

The Confederate Cause And Its Defenders.

Before the Grand Camp of Confederate Veterans at the Annual Meeting held at Culpeper C. H., Va., October 4th, 1898, and published by Special Request of the Grand Camp.

Great wars have been as landmarks in the progress of nations, measuring-points of growth or decay. As crucibles they test the characters of peoples. Whether or not there is fibre to bear the crush of battle, and the strain of long contest:--not only in this determined; but also another matter, of yet more serious import, and of deeper interest to the student of history and to a questioning posterity. The grave investigator of to-day, searches the past to know whether man is of such character, whether the causes for which he has fought are such, that the future is always to be dark with "wars and rumors of war" He asks what men have regarded as sufficient causes of war? He does not enquire whether "the flying Mede" at Marathon, or the Greek with "his pursuing spear," are types of their nations: he rather seeks to know how the apparently unimportant action of an insignificant city, provoked the great Persian invasion. His question is, not whether Athens or Sparta bred the better soldier, but he searches the records to find out the causes of the Peloponnesian war.

He does not consider whether Vercingetorix, standing a captive in the presence of Caesar, was, after all, the nobler leader; nor whether Attila at Chalons was a greater general than Aetius, nor why the sword of Brennus turned the scale on that fateful day at Rome. He is more concerned to know why the Roman legions marched so far, and why the world threw off the imperial yoke. The causes of wars test yet more deeply than conduct in the field, the characters of peoples, indicate yet more surely what hopes of peace or fears of war lie in the future, to which we are advancing.

The foregoing considerations press on no people on earth more heavily than on those of the Southern States of this country. The question of the justice of the cause for which our Southern men

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fought and our Southern women suffered, in the great war which convulsed this country from '61 to '65, will always interest the philosophical historian, who will seek to know the motive that prompted the tremendous efforts of those four years, and the character of the men who fought so hard. It must command the attention of Confederate soldiers and their descendants for all time to come.

During that contest, and for many years after its close, there was no doubt as to this question in all our Southern land, and this is the case with nearly all our mature and thinking people to-day. I fear, however, that some of our children, misled by the false teachings of certain histories used in some of our schools, may have some misgivings on this all-important subject.

As Carthage had no historian, the Roman accounts of the famous Punic wars had to be accepted. All the blame was, as a matter of course, thrown on Carthage, and thus "Punica Fides" became a sneering by-word to all posterity. And so it has been, until recently, with the South. For many years after the war, our people were so poor, and so busily engaged in "keeping the wolf from their doors," that they lost sight of everything else. The shrewd, calculating, and wealthy Northerners, on the other hand, realized the importance of trying to impress the rising generation with the justice of their cause; and to that end they soon flooded our schools with histories, containing their version of the contest, and in many of these "all the blame" (as in the case of Carthage), is laid on the South.

In view of these facts, I have thought it not only not improper, but perhaps, a sacred duty, to call attention to some things which have impressed me very much, and some which so far as I know, have not heretofore been brought to the attention of our Southern people.

I shall not, in this address, discuss the Confederate Cause from the standpoint of a Southerner at all. Indeed, this has been done so

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thoroughly and ably by President Davis, Mr. Stephens, Dr. Bledsoe, and others, as to leave but little, if anything to be said from that point of view. I propose to set in order certain facts which will show: (1) What the people of the North said and did during the war to establish the justice of our Cause, and what they have said and done to the same end since its close; and (2) What distinguished foreigners have said about that cause, and the way the war was conducted on both sides. It seems to me that an answer to these enquiries is worthy of the gravest consideration, and ought to make its impression on any reflecting and unprejudiced mind.

I am profoundly thankful that in these latter days, our own people have become aroused to the importance of presenting the truth of this great struggle, and that the result has been to produce some very good histories by Southern authors, giving the facts as to the causes which led to the war, and those as to its conduct by both parties. For these indispensable books, we are indebted almost solely to the influence of the Confederate Camps and kindred organizations which have sprung up all over the South.

Passing over the history up to the year 1864, we find the people of the North were then greatly agitated on the question of the propriety of the war, its further prosecution and the manner in which it was being conducted by the administration then in power. The opposition to the war and Lincoln's administration was led by Vallandigham, of Ohio, with such boldness and ability as to cause his arrest and temporary imprisonment. In the Presidential contest of that year, Lincoln and Johnson were the candidates of the Republican, or war party, and McClellan and Pendleton were those of the Democratic, or peace party. The convention which nominated McClellan and Pendleton was one of the most representative bodies that ever assembled in this country. It met in the city of Chicago on the 29th of August, 1864, with Governor Horatio Seymour, of New York, as its chairman.

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An idea of the temper of the convention may be gathered from an extract from one of the speeches delivered in it by Rev. C. Chauncey Burr, of New Jersey, which is as follows:

"We had no right to burn their wheat-fields, steal their pianos, spoons or jewelry. Mr. Lincoln had stolen a good many thousand negroes, but for every negro he had thus stolen, he had stolen ten thousand spoons. It had been said that, if the South would lay down their arms, they would be received back into the Union. The South could not honorably lay down her arms, for she was fighting for her honor."

Mr. Horace Greeley says that Governor Seymour, on assuming the chair, made an address showing the bitterest opposition to the war; "but his polished sentences seemed tame and moderate by comparison with the fiery utterances volunteered from hotel balconies, street corners, and wherever space could be found for the gathering of an impromptu audience; while the wildest, most intemperate utterances of virtual treason--those which would have caused Lee's army, had it been present, to forget its hunger and rags in an ecstasy of approval--were sure to evoke the longest and loudest plaudits."

