

audience and in all the land. For these were the men who had offered their lives to the end that this people might be free, and had made possible all the blessings which, under a republican form of government, they enjoyed—the blessings which under the providence of God will be enjoyed by the countless generations which follow them.

TOO LATE FOR DISCRIMINATION

Did Webster on that historic day in that hallowed place stop to draw a line of distinction between the old gray-haired veterans, who sat with streaming eyes looking into his face as there poured from his lips those eloquent words of tribute to their valor and sacrifice? There were before him men who had served throughout those seven dreadful years of war. Others there were who, too young for battle at the beginning, had joined the army only a year or perhaps a month before the end at Yorktown. Some had rendered service as scouts on the frontier without participating in important engagements. Doubtless some had been braver than others and had borne more willingly the burdens and dangers of battle. Was deference made to that? No, no; the war had ended 42 years before. It was too late for discrimination then. The time had long gone by for nice discriminations. Webster only saw—the people only recognized this body of survivors in the mass—rapidly diminishing, year by year, as death called, and, before it might be too late, all sought to do honor to all lest discrimination might work injustice to some.

Who was there on that historic occasion to sound a note of discord by protesting against the tribute of the great orator because it was paid to all of the survivors? Who, on that great occasion, had it in his heart to say, "No, Webster, you are mistaken. In the rapidly thinning ranks of these old gray-haired soldiers there are men who faltered in the hour of danger—men who served only months instead of years—men who do not deserve to be honored by this people." There was no such thought in any mind, and the harmony of the occasion was not marred by such utterance, and no old soldier who heard that great oration returned to his home that day heavy of heart because of any intimation that he was less deserving than his comrades who had served longer or even better.

Mr. President, the great war for the preservation of the union ended 47 years ago. The average age of the survivors of the army of the republic is five years greater than the average age of the revolutionary heroes who, at Bunker Hill in June, 1825, heard Webster deliver his immortal utterances.

Almost half a century has elapsed since the armies of Grant and Sherman marched down Pennsylvania avenue in Washington, passing in grand review before the dignitaries of the nation.

In those great armies on that day there was every grade of soldier—heroes of an hundred battles and striplings who had, for lack of opportunity, only participated in two or three or perhaps only one. In those ranks were men of sublime courage and others weakened by disease and privation, who did not possess great physical courage. Some had served from Bull Run to Appomattox and others whose service was shorter and of less value, but beneath every blue uniform there beat a patriotic heart, and each in his way and according to his opportunity had served his country and rendered some service in restoring the union and maintaining the honor of the old flag.

On that proud day of review, in May, 1865, the men of that army were in the vigor of young manhood, full of joy that their efforts for the union had been crowned with success—full of hope for the future of the republic for which they had sacrificed so much. Laying aside arms and uniform they returned to the peaceful walks of life and took upon themselves the duties of citizenship.

Forty-seven years have rolled by. Within that time hundreds of thousands of those brave men have answered their last roll call and have been called to their reward. Each day witnesses the final departure of many, and the ranks of the survivors are in this way being broken day by day. Those who remain are bowed beneath the weight of years, for nearly all have reached or passed man's allotted span of three score and ten.

A few years more and the grandest army the world ever saw will have disappeared, and the men who, at Gettysburg, and Antietam, and Chancellorsville, and Lookout, won imperishable glory for themselves and their country will live only in the memories of the younger

generations, who will in the years to come enjoy the blessings of a free government which these old men periled life to maintain.

Mr. President, these venerable soldiers of the union to whom we owe so much of our greatness and prosperity make no unreasonable demands, for they only demand that the plighted faith of the nation be kept and that they have just treatment.

In this age of luxury they demand no luxuries, nor do they ask to be indulged in any extravagant tastes. They only ask that out of our abundance they be allowed a sum which will provide humble homes, beds on which to rest and to die, raiment that will protect their aged bodies from the cold, and food sufficient to sustain them in their declining years.

Who will grudge these old veterans a dollar a day? Their days for earning money are past. The road to the grave is a short one.

And the men in or out of congress who go about with microscope peering into the individual records of the few, to discover a defect here and there—the men on the hunt for excuses to justify them in refusing justice to the great mass, will not command more attention than would a man at Bunker Hill who had tried to break the force of the great oration by reading records showing that a few of the old revolutionary soldiers before him were unworthy of the tribute which Webster had paid to all.

Sir, in the county in which I was born and reared there was a solitary grave near the roadside, said to have been that of a soldier of the revolution who had died in the early pioneer days of that county. I remember the veneration in which that grave was held by me and my youthful associates. The question as to whether he had served months or years, whether he had been the best soldier or the worst, never entered our minds. We only remembered that he had worn the uniform of the continental army and had contributed something to the cause of American liberty.

Mr. President, I grant freely that there was a time when discrimination would have been proper. During the years immediately following the conflict when the first pension legislation was being enacted for the benefit of the civil war veterans the pensions should have been graded according to the length and character of service, the extent of disability, and the pecuniary condition of the applicant. The incidents of the war were then fresh in the minds of all and little difficulty would have been experienced in ascertaining the true record of every soldier.

