

DECORATION DAY.

The Proceedings of Yesterday's Celebration—Speech of J. C. Bonnell at the Cemetery.

The procession formed on Main street at 2 o'clock, and marched to Oak Hill Cemetery, where the programme was carried out without a single failure.

The ceremonies were beautiful and impressive.

F. A. Bates, Post-Commander, made the following address:

COMRADES: Once more we are called upon to strew flowers over the graves of our comrades. It is a pleasant duty we have, that we may show to the people, that our comrades are gone but not forgotten.

It is a day observed all over our land, in every city, town and hamlet where there is a comrade of our land to rest. Each year finds many more little mounds to be strewn with flowers all over our broad land.

Comrades, it is but a few years hence when the last one will have answered the final call. Let us, by our deeds and actions, leave such a remembrance in the minds of our sons and daughters and have them instill in the minds of the coming generations and impress on their minds the many trials and sacrifices made by all who helped to save our nation and made it possible for them to live in one grand union of the United States, and that we gave them the old flag back in all its glory, not one star missing.

Let us teach to all the rising generation, loyalty and reverence for the stars and stripes, their flag of their nation. With loyalty instilled in their minds, we can go and leave them, with no fear for all time to come.

Let each one teach their children to reverence all union soldiers and have a special care for the widows and orphans. No child can have a prouder heritage left than when they can say his or her father, or grandfather was a soldier in the union army; and he helped to save our nation and left us as an heritage a land of freedom, with every star on our flag and all men free and equal.

From year to year we go forth to strew flowers and by example let us hope for all time to come that this our beautiful custom, inaugurated by the G. A. R., may continue and as our country shall prosper and grow, that the coming generation will keep this day sacred; not only strew our graves with flowers but each of their loved ones that may hereafter be laid to rest.

Let us with fraternity strive to do our part on with another. Let each one with charity assist the needy, for our time is short that is left for us to do our work. Comrades let it be well done.

The first in order was a song by the choir, entitled, "Today this hallowed place we seek." Rev. Buckner then led in prayer; next "Hail Columbia," was played by the G. A. R. band; following this, the Women's Relief Corps and Sons of Veterans, decorated with choicest flowers, decorated the graves of the patriotic dead.

After the ritualistic ceremonies the choir sang the song entitled, "Cover them over." Post-Commander, F. A. Bates, introduced John C. Bonnell, of Omaha, as orator of the day, who delivered a real gem in the way of an oration; and it is so completely appropriate, and full of good things, that the HERALD cannot refrain from publishing it.

MR. PRESIDENT—Anniversaries are as old as time and as fixed as the everlasting hills. In the history of the individual, joyful tidings proclaim the birth, and yearly the event is celebrated. Later in life the next most important event (marriage) establishes a mile post that ever and anon is commemorated, increasing in interest and value as the years go by.

The amnesty marks with a red letter its charter day and the state its admission into the Union. Nations too, our own most prominent, declares its independence, unfurls its flag and annually hearts in the grown up citizen as in the small boy, swell up with enthusiasm so great that fire-crackers, gunpowder and bands of music are brought into requisition to help celebrate this grand anniversary.

a thousand years, and enemy and friend alike are reaping the benefit of this now peaceful and grandest nation on the globe.

Let us today turn backward near 30 years (a full generation) and in a concise way scan happenings and results. In April 1861 the message by lightning speed went flashing across the continent, "Our flag is fired on and by our own kin." Then did it take nerve mingled with prayer to decide aright as to action but in our noble leader, Lincoln, both these grand traits were embodied and he said the flag cannot fall by foreign hands and it must not fall by the assault of traitors and he called for men to defend that flag with their lives.

And what a war, all others in our history fade in insignificance, compared with this. The revolutionary war cost \$140,000,000, engaged about 200,000 men and fought 58 battles. The war of 1812 cost \$100,000,000, engaged less than 400,000 men and fought 87 battles. The Mexican war cost \$100,000,000, engaged but 100,000 men and fought but 20 battles. The war of the rebellion cost over \$600,000,000, engaged near 3,000,000 men and fought over 2,000 battles.

