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ADDRESS
OF
GENERAL ARCHIBALD BLAKELEY
AT THE REUNION OF THE
SOCIETY OF THE ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND

Louisville, Ky., October, 1901



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ANNUAL ADDRESS.

Mr. President and Comrades—Was the removal of SHERMAN from the command of our infant army right or wrong, wise or unwise?

Who killed Zollicoffer?

Did BUELL save GRANT from defeat at Pittsburgh Landing and Shiloh?

Was it the fault of BUELL that BRAGG turned his left on the Tennessee and precipitated the racing campaign of both armies to Kentucky in 1862?

Who commanded the troops in the action at Perryville thirty-nine years ago yesterday?

Was Perryville a victory or defeat for the Union arms?

Was the removal of BUELL from the command of our army right or wrong, wise or unwise?

Why was ROSECRANS' right turned upon his rear and center at Stone River?

Was any one blameworthy in the issuance or execution of the order "Close upon REYNOLDS and support him?"

Were ROSECRANS, MCCOOK and CRITTENDEN, or either of them, justified in leaving the battle-field at Chickamauga during the Sunday fight?

Was the battle of Chickamauga a victory or defeat for the Union arms?

Did GENERAL WILLIAM S. ROSECRANS or GENERAL WILLIAM F. SMITH select the location for the pontoon bridge across the Tennessee River at Brown's Ferry?

Was the removal of GENERAL ROSECRANS from the

command of the *Army of the Cumberland* right or wrong, wise or unwise?

In the battle of Lookout Mountain, what troops attained the highest position?

Did the *Army of the Cumberland* assault the heights of Missionary Ridge with or without orders, and who first reached the summit?

Who captured DeLong Place?

At the time of this charge, had BRAGG's center been weakened by the withdrawal of troops to resist SHERMAN on his right?

In the division of the troops between SHERMAN and THOMAS, after the Atlanta campaign, was THOMAS fairly or unfairly treated?

Who commanded the fighting line at Franklin?

When THOMAS was peremptorily ordered to move immediately on HOOD at Nashville, was he right or wrong in disobeying the order until he got his horses shod?

Was the general government or controlling military power inimical to our army or its leaders?

Were necessary re-inforcements or supplies at any time willfully withheld?

Was the assignment of THOMAS to the Department of the Pacific a reflection upon that great and glorious soldier?

These, and cognate questions, have been discussed *ad libitum* for over a third of a century, and in my judgment it is high time they were relegated to the realms of *res ad judicata*: except in so far as it may become necessary to refer to them in the consideration of what I conceive to be the paramount question for all survivors of the *Army of the Cumberland*, today, and for all other days hereafter, until our last, lone comrade totters into his grave!

This question is: "What will be the place of the *Army of the Cumberland* in the history of the great Rebellion, now commonly called the American Civil War?"

Will its place be major or minor?

Will it be first, second, third, fourth; or will it have any place at all in the story of that wonderful transaction?

My comrades, it is not enough that our army did its whole duty bravely and well, but we should see to it that its history shall pass down to all future generations, untarnished by falsehood and unminimized by the omission of the truth.

"*Suppressio veri* or *expressio falsi*" should not blacken its pages.

The remarks I propose to make to you today, are intended to apply to the paramount question aforesated.

It had been the night dream, the day dream and the fond hope of the disunionists that the dividing line between the North and South should be that of Mason and Dixon from the Delaware to the Ohio; the Ohio to the Mississippi; the Mississippi to the northeast corner of Missouri; the north line of Missouri; the west line of Missouri to Arkansas; the north line of Arkansas, thence westwardly including what is now New Mexico, Indian Territory, Oklahoma and Arizona, to the Mexican Border.

It was to this ideal line, impulsive disunionists rushed when first called to arms.

By the time hard knocks came to be given and taken, by the time great battles had to be fought, cooler heads, calmer judgments under skillful commanders, had retired their line to one extending from the lower Potomac and the Chesapeake Bay to the Mississippi River.

The Mississippi, with its broad expanse of water,

rugged bluffs, isolated islands and miry swamps, was the real left of the Confederate fighting line; accentuated by the Confederate Government placing upon that river under able commanders, an army, second only to that under LEE on their right flank.