But after the lapse of a half century it is too late. We now can only deal with this rapidly disappearing army as a mass. We can only remember that they wore the uniform and that all did something for the preservation of this matchless governmental fabric. We only see the bent and tottering forms and realize that many of them are in distress, approaching their near-by graves with hearts made heavy by a nation's neglect. And then we recall the promises that were made in the hour of national stress and storm to induce them to leave their homes and peril their lives and sacrifice health to the end that the nation might not perish from the earth, not forgetting the pledge of the nation made by the immortal Lincoln in his second inaugural address, delivered a month before the fall of Richmond and five weeks before his tragic death, that we would "bind up the nation's wounds and care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and orphan."

Mr. President, let there be no more delay in caring for those who bore the battle, their widows and orphans. If we have not the desire as patriots to do so, let us as a Christian people have compassion upon them, because they need the nation's comforting aid.

THE PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE

Sir, I am opposed to the pending bill, known as the McCumber or Smoot substitute, because it does not meet the just demands of the union soldiers.

Under its provisions but a few thousands of the surviving veterans could ever receive a dollar a day, and it is so full of inequalities and unjust discrimination that it has received unstinted condemnation at the hands of the soldiers of the country. I desire to quote from Gen. Sherwood, chairman of the invalid pensions committee of the house of representatives, a gallant soldier, who enlisted as a private in April, 1861, participated in 42 battles, and mustered out as a brigadier general, having been promoted to that position by President Lincoln

for long and faithful service and conspicuous gallantry at the battles of Resaca, Franklin, and Nashville, a record which entitled his words to consideration. He says:

"First, let me call your attention to the fact that no soldier out of the 600,000 called out by President Lincoln in 1862 will ever be able to get the maximum pension of \$30 per month under the Smoot substitute should he live to be 100 years old. According to the official roster of the war office, 421,465 men were mustered into the service under Lincoln's call of July 2, 1862, for 300,000 men. Under the call of August 4, 1862, for 300,000 men 87,588 were furnished; 15,000 militia were called out in May and June, making a total of volunteers furnished in 1862 of 522,053. Of this number 421,465 were mustered into the service for three years—none of them so mustered in until August, 1862. The war closed in April, 1865. All of these regiments were mustered out before they had served three years. Hence, not a man of any of these veteran regiments that fought the greatest and fiercest battles of the bloodiest war in all history could ever get a dollar-a-day pension under the Smoot substitute bill should he live to be 100 years old. * * * I do not believe that over 9,000 soldiers out of the over 511,000 now living would be able to draw the maximum pension of \$30 per month under this substitute bill.

"Let me illustrate the Smoot substitute: It proposes to pension a 90-day man who is 75 years old at \$21 per month, while a veteran of 40 battles who enlisted in 1862 at the age of 16 years only gets \$15.50 per month, because he was mustered out a few months short of three years on account of the close of the war. The Smoot substitute pensions a 90-day man of 70 years at \$18 per month, while a 3-year veteran who served in 36 of the signal battles of the war and is now less than 66 years old and who has a service record at the front of 3½ years with a veteran reenlistment only gets \$18 per month.

"Let me further illustrate: Here is Samuel Barnhart, Forty-sixth Ohio, who enlisted in 1862, when 16 years old, for three years, and served in 20 battles, mustered out June 4, 1865.

"Here is another soldier, David Gillespie, One hundred and seventy-seventh Ohio, who enlisted for 100 days, in August, 1864, at the age of 28 years.

"Barnhart is now 65 years old, and under the Smoot substitute would draw a pension of \$15.50 per month, while Gillespie, the 100-day soldier, who is now 75 years old, would draw \$21 per month.

"Here is another specimen: George W. Davis was mustered in Company A, One hundred and thirty-first Ohio, a 100-day regiment, at the age of 27. James C. Reiber, same company, enlisted at 16 years. Davis is now 75 years old and under the Smoot substitute would receive \$21 per month, while Reiber, who is now 64, would get only \$13 per month. Both rendered the same service and touched elbows in the same company."

He also calls attention to the fact, which must not be overlooked, that the Smoot substitute has no disability clause, and that it contains no provision which will put a stop to the ever-increasing number of private pension bills of which so much complaint has been made upon the floor of the senate.

Mr. President, I favor House bill No. 1—the Sherwood bill—because it is the nearest approach to a dollar-a-day pension that is attainable and because it settles once and for all this much-mooted pension question.

The purpose of the bill is to determine automatically the status of every soldier in the country, and then we will have no need for a vast army of men in its execution.

Because the pending measure—the Smoot or McCumber substitute—is so full of glaring inequalities, it is satisfactory to but few, and allows the agitation for increase to continue without limit. It continues in operation all the expensive and complicated machinery of the pension office, including medical examining boards in every part of the country, while the Sherwood bill, which the great mass of the soldiers demand, working automatically, will dispense with the thousands of examining boards, the hundreds of special agents and spies now employed by the department, will stop all special pension legislation, and at the same time be a distinct and positive proof of the gratitude of the nation to its defenders.

It has been loosely asserted that the Sherwood bill will add \$75,000,000 to the expenses

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