Then glance at the casualties on the Union side. Over 100,000 killed, mortally wounded in battle, 250,000 died of disease or accident, and more than 30,000 were crowded and starved to death in rebel prisons. This makes a total loss of life of near 400,000 and 300,000 more were by minnie ball and shell maimed and crippled for life.

This memorial day instituted and officially promulgated by that grand volunteer soldier, John A. Logan in general orders when commander in chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, is increasing in interest. This is right and we begin to look upon it as a sort of national thermometer indicating the degree of patriotic love and respect felt for those who unhesitatingly placed their bodies between our stricken government and bustling shot and glistening steel of armed treason.

And this my friends was a greater test than ever before come to citizens of any republic. Think of it, why there is no question as to duty in repelling invasion by foreign foe, fight raiding Indians or quell the uprising anarchist, but it took a far greater test of character and devotion to the flag to say to a brother "thus far and no further."

These loyal patriots said plainer than words can express it, you may kill me, you may destroy all my personal hopes success or happiness in life but hurt not this sacred fabric of human liberty. My life shall stand between traitors and this republic of the fathers, that it may not die. This jewel of the century, must be handed down unimpaired to generations yet unborn. We are ready to perish that principles of self government and personal liberty instituted by the fathers shall not perish from the earth, and when Jackson said "the Union must and shall be preserved" and thus unmistakably did our honored dead evince their love of country. They loved much and gave their all for the objects of their afflictions.

Think of their deeds of daring upon battle fields, their sufferings in camp and march, and the horrible deaths in pent up noisome prison pens, which nothing less than demoniac genius could have devised, and maintained, that actually murdered these loyal men by the thousands.

Oh, Americans, living in these grand times of peace and good will, protected by the flag these heroes saved to you, it is impossible to draw aside the curtain of history and let you see all the heroes. Think now, surrounded as you are by friends and family, prosperous and in happy homes. Think of staying one day in such a place. Think of dying there with conviction of right and love for the flag. When life liberty and God's pure air was offered you if you would traitor to that flag. Would you have accepted such costly freedom, or would you as the thousands of boys in blue did rather than thus ignobly surrender.

Died by fatigue, died on battle field with face to the foe, died for freedom, died for right, died for God and country, died for you and me. Surely I say that in the accomplishments of a nations rescue from the assassins knife, their nobility and sublime death entitled them to the grandest words of praise we can give them.

"Do this in remembrance of me" divinely spoken made a memorial ever-lasting and all important. "Do this in memory of those who gave their lives for their country" penned by our own loved Logan, has created a memorial that we hope and pray will go on to the end of time, and as we bend over the passionless mounds of these heroes, may thoughts of the price they paid for our liberty, give to us an enhanced value of that liberty.

And now with country saved, let us look at it in all its grandeur and wealth, in all its wide domain of hill and dale, river and farm, manufactory and mine, untouched millions of acres of timber and untamed millions of acres of sod. Contrast our national condition for a generation of years. 1862 spending money by the millions,

1890 finance so reconstructed that all the stock gamblers of wall street cannot induce a panic; 1862, thirty-five millions of people; 1890 double that amount; 1862 five weeks in journeying from Pacific to Atlantic coast; 1890 the journey takes but that many days. Look at the long line of churches, schoolhouses, and millions of happy homes covering our land.

The great national debt so decreased that it is of mere pin money importance to that nation, and our surplus the only trouble—to some. Surplus, did we say? There is rightly no surplus as long as there is one ex-volunteer soldier or family of one who wants for bread or clothing or whose children want for schooling. But for volunteers donning the blue, and assuming its dangerous responsibilities, there would have been no surplus. All we have today is the result of their fidelity. If they had failed we would have had twenty years of anarchy and the mass of the people beggars. It makes my blood boil to see an ex-volunteer beg the privilege of sorting or carrying the mails, and be refused because some pet wanted the job. If these soldiers had not stood for our flag and wiped out rebellion, our letters would probably be written in blood, and the arch traitor satan, for ought I know, carrying the mails.