True, there were lines extending west of the Mississippi on which battles were fought and much good work done subsidiary in the contest then submitted to the arbitrament of arms.

The line from the Potomac to the Mississippi was strong by nature and strengthened by the ready hands of willing workers.

Its salients bristled with all then known instruments for offensive and defensive war.

Into this line the Confederacy built its best brain, blood, and white muscle.

Back of it and westward, the Confederate Government had military and civic control of one million, ninety-five thousand, six hundred and thirty-two square miles of territory—a richer or more beautiful land could not be found under the sun.

Rivers ran from its towering mountains to the sea—rivers whose waters were seldom lessened by summer's heat or winter's frost.

Its sea line was more indeed than the line graciously allowed by the Confederate Government to the old Union on the Atlantic Coast.

Its landings, wharves, ports, quays and harbors with the boundless Ocean, gave them commerce and intercourse with the nations of the earth.

On this territory they had a population of ten million, three hundred and seventy-eight thousand, eight hundred

and sixty, all practically a unit in the determination to win or die.

All prior differences in politics and religion were forgotten; those fit for military duty in line or command hastened to their armies; the rich with lavish hand threw their wealth into the coffers of their government; ministers, preachers, priests and bishops prayed for success, and the frenzied passions of the people were intensified by the eloquent appeals of orators and the press for victory and vengeance.

A servient population of four million African slaves, loyal to their masters and their masters' cause, sweat their very life's blood in ploughing, digging, planting, hoeing and reaping the crops necessary for the maintenance of their army and people, producing at the same time, a staple that commanded the gold in nearly all the markets of the world; a product then deemed essential and indispensable for the prosperity and well being of all industrial nations and peoples.

A generation of educated, intelligent, beautiful and enthusiastic women cast themselves into the Southern cause with an abandon and bravery exceeding that of Spartan Mothers.

And more, the Confederacy had the sympathy and help of at least one-fourth of the people of the North, indeed you could hardly turn around in those days, without running against what we called a "Copperhead."

I have often thought that if the good Lord had taken the defenders of the Union of that day as he did Moses to a high place and given us a view of what I have so faintly described, we would have asked to die as Moses died, and to have been buried as Moses was buried; else, descending

the slopes of the American Pisgah, we would have chanted in mournful refrain the words of the political philosopher of New York—"Better let the wayward sisters go."

It is well that we were not permitted to have that view.

It is well that we did not know the magnitude of the work before us.

What was that work?

Destroy this great Confederate battle line and all other like lines.

Defeat and disperse the Confederate armies wherever found on land or water.

Retake our forts and all other property of the nation held by hostile hands; carry the Star Spangled Banner through every state, county, parish, precinct, town and city within the limits of the rebellion: see that the constitution and laws of the United States of America were enforced and obeyed on every inch of the national territory from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the Lakes on the North to the Gulf on the South.

In the prosecution of this work our government divided its military forces, especially those operating on land, into armies with geographical designation and territorial limit.

Of these there were many, as events ran, however, there were three whose work and victories won our cause.

These were the *Army of the Potomac*, the *Army of the Tennessee* and the *Army of the Cumberland*.

We will not willingly pluck a laurel from the well-earned crowns of the other organizations on land or sea, but their work was subordinate to that of the three armies named: They struck the vitals, the *heart* of the rebellion,

while the others operated well and successfully on the exteriors.

An intelligent and impartial study of our four years' war will demonstrate the truth of these propositions.

The *Army of the Potomac* was set opposite the army of GENERAL LEE on the Confederate right.

The *Army of the Tennessee* was set opposite the Confederate forces on the Mississippi.

The *Army of the Cumberland* was given the post of honor and set opposite the Confederate center.

I understand it to be a military truism, that the center is the place of honor.

Your wings may be broken, but while your center is intact the battle is not lost.

Thus at Stone River, GENERAL THOMAS had the center; the right was crushed and doubled on his rear, the left was paralyzed, but THOMAS held the center until the wings were restored and the victory won.

And so at Chickamauga.