This convention adopted a platform containing these, among other, remarkable declarations:

"That after four years of failure to restore the Union by the experiment of war, during which, under the pretence of a military necessity of a war power higher than the Constitution, the Constitution has been disregarded in every part. Justice, humanity, liberty, and the public welfare demand that immediate efforts be made for the cessation of hostilities, with the ultimate convention of all the States, that these may be restored on the basis of a federal union of all the States, that the direct interference of the military authorities in the recent elections was a shameful violation of the Constitution, and the repetition of such acts will be held as

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revolutionary, and resisted; that the aim and object of the Democratic party is to preserve the federal union and the rights of the States unimpaired, and that they consider the administrative usurpation of extraordinary and dangerous powers, not granted by the Constitution, as calculated to prevent a restoration of the Union; that the shameful disregard of the administration in its duty to our fellow-citizens--prisoners of war--deserves the severest reprobation," &c., &c.

It will thus be seen that this platform charged the party in power with the very offences which the people of the South complained of and which caused the Southern States to secede. It charged that the "Constitution had been disregarded in every part"; it declared that "justice, humanity, liberty, and the public welfare demand that immediate efforts be made for a cessation of hostilities"; it charged the administration with the "usurpation of extraordinary and dangerous powers, not granted by the Constitution"; it charged it with direct interference in the elections, and with a shameful disregard of its duty to prisoners of war. The platform claimed that the object of the party adopting it was to preserve the Federal Union and the rights of the States unimpaired.

In a word, the grievances here set forth were those of which the South was then complaining, and the principles sought to be maintained those for which the South was contending. **And in addition to these, the people of the South were then exercising the God-given right and duty of defending their homes and firesides against an invasion as ruthless as any that ever marked the track of so-called civilized warfare.**

Mr. John Sherman tells us in his "Recollections of Forty Years in the House, Senate, and Cabinet," that prior to the adoption of this platform "there was apparent languor and indifference among people of the North as to who should be president, but after its adoption, there could be no doubt as to the trend of popular

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opinion." Governor Seward said in a speech delivered a few days after the adoption of that platform: "The issue is thus squarely made: McClellan and disunion, or Lincoln and union."

So that the issue thus made by the people of the North among themselves was really whether the war then being waged by them against the South was right or wrong; and on that issue, thus clearly presented, out of four millions of voters who went to the polls nearly one-half said, in effect, that the war was wrong, and that the principles for which the South was contending--the "rights of the States unimpaired"--were right, and that their overthrow was to be resisted by all patriotic Americans. Lincoln received 2,216,067 votes, whilst **McClellan received 1,808,725 votes; the latter receiving very nearly as many votes in the Northern States alone** as Lincoln had received in the whole country when he was elected in 1860, his vote at that time being only 1,866,352.

I construe this as a condemnation of their cause by nearly one-half the people of the North, "out of their own mouths." **It will be remembered that in this election the soldiers in the field voted, and it is to be presumed, of course, voted in support of the cause for which they were then fighting.--which fact alone would doubtless account for a very large part of the votes cast for Mr. Lincoln.** In this election, too, there was again the most shameless interference by the military to carry the election for Mr. Lincoln. When we consider these facts, I think the result was truly remarkable, and something for the Northern people to think of now, when many of them so flippantly taunt the Southern people with having been "rebels" and "traitors." Let them ask themselves, did not the South have a just cause, and **did not nearly one-half the Northern people so pronounce at the time?**

As a sample of the **interference by the military authorities in that election**, General B. F. Butler tells us in his book how he was sent by Mr. Stanton to New York with a military force to control that

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city and State for Mr. Lincoln. He says he stationed his troops conveniently near to every voting place in New York city, and that "he took care that the Southerners should understand that means would be taken for their identification, and that whoever of them should vote would be dealt with in such a manner as to make them uncomfortable"; and "the result was," he says, that "**substantially no Southerners voted at the polls on election day.**"

I think these figures and these facts demonstrate that if this election had been a fair one, **without the interference of the military**, a majority of the voters of the North would have said by their votes that the war then being waged against the South was wrong, and would therefore have stopped it of their own accord, because they were convinced it was wrong, and contrary to "justice, humanity, liberty, and the public welfare."

It is most interesting to notice the vote in some of the great States of the North in this contest on the issue thus presented. Notwithstanding the interference by the military, as above stated by General Butler, the vote in **New York** was 368,726 for Lincoln and 361,986 for McClellan, or a **little over 6,000 majority for Lincoln** and his cause. **Can any one doubt what the result would have been but for what General Butler says he and his troops did?** In Pennsylvania the vote was 296,389 for Lincoln, and 276,308 for McClellan. That in Ohio was 265,154 for Lincoln, and 205,568 for McClellan. That in Indiana was 150,422 for Lincoln, and 130,233 for McClellan. That in Illinois was 189,487 for Lincoln, and 158,349 for McClellan. That in Wisconsin was 79,564 for Lincoln, and 63,875 for McClellan. In New Hampshire it was 36,595 for Lincoln, and 33,034 for McClellan. In Connecticut it was 44,693 for Lincoln, and 42,288 for McClellan; and whilst McClellan got the electoral votes of only New Jersey, Delaware and Kentucky, it is shown by the large vote he polled in all the States that the feeling of the people of the North against their cause was not confined to any State or locality, but

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pervaded the whole country; nearly every State, except perhaps Massachusetts, Vermont, Kansas, Maine and West Virginia, endorsing the war policy of the Republicans by smaller majorities than they have since given to the same party on purely economic issues. And just think of it, my comrades, that by a change of 209,000 in a vote of more than four millions, a majority of the people of the North would have voted that their cause was wrong, and that ours was consequently right.