One hour in the hornet's nest, one day in the built mixed fire and smoke of the wilderness; one week in the trenches at Vicksburg, rightly earned for every man there, fifty years of exemption from work if he chooses to ask it. It has been asked over and over again, why ex-soldiers do not find proper employment. The answer is brief and simple. In the formation period of their lives (and remember that the average enlistment age of volunteers are but 22 years) they left their books, apprenticeships, farms and trades, and attended a difficult school—of camp and battlefield—and when they wanted a million strong men, their places were filled by still younger men; and when those who survived the conflict there was in thousands of instances nothing further to do. Many of them would be glad to be a door keeper in a palace they helped to save, but are denied the privilege.

Civil service to the dogs when it stands between the saviours of the nation and their rights. A reasonably intelligent ex-volunteer, should be preferred for government employ to a man who can write and talk in six languages if he could and did not enlist in the war. Every office in the gift of the government should be given to the government defenders who seek it, if competent and worthy until the roster is exhausted.

Right here I desire to say a word or two on pensions: This government cannot in honor allow any man who donned the blue, and received an honorable discharge, want the necessities of life, and yet instances are many where the poor house, shabby clothes, and scantily feeds as paupers, men who came to the nations rescue when she was weak and could not care for herself, and now the strong government does not rescue them when they are helpless. Shame! Shame! I say on those who are responsible for this state of affairs.

Did you ever think of the money saved because of the American citizen soldier? His citizenship made him at once a soldier when the exigency arose. It is unfair to compare pensions in free America with any foreign power. Think of the millions upon millions spent in preparation of soldiers in the German and French armies, and the great expense of maintaining the standing armies there. The volunteer fed and clothed himself with no expense to the government until April 9th 1861, and the next morning he was a soldier and a good one at that. And when we put off the blue uniform and put on the citizen's suit, we went back to work to pay off the National debt and make America the noblest country of the world. Therefore, if millions are used to support the needy soldier, now what harm is it? The Government could and should pay every dependent soldier one dollar a day over the present disabled pension schedule, and that would be a mere pittance to the expense of keeping a standing army of a million which would have to be done if we were not a nation of citizen soldiers.

Some argue that the great expense incurred in pensioning all dependent ones would be more than is warranted. We cannot for a moment agree with this, when millions are spent without just reason for it. The \$10,000,000 annually given to support the Indians is radically wrong in principle and practice. Perhaps you will say it is in payment for lands; bosh on such theory! Nomads cannot in justice acquire title to the land. The Divine charter reads "be fruitful, multiply, replant the earth and subdue it." Has the Indian done this? Can bands of savages in war paint by riding across country and killing peaceable settlers and defenseless women and children, acquire title to land an empire in extent? It is the merest nonsense to suppose they can; perhaps you argue it is cheaper to do this, than to

fight them. But is this a sound policy for a great nation like ours? It would have been cheaper to have purchased all the slaves of the south than to have fought the rebellion to a finish. If soldiers who saved this nation get a pittance from this government they must prove many things as to soundness when they went in, and unsoundness when they came out, and that the disability has been continuous, or they will never receive a cent. Widows, parents and dependent children of the ex-volunteer are not cared for as the lazy Indian, for brother Lo with his tomahawk and his string of white scalps, has a passport to Washington, and dips his dirty hands adroitly into the nation's purse. No; this \$10,000,000 annually should go to the deserving soldiers who would rather strave than beg, or press their necessities upon us. Why any longer support the blood-thirsty savage and tax white people to pay it. It is well enough to grant them lands in severalty, start them in farming, help them in schooling, but this done Uncle Sam should say, now Brother Lo, dig or die.

