

PASSING OF THE G. A. R.

Will the New Volunteers Swell the Veteran Ranks?

GREAT IN WAR AND IN PEACE.

The Grand Army's Military Society Without Peer or Parallel - Brief History of the Origin of the Order - Major B. F. Stephenson and His Coworkers - The Idea of a Society of Union Veterans Was Born in the Midst of a War - Other Associations Gave Way Before It, and It Became a Great National Order - It is an Exclusive Body by the Terms of Its Constitution - Its Labors Have Been Wholly Charitable and Beneficial and For the Good of Union Veterans - As No Provision Has Been Made For Perpetuating the Order It Will Cease to Exist With the Last Union Veteran.

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The "boys in blue" who celebrate the thirty-second anniversary of the founding of the G. A. R. at Cincinnati the first week in September would need to discard many of the cherished features of their time honored order before admitting to membership the veterans of the Spanish war. The watchwords adopted in 1866 were fraternity, charity, loyalty. They stand for virtues appealing especially to old soldiers then and still appealing strongly to their reverence. Constitutional restrictions might be swept away, but traditions are not easily blotted out.

There is not now, there never has been in the history of nations and of war, another such body as the Grand Army of the Republic. A peculiar, a thrilling, a vital, domestic crisis called it into being. How can its mantle fall upon men whose souls never have been stirred by like impulses and emotions with those who conceived and founded an institution wholly unique in the annals of time?

Besides, the Grand Army of the Republic is as exclusive in its way as the Society of the Cincinnati, the Loyal Legion or the Sons of the Revolution. True, it stands on a broader basis in some important respects, but there is a limit to eligibility fixed by its very nature. Its membership is restricted to honorably discharged soldiers and sailors who were mustered into the United States forces between April, 1861, and April, 1865. There are numerous reasons why the idea which inspired the veteran to form this order in 1866 cannot extend to veterans who have grown up since the war. There was need for fraternal unity and action in the years immediately following the war, when the character of the G. A. R. as it now exists was developed. There was need, and great need, of unswerving fidelity to the national idea, then something almost new. There was dire need of a great work of charity among the distressed survivors of the nation's defenders, their dependents and orphans. The veterans of the G. A. R. inculcated through years of toil the high ideal of patriotic duty which has borne fruit in the army of today. Those planted and watered, these enjoy the harvest. There is a kinship, but not an affinity. The Grand Army stands alone, has always stood alone, and alone it must stand until it passes out by crossing to the eternal camping grounds, where all who have fought under the flag of the republic shall be one in the sight of the great Commander.

The argument which defeated the purpose of uniting the sons of veterans into full membership with the G. A. R. was that it would be wrong to share the glory attaching to the veterans of 1861-5 with those who had no part whatever in winning that glory. It is like scattering a patrimony outside the circle of kin morally entitled to share its benefits. The mantle of the army of the republic descended to the surviving veterans. May it pass to other shoulders? The age of wonders has not ceased. America may yet put into the field an army destined to be greater in achievement, in nobility, in moral grandeur, than the host of 1861, but it can never muster its counterpart, born in a like crisis, tried in like emergencies, tempered in the same terrible fire.

Again, while it is too early to classify the fighting of this war it must be stated that it will have to exceed in severity that of all other wars in the nineteenth century in order that the boys of today shall come out with battle records worthy to be inscribed beside those of the graybeards now looking on. It proved a heroic task these veterans went about in the days when their hearts were light with the flow of fresh young blood—campaigns the severest known to modern warfare, battles the bloodiest and most desperate of the century, hardships which all the gold that was ever mined couldn't tempt men to endure, not even in this age of boasted physical hardihood.