The virulence with which McClellan's campaign was conducted cannot be better illustrated than by incorporating here a notice of a political meeting to be held during that canvass. This notice recently appeared in a number of The Grand Army Record, and is as follows:

"DEMOCRATS ONCE MORE TO THE BREACH!

Grand Rally at Bushnell, Friday, November 4th, 1864.

Hon. L. W. Ross, Major S. P. Cummings, T. E. Morgan, Joseph C. Thompson will address the people on the above occasion, and disclose to them the whole truth of the matter.

WHITE MEN OF McDONOUGH,

Who prize the Constitution of our Fathers; who love the Union formed by their wisdom and compromise;

Brave men who hate the Rebellion of Abraham Lincoln, and are determined to destroy it;

Noble women who do not want their husbands and sons dragged to the Valley of Death by a remorseless tyrant;

Rally out to this meeting in your strength and numbers.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE."

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Mr. Greeley, in his American Conflict, says:

"It is highly probable that had a popular election been held at any time during the year following the 4th of July, 1862, on the question of continuing the war, or arresting it on the best attainable terms, a majority would have voted for peace; while it is highly probable that a still larger majority would have voted against emancipation."

The same writer shows, too, not only how the successes or failures of the Northern armies served as the financial gauge which marked the price of their gold from time to time, but that these same successes or failures told in the elections the measure of the devotion of the Northern people to their cause.

Not so with the people of the South, who, in the darkest period of the war, February, 1865, and with a unanimity never surpassed, resolved that their cause was the "holiest of all causes," and declared their resolution "to spare neither their blood nor their treasure in its maintenance and support." And even now, a third of a century after that cause went down in defeat, but not in dishonor, its memories, though shrouded in sadness, are still a sacred and living factor in their lives and being.

Just at this point I desire to consider what was said of our cause, especially of the "right of secession," and of the conduct of the war on both sides, by a distinguished English nobleman who, it must be presumed, wrote from an unprejudiced standpoint.

In a work called The Confederate Secession, written by the Marquis of Lothian, and published in 1864 in Edinburgh and London, that writer, after reciting and discussing with remarkable accuracy and ability the grievances of the Southern States, and the cause which led to their secession from the Union, uses this language:

"I believe that the right of secession is so clear that if the South had wished to do so, for no better reason than that it could not bear to be beaten in an election, like a sulky school-boy out of temper at

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not winning a game, and had submitted the question of its right to withdraw from the Union to the decision of any court of law in Europe, she would have carried her point."

He then draws the following vivid contrast between the way war was conducted by the two parties. He says:

"Let us however suppose the Southern Secession to have been altogether illegal and uncalled for, or rather let us turn away our eyes from the question altogether, and suppose that the causes of the struggle are veiled in obscurity. Can we find anything in the circumstances of the war itself which may induce us to take one side rather than the other? Those circumstances have been very remarkable. **This contest has been signalized by the exhibition of some of the best and some of the worst qualities that war has ever brought out. It has produced a recklessness of human life; a contempt of principles, a disregard of engagements; a wasteful expenditure almost unprecedented; a widely extended corruption among the classes who have any connection with the government or the war; an enormous debt, so enormous as to point to almost certain repudiation; the headlong adoption of the most lawless measures; the public faith scandalously violated both towards friends and enemies; the liberty of the citizen at the mercy of arbitrary power; the liberty of the press abolished: the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; illegal imprisonments; midnight arrests; punishments inflicted without trial; the courts of law controlled by satellites of government; elections carried on under military supervision; a ruffianism both of word and action eating deep into the country; contractors and stock jobbers suddenly amassing enormous fortunes out of the public misery, and ostentatiously parading their ill-gotten wealth in the most vulgar display of luxury; the most brutal inhumanity in the conduct of the war itself; outrages upon the defenceless, upon women, children and prisoners; plunder, rapine, devastation, murder,—all the old horrors of barbarous warfare, which Europe is beginning**

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to be ashamed of, and new refinements of cruelty thereto added, by way of illustrating the advance of knowledge. It has also produced qualities and phenomena the opposite of these. Ardour and devotedness of patriotism which might, alone be enough to make us proud of the century to which we belong; a unanimity such as has probably never been witnessed before; a wisdom in legislation; a stainless good faith under extremely difficult circumstances; a clear appreciation of danger, coupled with a determination to face it to the uttermost; a resolute abnegation of power in favor of leaders in whom those who selected them could trust; with an equally resolute determination to reserve the liberty of criticism, and not to allow those trusted leaders to go one inch beyond their legal powers: a heroism in the field and behind the defences of besieged cities, which can match anything that history has to show; a wonderful helpfulness in supplying needs and creating fresh resources; a chivalrous and romantic daring, which recalls the middle ages: a most scrupulous regard for the rights of hostile property; a tender consideration for the vanquished and the weak; a determination not to be provoked into retaliation by the most brutal injuries, which makes one wonder, recollecting what those injuries have been, whether in their place, one would have done as they have done. * * * And the remarkable circumstance is * * * that all the good qualities have been on the one side, and all the bad ones on the other."

In other words, he says that all the bad qualities were on the side of the North, and all the good on that of the South. He then says of the South:

"I am not going a hair's-breadth beyond what I soberly and sincerely believe, in saying that the Confederates have in almost every respect, surpassed anything that has ever been known.

"The most splendid instance of a nation's defence of its liberties that the world has seen before the present day, was

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perhaps (I am not sure, but I think so), that of Sicily at the end of the thirteenth century: and the Confederates stand much above the Sicilians."

He then goes on to enumerate the splendid instances of sacrifice and devotion of the people, especially of the women of the South, and of the valor and heroism of the soldiers in the field, but to recount these, would consume more space than would be profitable in this discussion.