There is one bright page, however, in all the sombre manuscript of life, and that is the reverence accorded by the multiplied millions to the union soldier and if republics are ungrateful the mass of people are not. Passing hurriedly at the corner of Clark and Adams streets in Chicago the other day my attention was called to an approaching procession, and more particularly because the shrill notes of the fife was giving forth the holy air, "Nearer My God To Thee." I paused as did thousands, attracted by the instrument and the air, and saw file past the funeral procession of a veteran. It was composed of his immediate associates in the post office department and also his former comrades in arms. A young man in that patient and reverent crowd said it was something new in music to hear that air played on a fife. An elderly man with an empty sleeve answered, it was not new in the army; if you had been old enough to have accompanied us there, you would have heard much sweet music from the fife. This organ of the camp and the simplicity of the procession seemed to here in the densest part of the seething commercial cauldron, so move on the hearts of the crowd and impress them, that unconsciously they waited in reverence, many with hats uplited, and although the crowd had immediate egress in many directions still there they waited, almost spellbound for moments at the cortege had passed.

OUR AUXILIARY. And what shall be said in the few lines allotted for this grand organization, "The Woman's Relief Corps." This, Mr. President, is a subject on which I love to lose the scrutiny of a critic, in the reverence of a worshiper, and the gratitude of a child. In the great struggle there were bayonets, cannons, swords. But what made them effective? It was the loyal hearts and sturdy arms behind them; and who nerved those arms and stayed those hearts? The loyal women of America. With tearful eye she sent her son. With low-toned word he parts with wife, and with pallid lips the sister speaks good bye. These loyal hearts took hope for a pillow and slept beneath the shadow of the future. I call to mind an incident in the dark days of 1862. Our regiment was embarking at Keokuk, Ia, for the front. Amidst the throng a stalwart boy of twenty and his mother. He the only son and she a widow. Back and forth they pace the dock and when the "fall in" came they kissed goodbye and parted, he in a few months to fall at Prairie Grove and she in her home to all her life look on the vacant chair. Talk of sacrifices! All the wealth swallowed up in the war did not amount to as much in the sight of heaven, as the tribute of that honest loving mother's heart. I know the flag seemed dearer to him, when he saw what a sacrifice she had made for it.

So it is that woman demands our homage now, and we turn from the loud bagle notes and listen to the tender voice of those who prepared a generation of brave men, to walk through the seven times heated furnace of a civil war, and when the first gun at Sumtress walls was fired, and the mighty nation woke, then it was that woman's heart beat perfectly in cadence with the music of the union and her fair hands wrought the banner that gaily floated over the marching columns, and in their silken folds she wove her faith, her tears, her love, her fervent prayer.

The mother gave first one and then another son, and when the call for more men came, she gave the only one that was left. The wife gave up the husband of her love and spent her days in loneliness and work, the like of which was only made her duty because of the crises at hand.

Nerved by this great sacrificing example the soldier fought his way to peace, knowing it to be the only gate to his home. In childhoods joy they hailed the first of May with song and romping pleasure, and crowned their May day

Queen with flowers, while now as matrons they celebrate the last of May in remembrance of many a school mate dear who assisted in crowning that omen, but now sleeps in soldiers grave, and as they strew the nations offering they say

"The souls we loved are still alive
The names we loved are freedom's boast
Oh clasp these truths and ever strive
To realize what freedom costs."

Banded together to aid in dispensing charity to the families of the needy defenders of our country the Woman's Relief Corps, our own true sisters, numbering nearly a full 100,000 are our pride and our joy, and we realize, dear sisters that while your organization must increase, ours must decrease, and on you will be left at no distant day the duty of the Sons of Veterans, to strew the loving tributes of flowers. We, your brothers also realize that from whatever cause other eyes may grow dull and other hearts grow cold, your organization instituted for time will ever be the medium through which shall come such sentiments and promptings to action, that memorial day will ever be observed.

