

## ROBERT EDWARD LEE.

A TRIBUTE TO THE SOUTH'S GREAT-EST GENERAL.

An Address Delivered by Professor A. E. Strode before Camp Rion, U. C. V., at Ridgeway, S. C.

Mr. Commander, Venerable Survivors of the War between the States, ladies and gentlemen: When some three months ago I was requested by the body to speak here of the life and career of the great general, I felt the compulsion of your choice, found in your bidding no less than a command and I then resolved to merit your confidence as best I could.

But when I applied myself to the study of the subject or which you expressed a preference, day by day the conviction grew upon me, that the great and I cannot attain unto it, and I despair might have been my portion, had I not remembered your generous partiality in calling me from my humble station as an instructor of youth to speak in this assemblage of those who have felt the fiery breath of battle, who have fringed with "fringes" of glory, and who have won an undying fame on the pages of heroic history.

In such an assemblage I should have been well content to sit a silent hearer beholding in every man who wore the gray, my father's brother.

But since you have honored me with the encouragement of your approval, I shall address myself as best I can to the subject, your partiality has assigned me, but praying that you will continue to indulge my shortcomings.

In the northern part of the good old state of Virginia, there lies between the Rappahannock and Potomac rivers, a section of country some thirty miles in length with an average width of fifteen miles. Within these narrow limits have been born statesmen, soldiers and patriots whose names illumine the brightest pages of American history. Here was born the Father of his Country, here James Monroe first saw the light and near the birthplace of these two James Madison was ushered into the world.

To this family belonged Col. Henry Lee of Revolutionary fame, more familiarly known as "Light Horse Harry." Early in the Revolution nominated by Patrick Henry, then Governor of Virginia to be a Captain of cavalry, he became the well-beloved of Washington, was commended by Congress for conspicuous gallantry, and it was said of him by his mother's wondrous soldier. Having won high honor in the Revolution he was, after the return of peace, elected Governor of Virginia. Upon the death of Washington he was chosen by congress to deliver an oration upon the day that great patriot.

This address is that which he delivered to the West Indies. His letters to his family during this period of his affliction are models of chaste and elegant expression, of noble diction and lofty concepts. In one he writes, "Fame in arms or art is nought unless brothered to virtue." How well his great son illustrated with his life this maxim, all the world knows.

General Henry Lee was married twice; the second time to Annie Hill Carter of an old Virginia family, "moved," we are told, "for their usefulness, generosity, purity and faithfulness."

The fourth son by this marriage was Robert Edward Lee, born January 19, 1807, at Stratford, Westmoreland County, Virginia, in the same room in which two signers of the Declaration of Independence first saw the light.

Amid such surroundings linked by so many associations to an inspiring past, Robert Lee grew a noble boy. Walking the same wooded paths, sheltered Washington he looked upon the same noble river that gleamed for the glory of that great patriot.

We are told that the ancient Greeks adorned their cities with the noblest specimens of architecture and sculpture that their youth beholding the beauty of outward form might themselves incline to the beautiful and good in their own development. How much more potent as an inspiration to noble endeavor must be the contemplation of the graceful outlines which mark the development of a noble life. And before the mind of Robert Lee a devoted mother ever kept the images of high ideals. After his seventh year he never saw his father, but father still spoke to the son through those faded letters written upon the rack of pain, and around the son, who was so her, as she herself were thrown all the tender solicitude and fastening care of a Godly mother. To her then more than to anyone else it was the praise for his nobility of life.

Among his fellows he was popular and good. If there was ever a time in his life when he "sowed wild oats," a most diligent search fails to reveal it. "What shall I do with my life?" Is the question that must command the attention of every young man. When this question came to Robert Lee we do not know from what source he heard from fond though quivering lips the story of his sire's patriotism, he felt that sire's warrior spirit stir within him, and was strengthened in his resolution to be a soldier too by the father's gleaming sword, hung high above his home's broad hearthstone.

At 15 years of age he becomes a cadet at West Point. There to remain four years with no demerit upon his record, graduating second in a class of forty-six and holding the cadet adjutant of the post of honor in the aspirations of cadet life.

Assigned upon graduation to the engineer corps of the army he finds employment at various stations. He constructed the fortifications upon Hampton Roads which 27 years afterwards was striving to demolish. Everywhere efficient he is upon the opening of the Mexican war appointed captain of engineers upon the

lines breveted in rapid success on the first six months campaign crowned the young captain with honors and lifted him from obscurity into the light of fame. Gen. Scott at that time wrote of him, "Robert E. Lee is the greatest military genius of America, the best soldier that he ever saw in the field, and that if opportunity offered itself he would show himself the foremost captain of his time."