That this writer was not singular in his opinions, in regard to our struggle, is manifest from what Mr. Justin McCarthy tells us in the second volume of his "History of our own Times." McCarthy was evidently an ardent sympathizer with the North, and yet he says that in England "the vast majority of what are called the governing classes, were on the side of the South;" that "by far the greater number of the aristocracy of the official world, of Members of Parliament, of Military and Naval men were for the South;" that "London Club life was virtually Southern;" and that "the most powerful papers in London, and the most popular papers as well, were open partisans of the Southern Confederation."

Lord Russell said the contest was one "in which the North was striving for empire, and the South for independence."

Mr. Gladstone said, our President, Mr. Davis, "had made an army, had made a navy, and had made a nation."

And it is as certain as anything that did not happen can be, that but for the fall of Vicksburg, and our failure to succeed at Gettysburg in July, 1863 (both of which disasters came on us at the same time), Mr. Roebuck's motion in Parliament for recognition by England, which the Emperor Napoleon also was working hard to bring about, would have been carried, and the Confederacy would then have been recognized by both England and France. This recognition would have raised the blockade, and this was all the South needed to insure its success. For as a distinguished Northern

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writer, from whom I shall presently quote, said, "without their navy to blockade our ports, they never could have conquered us."

Mr. Percy Greg, the justly famous English historian, says:

"If the Colonies were entitled to judge of their own cause, much more were the Southern States. Their rights--rights not implied, assumed, or traditional, like those of the Colonies, but expressly defined and solemnly guaranteed by law--had been flagrantly violated; the compact which alone bound them, had beyond question, been systematically broken for more than forty years by the States which appealed to it."

After showing the perfect regularity and legality of the Secession movement, he then says: "It was in defence of this that the people of the South sprang to arms 'to defend their homes and families, their property and their rights, the honor and independence of their States to the last, against five fold numbers and resources a hundred fold greater than theirs.'"

He says of the cause of the North:

"The cause seems to me as bad as it well could be; the determination of a mere numerical majority to enforce a bond, which they themselves had flagrantly violated, to impose their own mere arbitrary will, their idea of national greatness, upon a distinct, independent, determined and almost unanimous people."

And he then says, as Lord Russell did:

"The North fought for empire which was not and never had been hers; the South for an independence she had won by the sword, and had enjoyed in law and fact ever since the recognition of the thirteen 'sovereign and independent States,' if not since the foundation of Virginia. Slavery was but the occasion of the rupture, in no sense the object of the war." Let me add a statement which will be confirmed by every veteran before me,--no man ever saw a Virginia soldier who was fighting for slavery.

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This writer then speaks Of the conduct of the Northern people as "unjust, aggressive, contemptuous of law and right," and as presenting a striking contrast to the "boundless devotion, uncalculating sacrifice, magnificent heroism and unrivalled endurance of the Southern people."

But I must pass on to what a distinguished Northern writer has to say of the people of the South, and their cause, twenty-one years after the close of the war. The writer is Benjamin J. Williams, Esq., of Lowell, Massachusetts, and the occasion which brought forth his paper (addressed to the Lowell Sun) was the demonstration to President Davis when he went to assist in the dedication of a Confederate monument at Montgomery, Ala. He says of Mr. Davis:

"Everywhere he receives from the people the most overwhelming manifestation of heartfelt affection, devotion and reverence, exceeding even any of which he was the recipient in the time of his power; such manifestations as no existing ruler in the world can obtain from his people, and such as probably were never given before to a public man, old, out of office, with no favors to dispense, and disfranchised. Such homage is significant; it is startling. It is given, as Mr. Davis himself has recognized, not to him alone, but to the cause whose chief representative he is, and it is useless to attempt to deny, disguise or evade the conclusion, that there must be something great and noble and true in him and in the cause to evoke this homage."

This writer then goes on to review Mr. Davis's career, both before and during the war, pays a splendid tribute to his character as a man, and his genius and ability as a soldier and statesman; says even Henry Wilson, of Massachusetts, referred to him in a speech made during the war, as the "**clear-headed, practical, dominating Davis.**" And after referring to the proud and defiant spirit of Mr. Davis, and his splendid bearing both in the last days of the Confederacy and after his arrest and imprisonment, he says:

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"The seductions of power or interest may move lesser men, that matters not to him; the cause of the Confederacy is a fixed moral and constitutional principle, unaffected by the triumph of physical force, and he asserts it to-day as unequivocally as when he was seated in its executive chair at Richmond, in apparently irreversible power, with its victorious legions at his command."

Mr. Davis, in' his speech on the occasion referred to, alluded to the fact that the monument then being erected was to commemorate the deeds of those **"who gave their lives a free-will offering in defence of the rights of their sires, won in the War of the Revolution, the State sovereignty, freedom and independence which were left to us as an inheritance to their posterity forever."**

Mr. Williams says of this definition:

"These masterful words, 'the rights of their sires, won in the War of the Revolution, the State sovereignty, freedom and independence, which were left to us as an inheritance to their posterity forever,' are the whole case, and they are not only a statement but a complete justification of the Confederate cause, to all who are acquainted with the origin and character of the American Union."