Comrades as we make our pilgrimage today let us not forget the graves of loyal women and with uncle John say:
These are not all, here by the wall
Is the grave of one who died in the war
Though her body hadn't a wound or a scar
Her hope and her heart was broken where
With a mass of men her lover fell
In a pool of gore while the flag he bore
Her life and her love together died
When he was dead.
Any violets left yet boys? then let 'em fall
Here by the wall.
Put roses here, this grave is dear:
She was my sister, the truest heart,
And always ready to do her part:
Gave up her son when the first gun
Thundered at Sumtress she had but one.
And she died when with stronger men
He starved to death in prison pen:
And when the news came her life went out
She loved red roses when we were small
Here let them fall close by the wall
We honor the soldiers but they aren't all.

Thus let us remember the loyal women who were a prominent factor, in the work of preserving the union, and if they did not fall on battle field, were none the less patriots and sacrificed much for the maintenance of our now United nation.

SONS OF VETERANS. The term veteran indicates one who is experienced in any art or calling, but most particularly in war. At the close therefore of the fearful struggle of 1861 to 1865 the title of veteran fell upon all who had shouldered a musket or drawn a sword for our national existence. Fraternal feeling exists among large bodies of men, who are from circumstances one in vocation and if forsooth, that be a hazardous one, more closely are they bound by this unseen but still existing fact.

The Grand Army had its conception in this fraternal feeling, and as time passed on the members often said, who is better fitted to receive our falling mantle than our sons. And so with this prompt ing Maj. A. P. Davis organized the Sons of Veterans. He was born in New England and was a lineal descendant of a family of revolutionary and war of 1812 fame. He enlisted and served as private from Maine and by successive promotions gained the rank of major. The organization began in western Pennsylvania, and was for years a local one. Still it grows in numbers and importance until 1881 it crystallized and assumed its present organization and was soon officially endorsed by the Grand Army of the Republic. Its cardinal principles are a firm belief in Almighty God and the pledge of time allegiance to the government of the United States. Among other grand objects we find this "To perpetuate the memory of the heroic dead by the proper observance of memorial day."

We should therefore, comrades be glad to aid this organization as best we can, encourage them by our presence in their camps, and welcome them today in this solemn memorial, knowing they will in a few years with the W. R. C. be the leading element for the proper observance of this important day.

The number of veterans will soon be but few, who protected our banner, the red white and blue, but the sons of those heroes have, fallen into line, to keep green their memory, till the wind up of time.

OUR FLAG. It is with pleasure we note the grand custom of carrying at the top of flag staff of school houses in our land, our starry banner. Very rightly should this be universal all over our union, and the rising generations taught to love and revere it. Take it into your district schools into the high schools of your city and into all your great institutions where children are gathered and may it be one of the familiar ornaments in every American home. Stocks or bonds, stately houses or lands, mill or field, is not our country. It is the flag and party ends and for. Under this flag what a grand patriotism begins. The star spangled banner is our anthem and on whatever sea you may be the flutter of that emblem is the inspiration for a shout and patriotic feeling. Quarrel we may over politics, but let us be taught to die for the flag. Again, there is only room in this country for but one flag, and although our country is large, it is not large enough for two. I gladly note the fact that a bill is now in congress, prohibiting the erection in our Union, monuments "To the Lost Cause," and the display of the stars and bars, anywhere on any occasion. This is right, and they can't pass that bill and seek for the good of the Union.

It does seem odd that self respecting southerners should care to raise that flag or walk behind it, and that the sober second thought of these people would be to have nothing more to do with it. There can no good come from displaying it, and only opens afresh the bloody

chasm. Any attempt to reestablish or flaunt it is unpatriotic, uncourteous and unmanly, when we remember the Christian courtesy and mainly forbearance extended those who surrendered it in 1865. Old glory our grand stars and stripes, whipped the other one out of sight and there it should stay.

Loyalty to the flag can be and should be learned by every man who comes to this country to make it his home, and he ought to love the old world behind him and in every way build up and foster within his heart and his children, a love for the new land.

These persons have the material for good citizens, but are not yet patriotic. They must be made patriotic and given a helping hand.

All public observances which are national should be encouraged, and all that are imported should be frowned upon.

The green flag of Ireland floating over the city hall of New York City on St. Patrick's day is to put it mildly, a setback on patriotism.