- Take the era beginning with Napoleon's renowned exploits and ending with the Franco-Prussian war. There were 14 notable battles in this period where the loss exceeded 10 per cent of the total number present on the field:
1. Eylau, 1807, Prussians and French, loss 26 per cent.
2. Stone River (Murfreesboro), 1862, loss 23 1/2 per cent.
3. Marengo, 1800, Austrians and French, loss 23 per cent.
4. Chickamauga, 1863, loss 21 per cent.
5. Antietam, 1862, loss 21 per cent.
6. Leipzig, 1813, allies and French, loss 21 per cent.
7. Gettysburg, 1863, loss 20 per cent.
8. Shiloh, 1862, loss 20 per cent.
9. Lundy's Lane, 1814, loss 19 per cent.
10. Mare-la-Tour, 1870, loss 18 per cent.
11. Waterloo, 1815, loss 14 per cent.
12. Worth, 1870, loss 14 per cent.

- 13. Solferino, 1859, French and Austrians, loss 12 per cent.
14. Sadowa, 1866, Prussians and Austrians, loss 12 per cent.
Of these battles Eylau, Marengo, Leipzig, Lundy's Lane and Waterloo were fought with smoothbore, flintlock muskets; Stone River, Chickamauga, Antietam, Gettysburg, Shiloh and Solferino with rifled barrels and percussion caps, and Worth and Mare-la-Tour with breechloaders. At Sadowa the Prussians had breechloaders.

If the figures for the losses at Eylau, Marengo and Leipzig could be given with the exactness that applies to the battles of the civil war, it is probable that the percentage of losses on those fields would be found less than I have estimated. The figures handed down doubtless include the prisoners or missing, thus swelling the loss.

In the numbers given for the civil war only the known killed and wounded are included in the account. To be exact, then, Stone River, Chickamauga, Antietam, Gettysburg and Shiloh should be considered the bloodiest battles of the century.

The Grand Army which appropriately lends its title to the veterans gathering at Cincinnati lost over 100,000 men in battle and over 250,000 by other forms of death in service. Its veteran organization claims to be a patriotic body of men, and if figures mean anything when set in due order it would not be extravagant to claim for it pre-eminence as an exponent and promulgator as well of national ideas. Its symbols and its ceremonies hold up the nation, the country, the Union, as the object of reverence and laudation. Aside from that it is a national order in the composition of its personnel and in the extent of its ramifications.

The volunteers went forth to the civil war by states, but as soon as they reached the field were massed into armies as United States soldiers, regiments of different states serving side by side in the various corps. The Grand Army knows no state lines in the regulation of its membership. Soldiers of every state are eligible to every post in any state. The test is whether a man served his country in 1861-5, no matter from whence he came.

So a grand encampment of the veterans is a patriotic celebration each year by hundreds of thousands of people who



MAJOR B. F. STEPHENSON, Founder of the G. A. R.

are and who represent the nation's defenders and who glorify the nation's triumphs and pray for her perpetuation.

It was a happy thought which gave birth to the Grand Army of the Republic. Chaplain William J. Rutledge and Major B. F. Stephenson of the Fourteenth Illinois, while sharing the fortunes of Sherman's army in 1864 conceived the idea of a soldiers' association to be organized after the war. They went further than others in the matter perhaps, but the feeling was common in the army that the ties of comradeship were too strong to be broken. Many were the plans laid for little reunions to talk over old times after the disbandment of the troops.

Soon after the war closed Major Stephenson submitted to some veterans a ritual for an organization. It was modeled somewhat after the most noted secret societies of the country. Conferences were held at Springfield, and in April, 1866, the first post of the Grand Army of the Republic was organized at Decatur. At that date there were numerous associations of veterans in the country, organized under the name of "union" or "league" or "association" or "brotherhood," but sooner or later these went over to the new order.