He then proceeds to tell how the Constitution was adopted and the government formed by the individual States, each acting for itself, separately, and independently of the others, and then says:

"It appears, then, from this review of the origin and character of the American Union, that when the Southern States, deeming the Constitutional compact broken, and their own safety and happiness in imminent danger in the Union, withdrew there from and organized their new Confederacy, they but asserted, in the language of Mr. Davis, ' the rights of their sires, won in the War of the Revolution, the State sovereignty, freedom and independence, which were left to us as an inheritance to their posterity forever,' and it was in defence of this high and sacred cause that the

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Confederate soldiers sacrificed their lives. **There was no need of war. The action of the Southern States was legal and Constitutional, and history will attest that it was reluctantly taken in the last extremity."**

He now goes on to show how Mr. Lincoln precipitated the war, and describes the unequal struggle in which the South was engaged in these words:

"After a glorious four years' struggle against such odds as have been depicted, during which independence was often almost secured, where successive levies of armies, amounting in all to nearly three millions of men, had been hurled against her, the South, shut off from all the world, wasted, rent and desolate, bruised and bleeding, was at last overpowered by main strength; out-fought, never; for from first to last, she everywhere out-fought the foe. **The Confederacy fell, but she fell not until she had achieved immortal fame.** Few great established nations in all time have ever exhibited capacity and direction in government equal to hers, sustained as she was by the iron will and fixed persistence of the extraordinary man who was her chief; and few have ever won such a series of brilliant victories as that which illuminates forever the annals of her splendid armies, while the fortitude and patience of her people, and particularly of her noble women, under almost incredible trials and sufferings, have never been surpassed in the history of the world."

And he then adds:

"Such exalted character and achievement are not all in vain. **Though the Confederacy fell, as an actual physical power, she lives illustrated by them, eternally in her just cause--the cause of constitutional liberty."**

Mr. Henry Cabot Lodge, one of the present Senators from Massachusetts, in his life of Webster, says:

"When the Constitution was adopted by the votes of the States at Philadelphia, and accepted by the States in popular conventions,

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it is safe to say that there was not a man in the country, from Washington and Hamilton on the one side to George Clinton and George Mason on the other, who regarded the new system as anything but an experiment entered upon by the States, from which each and every State had the right peaceably to withdraw--a right which was very likely to be exercised."

And I heard Mr. James C. Carter, of New York, but a native of New England, and one of the greatest lawyers in this country, in his address recently delivered at the University of Virginia, say:

"I may hazard the opinion that if the question had been made, not in 1860, but in 1788, immediately after the adoption of the Constitution, whether the Union, as formed by that instrument, could lawfully treat the secession of a State as rebellion, and suppress it by force, few of those who participated in framing that instrument would have answered in the affirmative."

These are clear and candid admissions on the part of these distinguished Northerners that the Southern States had the right to secede as they did, and were, therefore, right in regard to the real issue involved in the 'War Between the States'.

There is but one other fact to which I desire to call attention in this connection, and while it has often been referred to, it cannot be too deeply impressed upon the minds of our people, and ought, it seems to me, to be conclusive of this whole question--and that is, the refusal of the Northern people to test the question of the right of secession by a trial of President Davis; and this, notwithstanding the fact that since the cry, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" went up at Jerusalem, nearly two thousand years ago, I believe there never was a time when a whole people were more willing to punish one man than were the people of the North, who were in favor of the war, to punish Mr. Davis for his alleged crimes as the leader of our cause and people.

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Mr. Davis was captured on or about the 10th of May, 1865, near Washington, Ga., and straightway taken to and confined in a casemate at Fortress Monroe. To show how eagerly these war people of the North demanded his life, they attempted first to implicate him in the assassination of Mr. Lincoln. It was even charged in a proclamation issued by the President of the United States that the evidence of Mr. Davis's connection with that atrocious crime "appears from evidence in the Bureau of Military Justice." This evidence consisted for the most part of affidavits of witnesses secured by that vile wretch, Judge Advocate General Holt. A committee of the then Republican Congress says of these:

"Several of these witnesses, when brought before the committee, retracted entirely the statements which they had made in their affidavits, and declared that their testimony as originally given was false in every particular."

Utterly failing in the attempt to connect Mr. Davis with this crime, they then tried to involve him in the alleged cruelty to prisoners at Andersonville, and a reprieve was offered to the commandant of the prison, Wirz, the night before he was hung, if he would implicate Mr. Davis,—which offer the brave Captain indignantly refused.

It was only after every attempt to connect Mr. Davis with other crimes had failed, that the authorities at Washington dared to have him indicted for the alleged crime of treason. Three several indictments for this offence were then set on foot. The first was found in the District of Columbia, but no process seems ever to have been issued on that. The second was found May 8th, 1866, at Norfolk, Va., in the Circuit Court of the United States for the Eastern District of Virginia, then presided over by the infamous Judge Underwood; and as Underwood himself tells us, this indictment was found after consultation with, and by the direction of Andrew Johnson, the then President of the United States. Almost

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immediately on the finding of this indictment, Mr. William B. Reed, a distinguished lawyer from Philadelphia, appeared for Mr. Davis, and asked: "What is to be done with this indictment? Is it to be tried?"

* * "If it is to be tried, may it please your honor, speaking for my colleagues and for myself and for my absent client, I say with emphasis, and I say with earnestness, we come here prepared instantly to try that case, and we shall ask no delay at your honor's hands further than is necessary to bring the prisoner to face the Court, and enable him under the statute in such case made and provided, to examine the bill of indictment against him."

At the instance of the Government, the case was then continued until October, 1866. Although efforts were made by Mr. Davis's counsel to have him admitted to bail, or removed to some more comfortable quarters, neither of these could be accomplished until May 13th, 1867, when he was admitted to bail, **after a cruel imprisonment of two years**, Horace Greeley, Gerritt Smith and other distinguished Northerners then becoming his sureties.