At the beginning of the fight, THOMAS had the left. The right was broken and rendered powerless, when THOMAS suddenly became the center and there was nothing but center. THOMAS cast his magnificent eye over that magic semi-circle, the horse-shoe ridge, formed his center on it and fought from noon till night, one to four, and held the field! But this is digression.

Although at the time the *Army of the Cumberland* was assigned the center in this Grand Drama of war, there was no large body of troops confronting us; this was accounted for on the absolute belief of the Confederacy from JEFFERSON DAVIS down, that God Almighty had fortified their center by a "concatenation" of hills, ridges,

mountains, rocks, creeks and rivers, requiring but a skirmish line to hold it against the armies of the North.

Now, for the purpose of answering the questions submitted, I propose to examine, briefly, the work of these three armies and thereby demonstrate that the greater merit is with the *Army of the Cumberland*.

In considering this question I will not undertake to say what we might have done with greater means.

We have been saying of our army what we could have done if we had been given greater means.

I will treat that question as past and useless now, and in any event it would only lead us into a field of speculation.

If our means had been more abundant we might have abused the blessed gift.

What we did with the means we had, is the question for us today, as well as for our neighbors, right and left.

We will first look at the *area of armed occupation* of each army.

In this we do not take into account territory over which sporadic movements were made, or the routes of campaigns not held by continued military occupation.

Covering too much ground in any of the avocations or professions of life is dangerous, and likely to wreck him who makes the venture.

That the same rule holds good in military work need not be elaborated in the presence of those familiar with the facts and principles of military movements and work. Extended area involves dispersion of forces. Dispersion is the converse of concentration.

Concentration is the life, essence and controlling condition for successful military work.

The *Army of the Cumberland* covered by armed occupation all of Kentucky, East and Middle Tennessee, North Alabama and part of Northwestern Georgia.

A territory greater than that held by either the *Army of the Potomac* or the *Army of the Tennessee*, and indeed nearly as much as that held by both of them.

We will next consider *the population occupying* the area held by these armies, respectively.

The populations on the area of the *Army of the Potomac* and the *Army of the Tennessee* were a unit in opposing the occupation and the cause for which our forces came upon them.

These populations were, with few exceptions, double dyed, arrant rebels, and proud of it at that. They were enemies and could not be trusted. No reliable information could be obtained from them. They were spies. They were intensified in all this by the belief that they were right.

In conducting military operations in populations of this kind, the problem is very simple. While they did not take up arms, molest our troops or commit overt acts of treason, they were treated as if they did not exist, and our armies moved on to find and crush armed and organized rebellion.

GENERAL GRANT tells us that after Pittsburgh Landing and Shiloh, he paid but little attention to the population, except to prevent abuses, pillaging, pilfering, etc., but through his quartermasters and commissaries he took whatever he needed for supplies on the theory that if he did

not take it, when he had passed away the enemy would come along and take it.

And the taking of it by our forces prevented the supplies from falling into the hands of the enemy.

Of GRANT'S movement from the Mississippi to the rear of Vicksburg, he says :

“When the movement from Bruinsburg commenced we were without a wagon-train. The train, still west of the Mississippi, was carried around, with proper escort, by a circuitous route from Milliken's Bend to Hard Times, seventy or more miles below, and did not get up for some days after the battle of Port Gibson.

“My own horses, headquarters transportation, servants, mess-chest, and everything except what I had on, were with this train. GENERAL A. J. SMITH happened to have an extra horse at Bruinsburg, which I borrowed with a saddletree without upholstering further than stirrups. I had no other for nearly a week.

“It was necessary to have transportation for ammunition. Provisions could be taken from the country ; but all ammunition that can be carried on the person is soon exhausted when there is much fighting, I directed, therefore, immediately on landing, that all vehicles and draught animals, whether horses, mules or oxen, in the vicinity should be collected and loaded to their capacity with ammunition. Quite a train was collected during the 30th, and a motley train it was. In it could be found fine carriages, loaded nearly to the top with boxes of cartridges that had been pitched in promiscuously, drawn by mules with plow harness, straw collars, rope lines, etc. ; long-coupled wagons, with racks for carrying cotton bales, drawn by oxen, and everything that could be found in the

way of transportation on a plantation, either for use or pleasure.