There was something about the plan of the new order to attract the mass of organized veterans. Possibly it was its declaration of principles, and maybe it was the breadth and depth of the sentiment displayed in its constitution and ritual. The declaration of principles and the first six articles of the original constitution read as follows:

"Section 1.—The soldiers and sailors of the volunteer forces of the United States, during the rebellion of 1861-5, actuated by the impulses and convictions of patriotism and of eternal right and combined in the strong bands of fellowship and of unity by the ties, the dangers and the victories of a long and vigorously waged war, feel themselves called upon to declare in definite form of words and in determined co-operative action those principles and rules which should guide the earnest patriot, the enlightened freeman and the Christian citizen in his course of action and to agree upon those plans and laws which should govern them in a united and systematic working method with which in some measure shall be effected the preservation of the grand results of the war, the fruits of their labor and toil, so as to benefit the deserving and the worthy.

"Sec. 2. The results which are designed to be accomplished by this organization are as follows:

- "First.—The preservation of those kind and fraternal feelings which have bound together with the strong cords of love and affection the comrades in arms of many battles, sieges and marches.
"Second.—To make those ties avail-

able in works and results of kindness, of favor and material aid to those in need of assistance.

"Third.—To make provision where it is not already done for the support, care and education of soldiers' and sailors' orphans and for the maintenance of the widows of deceased soldiers and sailors.

"Fourth.—For the protection and assistance of disabled soldiers and sailors whether disabled by wounds, sickness, old age or misfortune.

"Fifth.—For the establishment and defense of the rights of the late soldiers and sailors of the United States morally, socially and politically, with a view to inculcate a proper appreciation of their services to the country and to a recognition of such services and claims by the American people. But this association does not design to make nominations for office nor to use its influence as a secret organization for partisan purposes.

"Sixth.—The maintenance of true allegiance to the United States of America, based upon paramount respect for and fidelity to the national constitution and laws, manifested by discountenancing whatever may tend to weaken loyalty, incite to insurrection, treason or rebellion, or in any manner impair the efficiency and permanency of our free institutions, together with a defense of universal liberty, equal rights and justice to all men.

Three years after the adoption of this constitution the last clause of article 5 was strengthened by the addition of an article to the rules and regulations by which the order has since been governed, reading as follows:

"No officer or comrade of the Grand Army of the Republic shall in any manner use this organization for partisan purposes, and no discussion of partisan questions shall be permitted at any of its meetings, nor shall any nominations for political office be made."

In the rules and regulations adopted in 1869, and still in force, the objects of the order are stated in three paragraphs to the same purport as the six given above. The article bearing upon eligibility to membership has never been modified in the slightest. It is as follows:

"Soldiers and sailors of the United States army and marine corps, who served between April 12, 1861, and April 9, 1865, in the war for the suppression of the rebellion, and those having been honorably discharged therefrom after such service, and of such state regiments as were called into active service and were subject to the orders of United States general officers between the dates mentioned, shall be eligible to membership in the Grand Army of the Republic. No person shall be eligible who has at any time borne arms against the United States."

Many attempts have been made to break the force of this law, especially in so far as it shuts out Union soldiers who were impressed into the Confederate army for a time. All have failed, and so have all efforts to create an honorary membership.

In living up to the spirit of paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of the declaration of principles the G. A. R. has carried on a beneficent work as marvelous in its way as the battlefield record made in 1861-5. By a union of effort the order has secured state laws providing for the maintenance of indigent veterans either in state homes or by outdoor assistance, the burial of indigent veterans, and many laws favoring their employment in public service.

Aside from this every post is compelled to maintain a relief fund and hold sacred certain moneys for the relief of needy soldiers and sailors, their widows and orphans and dependents. The beneficent work of the order is not restricted to members, but is extended to all veterans. Millions of dollars have passed from the pockets of Grand Army men to the relief of their less fortunate comrades.

On the average the veterans are now passing the threescore mark. How long will they remain upon the stage in sufficient numbers to give spirit to ceremonies commemorating the civil war? In a decade and a half from now we shall be celebrating the centennial of victories at Landy's Lane, Lake Champlain and Baltimore, also that of Jackson over Pakenham at New Orleans, and about that time the semicentennial of the closing battles of the civil war. Is it a daring assumption to presume that there will then be living twice as many veterans as there were boys in blue on any of the battlefields of 1861-5?