On the 26th March, 1868, another indictment for treason was found against him, which was continued from time to time until November, 1868. During the pendency of these indictments, the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States was adopted, the third section of which provides, that every person who, having taken an oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and thereafter engaged in rebellion, should be disqualified from holding certain offices. Counsel for Mr. Davis then raised the question that Mr. Davis having taken an oath to support the Constitution of the United States as a member of Congress in 1845, the 14th Amendment prescribed the punishment for afterwards engaging in rebellion, and this was pleaded in bar of the pending prosecutions for treason. The reporter says this defence was "inspired and suggested from the highest official source--not the

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President of the United States." In other words, it was inspired and suggested by the Chief Justice himself, as shown during the course of the argument, and for the sole purpose of evading the trial of the issue of the right of a State to secede, which was necessarily involved in the charge of alleged treason. On the question thus raised, the Court divided, the Chief Justice being of the opinion that the defence set up was a bar to the indictment, and Judge Underwood being of the contrary opinion. On this division, the question was certified to the Supreme Court, where, in the language of the reporter, "the certificate of disagreement rests among the records of the Court undisturbed by a single motion for either a hearing or dismissal."

It is a part of the history of the times, to use the language of a distinguished writer, that **"the authorities at Washington and Chief Justice Chase himself decided after full consideration and consultation with the ablest lawyers in the country that the charge of treason could not be sustained, and so the distinguished prisoner, who was anxious to go into trial and vindicate himself and his cause before the world, was admitted to bail, and finally a nolle prosequi was entered in the case."**

I repeat that these proceedings are a virtual confession on the part of the Northern people, that they were wrong, on the real question at issue in the war, and therefore that the South was right.

At this time, when a few men at the North are broad enough and bold enough to speak of some of the great leaders of the Southern cause as great and good men, and when, just because they were leaders in that cause, these opinions are seized upon, by those who still hate and defame us, as evidence of disloyalty, if not acts of criminality on the part of those who venture to express them, it seems to me, it is pertinent again to enquire of the Northern people--

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(1) What did nearly one-half of your own voters think of that cause, not thirty-two years after, but when the war was raging, and when all the passions enkindled, and horrors wrought by it, were fresh in the minds of those voters?

(2) What did enlightened, distinguished and unprejudiced foreigners think of that cause; the way the war was waged, and the conduct of the leaders, and the people on both sides at that time?

(3) What do some of your most intelligent and distinguished writers think now of that cause, and its great civil leader?

(4) And why did the people of the North refuse to test the question of which side was right, when they had instituted the case for that purpose in their own courts?

It seems to me, that the facts here set forth furnish such answers to these enquiries as ought to give pause to those of the North, who still love to revile and defame the people of the South; many doubtless delighting in this task now, who did not dare to come to the front when their professed views of duty called them there; some of whom have been convinced of the justice of their cause, only by the savor of the "flesh pots," and the allurements of the pension rolls, which the results of the war and the achievements of others, have put within their grasp.

I would fain hope too, that these pregnant facts will be pondered by our young people of the South, and if there be more than one young Southerner who has said, as I heard that one did say not long ago, of his old Confederate father, "the old man actually thinks he was right in the war, "--that these facts will make any such, not only feel and know that the cause of the South was right, and that the people of the South, almost as a unit, espoused and loved that cause, but that as true men they love it still, and that their children ought to feel alike proud of that cause and those who defended it with their lives, their blood and their fortunes.

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As some of the writers to whom I have referred have said: 'There never was a people engaged in any struggle who were more united or determined than were the people of the South, in behalf of the cause of the Confederacy.' They almost to a man, and certainly to a woman, believed in that cause, and as I have said, supported it with their lives, their blood and their fortunes. The sayings that "might makes right," and that "success is a test of merit," have grown into proverbs. But there never were more fallacious and misleading statements than these.

Appomattox was not a judicial forum, but a battle-field, a simple test of physical power, where the Army of Northern Virginia, "worn out with victory," and almost starving, surrendered its arms to "overwhelming numbers and resources."

Therefore, I say that, so far as the way the war ended is concerned, it proves, and can prove, nothing as to which side was right or which was wrong. As we have seen, our enemies brought us into their own courts, thus proclaiming to the world that they were ready and willing to test the question judicially, and after advising with the highest authorities on their side, of their own motion, abandoned their case, and fled from the precincts of their own chosen tribunals. We were in their power, and could do nothing but accept this, their own virtual confession that they, were wrong.

We need not fear, then, to submit our cause, or the way we conducted the war in its defence, to the muse of history, and to await her verdict with "calm confidence." Every day not only adds new lustre to the heroism and devotion of our people, and the achievements of our armies in the field, but rewards the researches of the unprejudiced historian with new and more convincing proofs of the justice of our cause. What are thirty years in the life of a nation? It was nearly two thousand years from the time when Arminius overcame the legions of Varus in the Black Forest of

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Germany before a statue was reared to the memory of that victor, and he was called the "Father of the Fatherland." It was less than two hundred years from the time when Charles the II came to his own, when the principles for which Cromwell and Hampden and Pym fought were recognized by all English speaking peoples, as the only ones on which constitutional liberty ever can rest.

OUR DEFENDERS.

Having said so much about our cause, I have only time to add a few words about the defenders of that cause.

And first, what shall I say, aye, what can I say, of the women of the South? For they were among the first, and will be the last defenders of that cause. I have no words in which to portray the admiration I feel, and the homage I would love to pay to these devoted patriots. Writers have often tried to set forth the story of their services and sacrifices, but have turned away baffled at the contemplation of the task. Poets who have sung the achievements of heroes and warriors have found verse all too feeble to translate their loving deeds into song, and minstrels with harps well-nigh attuned to suit the Angelic Choir, have before that theme stood hesitant and abashed, with nerveless fingers and silent strings. It has been proposed to rear a monument to these noble women. I would love to contribute my mite to this undertaking. But I know too well that the highest conception of artistic genius can never measure up to the task of fitly portraying to the world the patriotism, heroism, devotion, and sacrifices of the noble women of the Southland. They were and are, in the language of Wordsworth:

"Perfect women, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort and command."