“The making out of provision returns was stopped for the time. No formalities were to retard our progress until a position was secured, when time could be spared to observe them.”

GRANT further says that “Grand Gulf was given up as a base. . . . SHERMAN wrote me of the impossibility of supplying our army over a single road, and urged me ‘to stop all troops till your army is partially supplied with wagons, and then act as quick as possible, for this road will be jammed as sure as life.’

“To this I replied: ‘I do not calculate upon the possibility of supplying the army with full rations from Grand Gulf. I know it will be impossible without constructing additional roads. What I do expect is to get up what rations of hard bread, coffee and salt we can and *make the country furnish the balance.*’

“We started from Bruinsburg with an average of about two days’ rations, and received no more from our supplies for some days; abundance was found in the meantime.

“Beef, mutton, poultry, and forage were found in abundance. Quite a quantity of bacon and molasses was also secured from the country.

“Every plantation, however, had a run of stone, propelled by mule-power, to grind corn for the owners and their slaves. All these were kept running while we were stopping day and night, and when we were marching, during the night, at all plantations covered by the troops.”

As to the Army of the Potomac, its immensity and the

small space occupied by it resulted in the immediate consumption of all supplies found amongst the people.

The population occupying the area held by the *Army of the Cumberland* was entirely different.

We came to Kentucky in the summer of 1861, and it was the field of our operations to the spring of 1862.

Kentucky was then, as always, a great state—great in her soil, forests, mines, agriculture, kingly men, queenly women.

You were at least abreast of other communities anywhere in all the elements of an advanced civilization. You had won honors in all the avocations and professions of life.

In statesmanship, diplomacy and arms you had no superiors. You had fought on all the battle-fields of the nation from the beginning.

Your state covered 41,263 square miles. Your population was then 919,484 whites, 10,687 free colored, 225,483 slaves, and 33 Indians, making a total of 1,155,684. Owing to your geographical position, institutions, social and commercial relations with the states south and east of you, perhaps a half of your people preferred going out with the seceding states. In saying this, I am not unmindful of the fact that in August of that year a majority of your voters declared by ballot for the Union; but you will keep in mind that the women of Kentucky did not vote. If they had voted the Union party would have been swamped, and you know it.

A Union recruiting camp and a Rebel recruiting camp near each other was not uncommon.

Amongst your leading men of that day there was great diversity of opinion as to what action should be taken. A

large neutral party sustained your Governor in posting notices and issuing proclamations forbidding the contending parties from entering Kentucky.

Confederate generals were issuing orders covering your entire state. The property of Union men was being destroyed by Rebel neighbors and Kentucky guerrillas. These are unpleasant things to say, but you and I know them to be true. I, therefore, verily believe, from what I have stated and from what I saw and heard in Kentucky during those very dark days, that had GENERALS ANDERSON, THOMAS, SHERMAN and BUELL on entering your state issued proclamations as did many other generals on entering new fields, or had we arrested your people and seized your property as done by the other armies of the nation, Kentucky would have rebelled and been lost to the Union during our four years' war. Here, we were confronted with a political question, equal to if not greater than the military problem.

How did we meet it? By general orders, and obedience to them, we convinced your people that we were seeking armed rebellion; that we were not here to break down, but to build up; that we were here to help you, not to hurt you; that we were here to protect you in your families, homes, rights and property; that we were not here to interfere with the institution of slavery; that your slaves would not be molested by us or permitted to rendezvous in our camps; that the property of your people would not be taken except upon absolute military necessity, and then by due authority and receipted for; that we were here to fight for the life of a nation for which Kentucky blood had crimsoned all our battle-fields of the past.

And although bad men flock to all armies, resulting

in pilfering and pillaging, and although we were not free from these pests, we convinced you that we were a body of intelligent, respectable and responsible men, who loved war not for war's sake, but for the sake of our great republic, which had grown to be the wonder of the world, the hope of the downtrodden of all lands.

You believed us, and Kentucky was saved for the Union.

You gave us not alone your political, moral and social influence, but in addition you gave us over seventy-five thousand as brave soldiers as ever drew a sword, wielded a saber or fired a gun.

You will remember, my comrades, that we saw many sorrowful days during that war, days when the issue seemed to be in equipoise.