So let us loyal Americans set such an example of our love for the grandest flag that floats, that they by emulating that example may be made better citizens. An incident in the war shows how loyally the boys in blue held to our standard, and in song and shout gained many a victory following its bright stars. The sixth day had closed of the seven days fight in the wilderness, and the armies rested, almost without speaking, in vain, awaiting the day that decided union victory. The boys in blue were singing and the boys in grey, listening. Finally a confederate said "just listen, we've whipped those yankees every day for six days, and now they are saying 'yes, we'll rally around the flag boys, rally once again.'"

Oh yes it was this that aided in making the next day a victory for the union. The poet has rightly said.

Columbia now take thy stand in every school-house in the land
As to our eager youth unfold, the story of
Those days of old.
When men gathered at thy call, to struggle
Toe'd in death to fall!

And now my comrades, what shall I say to you to cheer your pathway and incite you to a higher, nobler life? Let us all help the needy who responded to a call of the country with true loyal hearts. They are now poor but still loyal. Is the country as loyal to them as they were to the country twenty-nine years ago? I fear not. Are we comrades as loyal to the broken down soldiers as we should be—who is trying to gain a living for himself and family by running a pennant stand or some other little business? Do comrades patronize comrades as they should, or do we pass them by and spend our money elsewhere? Let us attend to these little things in a loyal manner, and thereby cheer the heart of many a poor soldier. Let us assist in securing employment for those returned soldiers of the union who have vainly sought for it themselves, and whose very tattered uniforms seems a denier in the eyes of those who never dared to clothe themselves in it. Our organization can draw its membership from one generation only and then slowly pass away, but all should remember that it presents greater attractions, and confers greater honors than any other organization, because its foundation was laid on an accomplished work, that contemplated the salvation of the Republic, and proved that our nation could rely on the galaxy and patriotism of its people pass into and out of the mysterious vortex of civil war, and not fall into anarchy on the one hand or despotism on the other. We often hear it intoned that camp life and war units us for a peaceful one. The war was an incident in our lives, and our duties as citizens made us at once soldiers, and I do not think we can be worse citizens for having been good soldiers. On the contrary I believe that ex-volunteers make better citizens. They not only had the cultivation of individual qualities of mind during the service, but having passed through the valley and shadow of death in war, are enabled to see more clearly the mountain tops of peace beyond.

In our charity to our southern brothers let us remember that true charity never calls upon one to blot out the destruction brought from right and wrong. There is one everlasting, irreconcilable difference between the spirit of a man who tries to destroy his country and one who lays down his life in its defense. Our dead are honorably identified with the noblest cause that ever elicited the sympathies of mankind and wherever our history shall be read there shall that which these men have done be told of them.

The good soldier cherishes and preserves that he fought for, and we of the blue as well as all loyal citizens may be called to defend American institutions and stand again at risk of life, for the maintenance of American freedom and laws. Let us reverently today perform our duty to fallen comrades, stand by our colors and be willing at all hazards of favor or fame, to defend our organization as the great standard bearer of our nations loyalty. Let us, by our manliness, win the favor of all good citizens, and prove by our daily lives that we worthily bear upon our breasts the badge of the Grand Army of the Republic.

Bring flowers, bring flowers, the sweetest and best.
To garland the mounds where our brave comrades rest.
Bring banners for thought unforgotten are they
Bring laurel for glory they won in the fray.
Bring flags for youth may tell us their prime,
Bring oak woods for liberty, lodge our sublime.
Bring chrysanthemums white for the truth they
upheld.
Bring lilacs for peace, they battle no more,
Bring violets, myrtle, and roses for love,
Bring snowballs for thoughts of the Heaven
above.
Bring hawthorn for hope which surmounts
every strife.
Bring amaranth bloom, for immortal life.

After song by choir, and benediction was pronounced, came the general decoration of graves, when the G. A. R. Post marched back to headquarters in G. A. R. Hall where awaited them a bountiful lunch prepared by the Woman's Relief Corps.

In all these exercises one can not but observe the importance of these two aux-

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