There are still living about 1,000,000 survivors of the Union armies, and the mortality of the whole period since the civil war has been excessive, yet that does not argue against marshaling an army of them in 1915. An excessive mortality for the decade following the end of the war was natural, but for the past 20 years the death rate among veterans has been less than that of civilians of the same age. Soldiers were discharged on account of wounds and disease by the hundreds of thousands, and no doubt death claimed victims from their ranks within a few years at a rate three or four times greater than the average for civilians of the same age.

As has been stated, the death rate among veterans has fallen off, and the veterans of 60 has one chance in four of reaching 70 and of taking part in the double celebration of 1915, and each of the 300,000 or 300,000 alive at that date will have about one chance in five of reaching the age of 80 and one of the 40,000 or 50,000 then surviving.

Records of longevity among veterans of previous American wars sustain these calculations. In 1869, 86 years after the end of the Revolutionary war, a veteran who had served four years died at the age of 109. The last Revolutionary pensioner on the regular roll died in 1867 at the age of 101. Some time about 1945 to 1950 the G. A. R. survivor bearing the distinction of being the "last will pass to the eternal camp," grounds.

GEORGE L. KILMER.

BEWARE OF ALLIANCE

THE UNITED STATES AND THE CONCERT OF EUROPE.

The Sentiment of Fraternalism Fanned by the Poisonous Breath of Commercialism. No Greater Question Has Arisen in Modern History.

The leading article in The Arena for August is from the pen of the editor in chief, John Clark Ridpath, on the subject of an alliance or union between Great Britain and the United States. In his accustomed powerful style Dr. Ridpath shows why such alliance must not and cannot be made. The following short extract will indicate to the reader the tenor of The Arena article:

The journalism which prevails, out of which public information is drawn within the circle of each metropolis, is totally ignorant of conditions prevalent west of the Alleghany mountains. To this journalism the valley of the Mississippi is no more than the valley of the Congo. The metropolitan press is not infected with even the outlines of information relative to the progress of affairs in the great states of the American union. It is almost wholly concerned with foreign affairs and international contingencies. The mass of the municipal populations read nothing but their newspapers; they know nothing else, and the consequence is that the United States, the people of the United States, the institutions of the United States, the hopes and purposes of the people of the United States, are forgotten and cast away by the municipal powers. Commercialism, having no country of its own, purposely permits and encourages this baleful ignorance, and the result has been that as soon as the recent overture from Great Britain was made known a universal clamor arose for the acceptance of the delusive proffer. The American newspapers immediately broke out in a chorus of jubilation at the prospect of an international embrace, in the warmth of which commercialism might get an added coil and the financial despotism of the world be strengthened and confirmed. It is not a pleasing task in the midst of all this fraternalism, of all this "English speaking race" business, of this outburst and proclamation of an Anglo-American union for the civilization and rectification of the world on moral principles, to utter a note of warning against it or to contend with the rushing winds which have filled all the house where we are sitting. Nevertheless we shall do our duty in this great matter. It is of the utmost importance that we should. There has not been such a historical crisis in our country since the outbreak of our civil war. Perhaps there has not been such a crisis in any nation since the battle of Waterloo. The question is simply this, Whether the nationality of the United States, as that nationality has been defined by our Declaration of Independence, by our constitution, by the teachings of the fathers and by all our national history during the first three-quarters of the present century shall survive and be perpetuated and defended, or whether all this shall be surrendered in whole or in part by the entrance of the United States into an Anglo-American alliance first and the concert of Europe afterward. It is, as we said in our article many months ago, simply a question whether our country is to be and to remain American, as it has been in the past, or whether we are to abandon our history, lose our characteristics and become Europeanized.