When the *Army of the Potomac* retreated from the Peninsula; when the brave men under POPE were slaughtered like sheep; when Antietam ran red with the blood of our comrades; when eleven thousand of them were uselessly killed or wounded at Fredericksburg; when HOOKER was defeated at Chancellorsville; when the balance hung in mid-air over the contending armies at Gettysburg; when GRANT struggled with LEE in the Wilderness and thence to the James; when BUELL abandoned all he had won from the Ohio to the Tennessee, excepting his garrison at Nashville; when we were besieged in Chattanooga; when we had to use armed force to suppress rebellion in the North,—how we recall the blanched cheeks, tearful eyes and choked utterances on those direful days.

And then reflect: If Kentucky with her seventy-five thousand warriors had been on the other side, might not the scale have been turned against us?

[GENERAL WOOD (in the Chair) : Old UNCLE BILLY SHERMAN said that many a time.]

My Comrades, the crown of the *Army of the Cumberland* is brilliant with gems representing victories on many fields of carnage, but none are brighter, none sparkle with more brilliant luster, than that which represents its work in holding Kentucky to the Union as the needle to the pole. She may have vacillated for a time ; but, like the needle, struck her true position, stopped there, stayed there — is there yet, and will be, I trust, to the end of time.

You will also recall the condition of Tennessee when we entered that state.

Her people had voted to leave the Union, and the state was considered by them as in the Confederacy. The Governor and other state officers had abandoned the state and “ gone South.”

As a rule, judges, sheriffs, clerks and other court officials had also gone.

No magistrates left to issue warrants or bailiffs to execute them.

In fact the State of Tennessee, except the eastern part, was in a condition of “ innocuous desuetude.”

We would find an immense plantation, in fine condition, a mansion house fit for a king. All able-bodied white men had “ gone South,” the children, the women, the aged, infirm and slaves, were in charge.

By the well-known policy of our army, these people and their property were saved and more carefully protected by us than if their absent warriors had been at home. When the time came for restoration to statehood in the Union, our work of conciliation bore fruit, and

Tennessee was soon in her normal condition again in the sisterhood of states.

The make-up of our army has been well illustrated by the fact that since its dispersion, we find its members reaping honor and distinction in all walks, avocations and professions of life. From the presidential chair clear down to our town and county officers, the men of our army have distinguished themselves.

Indeed, wherever you go in our country and in many others, the men of the *Cumberland* are there, the successful workers and leaders in the battle of life. We were in fact, an army of gentlemen.

We will now look at the *topography* of our respective fields :

It is doubtful if any army ever had a better field for military work than the *Army of the Potomac*.

The Potomac river, the Chesapeake bay and the ocean gave it a base for the prompt transmission of supplies and re-enforcements not excelled by any other in the history of war.

These waters were not only utilized for that purpose, but for war vessels of all kinds, sizes and descriptions, lending a helping hand everywhere and especially on the James river, where the gunboats and ironclads were avenging angels in the contests on and along its shores.

GRANT and McCLELLAN bear positive, honorable and generous testimony to these facts.

The gradual slope of the land constituting Eastern and Southeastern Virginia was an ideal field for the movements and battles of large armies, without let or much hindrance from rivers or mountains, excepting, however, the region of the Shenandoah, which passed from sight

when they got a fighter from the *Army of the Cumberland* to clear it out.

The *topography* of the scene of operations of the *Army of the Tennessee* was unique.

The Mississippi and the navigable waters entering it were the bases for the operations of that army.

From the rivers of the North and Northwest, contributory to the Mississippi, supplies and re-enforcements were literally poured into and upon that army wherever and whenever needed.

The noise of battle had scarcely ceased at Pittsburgh Landing and Shiloh, when steamer after steamer, with surgeons, doctors and nurses with all the paraphernalia for the care of the sick and wounded were anchored at the west bank of the Tennessee.

Yea more, one steamboat in particular was loaded with coffins for the unfortunate dead.

All the principal battles of the *Army of the Tennessee*, except the engagements back of Vicksburg, were fought on the banks of the rivers constituting the bases.

