there shall hereafter be no master and no slave; no noble, no peasant; no dominant class, no inferior class. Every man has a right to be all that he can be. Even our late enemies concede all this, and most of it most cordially and sincerely. For it our dead brothers gave their lives. Failure to maintain it would be an infinite shame.

One of our high duties has been thus far nobly discharged. Every dollar of the debt has been held as sacred as a soldier's grave. More than two thousand million of it has been paid. Had it been treated with dishonor or trifling, there would have been lacking one large element in the demonstration that a free people can endure and govern.

Let us all remember that "Liberty is a burden, not a release." It is easier to live under a reasonable despotism than in a republic. Where one man rules, it is the paradise of those who lament the existence of parties and political agitations. The American citizen has assumed the sovereignty and cannot escape its duties. All political thoughts, debates, and conflicts concern him, and he can never reach the end of his care.

We have the unspeakable happiness to have lived

twenty-six years after the close of the war, and to see the great changes in fundamental law and statute necessary to confirm the judgment thereof; to see our country first in financial credit, first in the harmonious justice and freedom of its institutions, and soon to be first in numbers and wealth. No man who has contributed, however humbly, to this wonderful advance has lived altogether in vain.

By immeasurable sacrifices in war and peace a new and solemn sanction has been given to the duties of citizenship. Let no man trifle with the honor of the great Republic, or deny its authority, or corrupt its ballot boxes.

We read in the Scriptures that when King David was encamped over against Bethlehem, which was in the hands of the Philistines, three of his thirty chieftains came down to see him.

“And David longed, and said: ‘Oh that one would give me to drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate!’”

“And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David; nevertheless, he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord.

“And he said: ‘Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this; is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?’ Therefore he would not drink it.”

More than three hundred thousand men went in jeopardy of their lives and shed their blood for the Republic.

When the moralist dwells upon the beauty of peace

and the sin and barbarism of war, he too often paints the soldier only as one divested of all fine, pure elements of humanity, going out to kill his fellow-men, and lay waste their homes. Such are some warriors; such were not ours. Before the contest opened, and during its earlier years, the defenders of the Union had less of hatred than ever prevailed in a people going to battle. They longed for signs of changed conviction, or dying passion, and returning amity. At any moment, the news that our opponents had abandoned strife and stretched out right hands would have been received with joy indescribable and far surpassing that of the capture and enforced surrender of Appomattox. It was the stronger brother restraining the weaker from the destruction of things of old dear to both, and the heavy hand of relentless war, more deadly to the attacking force than to the defenders, was really not raised in the East until the campaigns of 1864.

Napoleon's dictum, "The worse the man the better the soldier," only reveals the character of his wars. He would have discovered that it was not alone barbarous in morals, but a blunder in true military science, had he led in such causes that a truly intelligent people could have daily wrestled in prayer with Almighty God for his success. Said David to Goliath, "Thou comest to me with a sword, a spear, and a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied."

We venture to say that the great mass of our soldiery thought not so much of sending death to others as of their belief that then, if never before, they were serv-

ing God and their country, and were willing to die for the good cause, if need be.

The true soldier is not a boaster. Saving and excepting the few great leaders, he well knows that he was one among two and a quarter millions, only one, yet proud to be counted there. When all was over, Dr. Bushnell said, on an occasion similar to this, "The heroes of the war are the dead men." True, but there were other heroes than either dead or living soldiers. Remember the mothers and wives. While to the soldiers some days and weeks were as holidays, to the beloved at home nearly all days were days of battle, and every hour carried the possibility of sorrowful tidings. Remember such as the Massachusetts mother losing all her five sons: to whom Abraham Lincoln wrote of the "solemn pride that must be hers to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom."

Remember the little army of nurses who gave many lives, with a courage not surpassed on the field.

Remember those whose work at home was indispensable and who had faith. In 1864 Grant said the Union would be saved if the North stood firm. The army sometimes looked as anxiously northward as southward. Remember the farmers and mechanics who could not go; who sent sons and brothers, staying at home to maintain families; sending cheer and comfort to their boys in the field; voting as seemed best to them, but always at heart voting for the Union. Remember our legislators, who ordered army after army, and debt after debt, with a grand audacity, a splendid faith in Heaven and the people, until 1864 saw the Union with the great-

est army the world ever saw, near a million and a quarter of men, the best armed, equipped, clothed, fed, paid — and pensioned — the world ever saw.