That this no greater question has arisen in modern history. The solution of it the one way or the other will perhaps determine the course of civilization for centuries to come. If the United States of America shall continue in the course prescribed by the fathers of the republic and happily pursued into the present day, this nation must in the nature of the case be and become the conspicuous and singular example of political liberty and progress to all the other nations of the world. But if, on the other hand, the United States shall be wrested from the moorings and be carried over and reincorporated as a part and parcel of Europe then this nation might as well have never been. The distinctive principles and tendencies for which the American republic has stood and which it has so favorably exemplified for a century and a quarter might as well have never been known. For why should the human race be mocked and tantalized for 125 years with the appearance and prospect of emancipation only to be robbed of its hopes and sent back into that very past from which we escaped with so much hardship and expenditure of blood and treasure in the eighteenth century?

Telegraphs and Telephones in Japan. The telegraph system of Japan, which is controlled by the government, comprises 12,000 miles of land lines and 388 of submarine cables, besides the cable to Formosa, which is 800 miles in length. There are 1,122 telegraph offices in the kingdom, and the operators are mostly young men, except in the country, where girls are often employed. The extent of the telegraph business can be inferred from the fact that the number of messages sent in a year exceeds 22,250,000, while the traffic with foreign countries reaches 150,000 messages. The telephone business is growing very rapidly in Japan, but has been handicapped by inability to secure instruments, the demand far exceeding the supply. The instruments are owned and operated by the government. The first exchange was opened in 1890. In 1896 there were 240 miles of lines and 3,222 subscribers.

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HOW DEWEY WAS ABLE TO DO IT. Naval Exhibit at Omaha Which in a Measure Explains the Feat. Since the welcome news of Admiral Dewey's remarkable victory at Manila on the 1st day of May was published throughout the civilized world, it has been a matter for wonder everywhere, not less in the United States than in Europe, that the American gunners were able to destroy a Spanish squadron in a Spanish harbor without the loss of a single American life. When history repeated itself at Santiago two months later the wonder was intensified. In the Government building at the Trans-Mississippi exposition is an exhibit which in a measure explains the mystery. This is a naval range finder, the invention of a United States naval officer. Up to date no one outside of Uncle Sam's service has been able to discover how it is operated. The instrument is shown in a glass case with various other nautical paraphernalia, and of course the attendants refuse to answer questions as to its method of working. In showing us the enormous advantage derived from the use of this instrument one of the naval officers in charge of the exhibit says: "It is a fact that no other navy has any means of finding the range that does not involve a mathematical calculation. This implies a good deal of time lost, and in most cases they find it quicker to get the range by actual experiment. The Spaniards, for instance, have to fire several shots before they can get the range of one of Uncle Sam's ships. If their first shot falls short they try again and then they are apt to overshoot, and by that time the position of the vessels may have been altered and they are still at sea. Meanwhile the officer in the conning tower of the American ship has located them almost exactly with this instrument and reported the range by telephone to the various captains. This has only consumed a few seconds, and while the Spaniards are still trying to get their range the shells from the American guns are sweeping their decks. "The peculiar thing about the instrument," continued the officer, is that while it is one of the simplest things in the world to anyone who knows its secret, the most expert mechanic or inventor might examine it as long as he wanted to, and still be unable to discover how it works. This is why representatives of other navies have been completely baffled in their efforts to find it out. They have range finders of their own, but none that give the same instantaneous and accurate results. And as long as they can be kept in the dark we will be able to outshoot any nation on earth, even if there was no difference in the skill of the gunners. "There is another advantage in the use of the instrument which amounts to considerable in the course of half a dozen naval engagements. It costs \$1,360 to fire a pair of 13-inch guns once. If the Spaniards go into a fight they must fire at least two shots to secure the range. Frequently these do not answer, and they go on shooting \$680 charges in the air, while every pound of powder that goes into a United States gun is utilized. The ability of the American gunners to obtain the exact position of the enemy before a gun is fired saves thousands of dollars in ammunition in every engagement.

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