From first to last, from Belmont to Vicksburg, the armed boats were the unfailing ally of the land forces.

Commencing with Belmont, which was a defeat, the Tyler and Lexington were an especial feature in the battle, and saved the force from probable capture by conveying it from the field.

Fort Henry was captured by the Tyler and Lexington and four iron-clads, three and a half hours before the land forces under GENERAL GRANT arrived.

In its next engagement, at Fort Donelson, the Carondelet, St. Louis, Louisville, Pittsburgh, Tyler, Conestoga, and perhaps others were there, and although disabled

before the contest closed, it was clear that but for them the issue would have been doubtful with the land force on hand.

New Madrid and Island No. 10 were taken by the Western Flotilla under COMMODORE FOOTE.

GENERAL POPE was in waiting with a land force of twenty-five thousand; but could not take part in the action.

Fort Pillow was taken by the Mississippi Flotilla.

Memphis was a naval battle exclusively, fought on the Union side by COLONEL ELLET. ELLET's young son landed and climbed to the top of the postoffice, tore down the Confederate flag and ran up the stars and stripes, and afterwards the city was formally surrendered by the mayor to COLONEL FITCH, of the land force.

The battle of Memphis was a battle royal between the Rebel and Union fleets, in which COLONEL ELLET by the almost exclusive use of his rams destroyed the enemy's fleet.

It is well attested history that had it not been for the work of the Tyler and Lexington at Pittsburgh Landing the result there would have been at least doubtful.

After stating important service rendered by the gunboats on the first day at Pittsburgh Landing, the COMTE DE PARIS says in describing the night after the first day's battle: "During the entire night the two Federal gunboats fired shells in the direction of the Confederate camps every ten minutes.

"These enormous projectiles bursting among the trees, and breaking the branches with a dismal noise, did scarcely any harm; but they caused considerable uneasiness to the troops who were so greatly in need of rest. These ex-

plosions, regular as the tolling of a funeral bell, alone interrupted the silence, which, with nightfall, had succeeded the tumult of the day.”

Of the Vicksburg campaign GENERAL GRANT says :

“The navy, under PORTER, was all it could be during the entire campaign. Without its assistance the campaign could not have been successfully made with twice the number of men engaged. It could not have been made at all in the way it was with any number of men without such assistance.”

As to the *topography* of the field of the *Army of the Cumberland* we found JEFFERSON DAVIS’ “concatenation” to be correct as to the natural barriers, but we waded, swam and bridged the creeks and rivers, climbed the rocks, ridges and hills, scaled the mountains to the key point of the “concatenation,” and although then on half rations and four hundred miles from our base and supplies, our commander voiced the determination of every soldier in his army when he telegraphed GENERAL GRANT “We will hold the town (Chattanooga) until we starve.”

The creeks, rivers, ridges and mountain ranges did not run our way as they mostly did with our sister armies, but persisted in crossing our pathway at all times and places.

We were, to all intents and purposes, an invading army, and the well-known military axiom is that an invading army should have double the force of the army of resistance. After we crossed the Cumberland River it took a greater force to guard our communications than would have been necessarily required to guard the capitol city of the nation.

The *Armies of the Potomac* and *Tennessee* fought their principal battles on base lines. The departures being when GRANT fought his preliminary battles in the rear of Vicksburg and in his final Appomattox campaign.

If Stone river could have floated even the Tyler and the Lexington to help us, our victory there would have cost us less than it did.

If the Chickamauga had been navigable and stocked with gun-boats and ironclads, the history of that battle would be different from what it is to-day.

Armed river boats could have been placed on the Upper Tennessee to help us if taken in hand in time, but it was not done.

If the Tennessee had been traversed by gun-boats and iron-clads, in 1864, HOOD's army of invasion might have been finally halted there.

If the Duck and the Harpeth had been navigable for gun-boats and iron-clads their presence there would have at least prevented the escape of whatever of HOOD's army THOMAS did not kill, wound or capture.

These remarks are merely suggestive for thought, reflection, etc., in comparing the work of our three armies.

The *Army of the Tennessee* captured Vicksburg and Pemberton's army July 4, 1864, and ended the fight on the Confederate left and the Union right.