Forget not the true Union men of the border and Southern States, who stood by Union and Liberty, while neighbor was arrayed against neighbor, brother against brother, son against father; where the soldier often heard that his fields were ravaged, his home burned, his family houseless, and on furlough he could only visit them by stealth. What had we of New England to suffer by the side of these our comrades of the South? Remember among them the black man. Remember our comrades of foreign birth who were with us from Sumter to the end, and those who came from foreign lands to join us.

The New Testament, nowhere reflecting upon the profession of the soldier, and full of the metaphors that interchange easily between the campaigns of the evangelist and the warrior, gives us a charming story of a Roman captain, a pagan, engaged in the ungrateful work of enforcing the dominion of Rome over the conquered Hebrews. He had a servant who was dear unto him, and who was sick and ready to die. The generous soldier, having heard of one Jesus who was the friend of sorrow and suffering, and did great wonders in healing men, sent to Him certain elders of the Jews beseeching him to come and heal the servant. The Scripture proceeds to say:

“ And when they came to Jesus they besought him instantly, saying, ‘ That he was worthy for whom he should do this, for he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.’ ”

Here was a broad and liberal, as well as wealthy, soldier, possibly not a strong believer in the gods of Rome and Greece, but still less likely to believe in a gospel from Judea, and yet he gave liberally to the alien race over whom he was on guard.

“Then Jesus went with them, and when He was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying unto Him: ‘Lord, trouble not thyself, for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof; wherefore, neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee, but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.’

“‘For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, ‘Go,’ and he goeth; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he cometh; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he doeth it.’

“When Jesus heard these things he marvelled at him, and turned about and said unto the people that followed him: ‘I say unto you, I have not found such faith, no, not in Israel.’”

Thus kindly did the Divine Master look upon the pagan captain: “a soldier and a gentleman” of Rome.

Mr. President: I heartily congratulate Utica upon this noble testimonial for the dead. Let us prefer to believe that their spirits are permitted to witness this inspiring scene. In the dreary days of toil, in the idle hours of waiting camp life, in the dread moment of supreme trial, ever and anon, there came to the young soldier the question, “What are they thinking of me at home?” It flushed his cheek, brightened his eyes, brightened his sorrow, and raised his courage. “If we go home victors, how glorious it will be; if we fall, they will surely remember us.”

But monuments are not for the dead alone. Justice

to ourselves and a wise provision of future trials require them. They say to the young: "This, and more too, shall be done for all who so love their flag and their country."

Forget not the wonderful time when millions were uplifted by the great call, many to suffer labor, sorrow and pain and death for something outside of, above and beyond themselves, joining the noble army of martyrs. Raise a monument in every town, where it shall meet the eye of the multitude for centuries to come, forever telling the story of the great salvation of free government. Call children to it and tell them the tale, fully and truly—the causes and reasons, and issues and results. Let the skillful sculptor and painter, and the cunning engraver, set forth the countless romances and nobilities of the long struggle. Let the poet, orator, and historian perpetuate the significance of that demonstration of the wisdom, power, justice, liberty, and truth of the republic.

Perhaps you have heard idle and wicked hopes and prophecies that the memories of the war will pass away. Never! Never! God have mercy upon a people that could forget or desire to forget! With "malice toward none and charity for all," remembering that those who were wrong are to be personally judged by the light they had, and their cause by the light posterity will have, the grandeur of the struggle and the majesty of the conclusion will remain in the minds of all the world. While the individual names of all, save a noble few of the leaders, will grow dim in the misty and distant past, the splendor of their valor will blend with the purple and gold of your sunrise and sunset for ever and ever.

Only a few words more. Assisting upon many similar occasions, I have made it my custom, as a most worthy part of an appropriate liturgy, to read, at the close, the immortal words of Abraham Lincoln, delivered at the dedication of the Cemetery at Gettysburg, twenty-eight years ago. Standing upon Cemetery Hill, before him the panorama of hill and valley, magnificent in three days of awful battle, and now superlatively beautiful and holy in the sunshine of peace, he declared a vow and a covenant that we renew to-day. He said:

“Four-score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new Nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

“Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it as the final resting place of those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

“But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we SAY here, but it can never forget what they DID here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work that they have thus far so nobly carried on. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to the cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion — that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain — that the nation shall, under God, have a new birth of freedom, and that the government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

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