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And what can I say of our leaders in that cause? It is no small thing to be able to say of them that they were cultivated men, without fear, and without reproach, and most of them the highest types of Christian gentlemen; that they were men whose characters have borne the inspection and commanded the respect of the world. Yes, the names of Davis, of Lee, of Jackson, the Johnstons, Beauregard, Ewell, Gordon, Early, Stuart, Hampton, Magruder, the Hills, Forrest, Cleburne, Polk, and a thousand others I could mention, will grow brighter and brighter, as the years roll on, because no stain of crime or vandalism is linked to those names; and because those men have performed deeds which deserve to live in history. And what shall I say of the men who followed these leaders? I will say this, without the slightest fear of contradiction from any source: They were the most unselfish and devoted patriots that ever marched to the tap of the drum, or stood on the bloody front of battle. The northern historian, Swinton, speaks of them as the "incomparable infantry of the Army of Northern Virginia." Colonel Dodge, a distinguished Federal officer, in his lecture on Chancellorsville, before the "Lowell Institute" in Boston, says:

"The morale of the Confederate army could not have been finer." * * * "Perhaps no infantry was ever, in its peculiar way, more permeated with the instinct of pure fighting--ever felt the gaudium certaminis more than the Army of Northern Virginia."

Another gallant Federal colonel thus wrote of them:

"I take a just pride as an American citizen, a descendant on both sides of my parentage of English stock, who came to this country about 1640, that the Southern army, composed almost entirely of Americans, were able, under the ablest American chieftains, to defeat so often the overwhelming hosts of the North, which were composed largely of foreigners to our soil; in fact, the majority were mercenaries whom large bounties induced to enlist,

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while the stay-at-home patriots, whose money bought them, body and boots, 'to go off and get killed, instead of their own precious selves, said let the war go on.'"

Another Federal officer, writing after the battle of Chancellorsville, says:

"Their artillery horses are poor, starved frames of beasts, tied to their carriages and caissons with odds and ends of rope and strips of rawhide; their supply and ammunition trains look like a congregation of all the crippled California emigrant trains that ever escaped off the desert out of the clutches of the rampaging Comanche Indians; the men are ill-dressed, ill-equipped and ill-provided--a set of ragamuffins that a man would be ashamed to be seen among even when he is a prisoner and can't help it; and yet they have beaten us fairly, beaten us all to pieces, beaten us so easily that we are objects of contempt even to their commonest private soldiers, with no shirts to hang out the holes of their pantaloons, and cartridge boxes tied around their waists with strands of rope."

Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, of New York, in his life of Benton, says:

"The world has never seen better soldiers than those who followed Lee, and their leader will undoubtedly rank as, without any exception, the very greatest of all great captains that the English speaking peoples have brought forth; and this, although the last and chief of his antagonists, may himself claim to stand as the full equal of Marlborough and Wellington."

And last, but not least, General Grant, to whom Mr. Roosevelt referred above, speaks of these soldiers in his Memoirs as **"the men who had fought so bravely, so gallantly and so long for the cause which they believed in."**

I might add a thousand similar commendations from those who fought us, but I cannot consume more of your time. If you have not done so, I advise you by all means to procure and read 'The

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Recollections of a Private', by a Northern soldier named Wilkinson, who was in the "Army of the Potomac" during Grant's campaign from the Rapidan to Petersburg, and describes, in a most entertaining and thrilling way, his experiences in that army. Without intending it at all, I believe, and only telling in his own style, the way in which that army was organized, controlled, and fought, his recitals are a panegyric on the Army of Northern Virginia and the glorious leaders of that army.

The London Index has this to say of our army and our people:

"Let it be remarked, that while other nations have written their own histories, the brief history of this army, so full of imperishable glory, has been written for them by their enemies, or at least by luke-warm neutrals. Above all, has the Confederate nation distinguished itself from its adversaries by modesty and truth, those noblest ornaments of human nature. A heart-felt, unostentatious piety has been the source whence this army and people have drawn their inspiration of duty, of honor and of consolation."

The Marquis of Lothian, from whom I have already quoted, said:

"There are few stories that history or tradition has handed down of valor and generosity which may not find something of a counterpart in the annals of this war. Parents sending forth their children, one after another, to die in the service of their country, without a murmur; delicate ladies leaving home to wait upon their countrymen in hospitals; stripping their homes of everything that could by any possibility promote the comfort of the troops, and working their fingers to the bone to making clothing for them;" * * * "individuals raising regiments at their own expense, and then serving in them as privates; school-boys and collegians forming themselves into companies, and volunteering for service; common soldiers in regiments giving up their pay in order to procure what was required for the sick and wounded." * * * "In their daring, as

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well as in their self-sacrifice, things are constantly done which in most countries would be made the theme for endless vaunting, but with them are passed over as matter of course, and as almost too common to be specially noticed."

Many such just and generous opinions might be quoted from like sources; but again I must forbear. You will observe that, as I was content to rest the justice of our cause on what our enemies and foreigners had to say of it, so I have been content to rest the conduct of our people, and of our armies, upon the testimony of the same witnesses, and on these alone. Let us leave the praise that ever waits on noble deeds to be fashioned

"By some yet unmoulded tongue
Far on in summer's that we shall not see."