The *Army of the Cumberland* annihilated GENERAL HOOD's great central Confederate Army at Nashville, December 15 and 16, 1864, which ended the contest on the center of the chosen Confederate line.

The *Army of the Potomac* captured GENERAL LEE and the army under his command April 9, 1865, at Appomattox, which ended the contest on our left and the Confederate

right. And that ended the war, and the great battle line from the Potomac to the Mississippi passed into history.

I think I have conclusively shown that, taking all conditions into consideration, the *Armies of the Potomac and the Tennessee* had vastly superior opportunities over the *Army of the Cumberland*, for the great and good results accomplished by them.

As a general rule the strength of an army is well ascertained by the number it brings into battle. Battles are seldom unexpected, but are usually foreseen by both.

The official records show that in the leading battles of the three armies, the *Potomac* and the *Tennessee* fought generally with the preponderance of troops largely in their favor, and that with the *Army of the Cumberland* the preponderance was the other way.

It is to be regretted that we have no history of our army to give the general reader a clear statement of its life and work.

We have had a vast amount of writing and speaking on the subject, but so clouded by details, technique, and the discussion of minor questions as to repel the general reader.

We are much indebted to GENERAL CIST, GENERAL COX, CHAPLAIN VAN HORNE, and many others for their contributions. I may be pardoned for speaking especially of the gifted pen of our honored Corresponding Secretary, for what he has accomplished in that line and his apt ability in hitting a hostile head wherever and whenever he sees it.

Our army has done one commendable thing in showing our work to the world, in the establishment and improvement of our National Military Park at Chickamauga and Chattanooga.

This will remain an object-lesson, we hope, for all time. No intelligent man, native or foreign, can examine our park without being led into its history and the story of the armies that consecrated that ground.

We should labor individually and as an organization to add to the work already done there.

We should yet have the Arch of Nationality, and many other things we have not. We should visit that park as often as possible, and take our families with us. We should take our children and grandchildren, and tell them of the military achievements of which the park is the monument. Every state represented in the battles of Chickamauga and around Chattanooga should erect a monument to the memory of her sons who fought there.

Monuments to many of our principal commanders on those fields will also come in time.

Since we last met, being at Queenstown, Canada, I ascended the monument erected by the British Government in memory of her GENERAL BROCK, killed at the battle of Queenstown Heights, in our War of 1812.

It stands on a hill at the edge of the battlefield, the hill being about three hundred feet high and the monument near two hundred feet, overlooking the field. The scene itself is entrancing, inspiring thought above the ordinary associations of life. Standing five hundred feet above the battle scene, to the northwest an apparently unending panorama of Canadian farms clothed in green, bedecked with their clean, white farm houses; the ceaseless monotone of the monster cataract rolls down from the south, broken by the intervening hills, valleys and palisades; the tumult of angry waters in the Niagara on the right in their supernatural struggle for the lake—they

drop into it and instantly are still as death: then, beautiful, placid Ontario, the dividing line between the two greatest nations of the day, seems to say to each, "Peace, be still."

Then my mind ran back to our later battlefields, and particularly to those with which I am familiar, and really before I knew it, my hands were outstretched with a silent prayer to the Almighty Father, that he would spare my days on earth until I would see a statue of GEORGE H. THOMAS on one of his fields of glory.

And so I pray yet, and know that you will join me in that prayer.

You may put it at Mill Springs, Stone River, Orchard Knob, Missionary Ridge, Chickamauga or Nashville, but don't put him on a brass horse.

Neither the tongue of man nor the pen of the writer can describe him; the brush and pencil of the painter nor the chisel of the sculptor can reproduce him. But do the best you can, and place it on a rock where in his working clothes and in all his magnificent simplicity he stood in the center of his semi-circle, Sunday afternoon, at Chickamauga, with eye following his line from flank to flank, his line of fire, death and victory!

Under him let the chisel write:

GEORGE H. THOMAS,
THE ROCK OF CHICKAMAUGA.
THE UNCONQUERED CONQUEROR.

And you may add the immortal words of Kentucky's Martial Poet:

"The muffled drum's sad roll has beat
The soldier's last tattoo,

And glory guards in solemn rounds
The bivouac of the dead."



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