During his first campaign in Italy Napoleon, in writing of his soldiers, uses this language, which to my mind strikingly describes the soldiers which composed our Southern armies. He says:

"They jest with danger and laugh at death; and if anything can equal their intrepidity it is the gaiety with which, singing alternately songs of love and patriotism, they accomplish the most severe forced marches. When they arrive in their bivouac it is not to take their repose, as might be expected, but to tell each his story of the battle of the day and produce his plan for that of to-morrow; and many of them think with great correctness on military subjects. The other day I was inspecting a demibrigade, and as it filed past me, a common Chasseur approached my horse and said, 'General, you ought to do so and so.' 'Hold your peace, you rogue,' I replied. He disappeared immediately, nor have I since been able to find him out. But the manoeuvre which he recommended was the very same which I had privately resolved to carry into execution."

And so I heard a distinguished Confederate soldier say that a private in the Army of Northern Virginia, sitting on the side of the mountain, outlined to him one evening the whole plan of the battle

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which was executed by the commanding general on the following day.

One by one the soldiers of the Confederate armies are passing into history. Whilst they go, not like those of the 10th Legion or the Phalanx, the representatives of victorious warfare; yet they will go as the defenders of a cause, which not only unprejudiced foreigners, but many of their former enemies, both during and since the conflict, have pronounced just and right; as soldiers who did' their duty and whose defence of that cause was such as to challenge the admiration of the world. I thank God that there is not linked with the names of these men, the crimes of vandalism, which so often brought forth the "widow's wail and the orphan's cry," and which so marked the desolated track of those against whom they fought.

I thank God too, that no pension scandal has ever linked its corrupt and corrupting touch to the name of the Confederate soldier; that his support is not a menace to the public treasury, but that he has "hoed his own row" and so lived as to command the respect of the world, and not by the help of the tax-gatherer, and amid the sneers and contempt of a long suffering and grateful people.

Whilst the cause for which they fought is a "lost cause" in the sense that they failed to establish a separate government within certain geographical limits, yet it is only lost in that sense. The principles of that cause yet live, and the deeds done by its defenders were not done in vain.

No my friends,
"Freedom's battle once begun
Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft is ever won."

And now, my comrades, I must stop to say one word for myself and for you, about the true and noble people of this battle-scarred, but still beautiful old county of Culpeper, in which it is our privilege

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to meet, and to greet one another on this interesting occasion. The record of this glorious people, won in the war of the Revolution, was completely eclipsed by that made by them in the Confederate war, and whilst "Cedar Mountain," "Brandy Station," and a hundred other fields will ever attest the heroism and devotion of the Confederate soldier, there is not a home or hamlet here that could not tell its story of the heroism, hospitality and devotion of her Confederate men and women.

It is with a sense of peculiar pride and pleasure then that we meet here to-night, not only with some of the survivors of those who stood shoulder to shoulder on those bloody fields, but with those men and women, and the descendants of those, who amidst the glare of their burning homes, and the threats and tortures of a ruthless and relentless foe, remained unwavering and unconquerable, and who are still true to principle and to right. Yes, my old comrades, we stand upon historic ground to-night. The rocky defiles of these mountains have echoed and re-echoed the thunders of artillery and the rattle of musketry amidst the ringing commands of Lee and Jackson, and the flashing, knightly sabres of Ashby, Stuart and Hampton. Here banner and plume have waved in the mountain breeze, whilst helmet and blade and bayonet were glittering in the morning sun; and here too, ah, shame to tell, history will record many a thrilling tale of outrage inflicted upon this defenceless people by the mercenary hordes of the North, permitted and encouraged by the remorseless cruelty and unquenchable ambition of some of their leaders. Just think of the almost infinite distance between the places these leaders will occupy in history, and those already occupied by those immortal and incomparable commanders, who sleep side by side at Lexington, and whose fame will grow brighter and brighter as the years roll by. As the conquerors of Hannibal, of Cæsar, and Napoleon have been almost forgotten amid the effulgence which will forever cling to the names

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of these illustrious, though vanquished leaders, so in the ages to come, the fame of Lee, of Jackson, the Johnstons, Stuart, Ashby and others will outshine that of Grant, Sheridan and Sherman "like the Sun 'mid Moon and Stars."

In the few hours that I could spare from the cares and engagements of a busy life, I have thought it worth the while to gather up the fragments of testimony which I have given you to-day as to the justice of our cause, and the conduct of the defenders of that cause, not by way of presenting to you any arguments of mine on these all-important themes; but to show you some of the acts and confessions of our quondam enemies themselves, and of distinguished foreigners. These constitute the highest and the best evidence which the law recognizes for the establishment of the truth of any fact. And I want you, and the young people here especially, to think on these things. Yes, my young friends, this cause, which is thus, as I think, established to be right, is the one for which a third of a century ago, your fathers fought, and your mothers worked and wept, and prayed. They thought they were right then, they know they were right now.

And I want to say, in conclusion, that to think and feel, as we think and feel about the **Confederate cause, does not mean that we are disloyal citizens of our now united and common country. But on the contrary, it is just in proportion as we are true and loyal to the cause of the South, that we will be true and faithful citizens of our country to-day; because the principles for which the Confederate soldier fought, are the only ones, as I have already said, on which constitutional liberty can ever rest in this, or any other country.** Yes, my comrades and friends, be ye sure that

"The graves of our dead with the grass overgrown
Will yet form the footstool of liberty's throne,
And each single wreck in the war path of might

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Shall yet be a rock in the temple of right."

And I therefore repeat the statement: **The men who died for the Confederate cause, have not died in vain.**

No,--

"They never fail who die

In a great cause. The block may soak their gore;

Their heads may sodden in the sun; their limbs

Be strung to city gates and castle walls;

But still their spirits walk abroad. Though years

EIapse, and others share as dark a doom,

They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts

Which overpower all others and conduct

The world at last to freedom."

Source: Southern Historical Society Papers. Vol. XXVI. Richmond, Va., January - December. 1898.