Assigned to various duties after the Mexican war the hastening events of 1861 found him in Washington. Of the fifty-four years of his life to this time, thirty-two had been spent in honorable service as an officer in the United States army. A master soldier now in the theories of war and ripe in his practice he is called upon to decide upon his service shall be given, to his State or to the Union. That the making of this choice caused him great perplexity, his letters written at the time plainly show. These letters, as well as his subsequent actions, no less plainly show that he was seeking to discover only where the path of duty lay. Surrounded by his wife and family in his beautiful home upon the Virginia hills opposite Washington he is called upon to decide this question. His illustrious father as Governor of Virginia, when summoned to a commission under the Federal government, had voted this sentiment: "No commission shall be given to any man to act as a part, however trifling to me, which could be construed into disregard or faithlessness to this commonwealth." A devotion to Virginia was then his just inheritance.

And Robert Lee knew that the Declaration of Independence had declared free 13 states—each one free, and each one with its own powers only had been delegated to these free states to the Federal Government. He knew that no state had done more valiant service in securing that independence than Virginia. And he knew that Virginia entering the union which had already been formed by the thirteen original states, was to be bound by the terms of the compact to withdraw it at anytime the Federal Government should exercise its powers to the detriment of her interests and the happiness of her people. These considerations must have been sufficient to satisfy the seeker after with Virginia's right to secede.

As to slavery he had no love for the institution. He would not have fought for its perpetuation. His own slaves he had freed long before. His father-in-law's slaves had been freed by will. On that score his mind was easy. But just across the river his old commander, Gen. Scott, was pleading with him to remain with the union. "For God's sake, Lee, don't resign the bluff of General Lee, the name of Robert E. Lee, the name of the Federal Government, Gen. Scott had said that Robert Lee would be worth fifty thousand men to their cause, and President Lincoln directed his Secretary of War to have an interview with Lee and secure him for the union by the tempting offer of the chief command in the army."

Here within his grasp was all the full realization of a soldier's fondest dreams—the chief command in the army of his country. Then behold this imperial man as discerning the way of duty to lie in other paths he turns his back upon all the glittering allurements of power, he is to see the chief command in the army of his country. Then behold this imperial man as discerning the way of duty to lie in other paths he turns his back upon all the glittering allurements of power, he is to see the chief command in the army of his country. Then behold this imperial man as discerning the way of duty to lie in other paths he turns his back upon all the glittering allurements of power, he is to see the chief command in the army of his country.

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And now after McClellan's failure a new leader is chosen for the invading hosts, and from the ranks of the Potomac he is called to the front and sent with his flying legions pell-mell, heading into the fortifications around Washington.

Having relieved Virginia of this second invasion General Lee crosses into Maryland and fights against great odds the drawn battle of Antietam, a crushing defeat. This battle closed the campaign of 1862. The great battles so far fought had been Southern victories, but the heavy losses of men began to tell upon the armies, they had no new supply to draw upon, the South might outgenerals but could not outmaneuver her foes. And just here it is worth noting that General Lee was always unflinching in his praise of the private soldier. To the men in the ranks he gave the credit of his victories, and for their weariness he was at all times solicitous. Delicacies and refreshments sent to him found their way by his direction to the sick in the hospitals, while the plainest fare sufficed for him when a bare acceptance would have lifted his table with every luxury that devoted friends could provide. And what a spectacle it was to see the great commander-in-chief with bare hands knitting socks for the private soldiers under his command, to who he himself carried them. Can we wonder that his men loved one so regardful of their happiness?

The spring of 1863 opened upon a Southern army, and the noble General Lee met General Hooker and with bold audacity following the plan of the great Jackson upon the Federal flank and inflicts upon Hooker's teeming army an overwhelming defeat. But alas for that day! Jackson was gone and there was none to take his place. Just one month after Chancellorsville General Lee again started north with an army of which one of his Generals said that it was in a spirit to undertake anything.

Gettysburg has been reckoned generally as the turning point of the war. General Lee never attempted to unload any part of the responsibility for this or for any other defeat upon another's shoulders. But that he lost this battle through no fault of his becomes more and more evident as the years go by. Just the other day General C. A. Bascom of North Carolina, smiling at a celebration of Lee's birthday in Petersburg, Va., said that "a court of inquiry appointed by General Lee to which General Mahon was president and General C. A. Battle (the speaker) was secretary, met at Culpeper Court House for the purpose of inquiring into the conduct of the Gettysburg campaign."

"The court censured Stuart and Longstreet but General Lee suppressed the report and took the blame upon himself. This report, said General Battle, has never been given to the public and would not now be but for the fact that General Lee has been attacked by the late General Longstreet in Virginia to get at war chest with General Meade for the balance of the campaign of 1863, at the close of which General Meade retreated and was replaced in command by General Grant."

Then came the death grapple in the wilderness, in which occurred the dramatic incident of the 30th of July 1863, when Gen. Lee, riding to the front to reform a broken line, was sent to the rear by the entreaties of his soldiers who, when they had seen him in a place of safety, led by the gallant Gordon, rushed forward to regain the lost position. Then by Spotsylvania and bloody Cold Harbor and back to the front, he was again and again forced to withdraw it at anytime the Federal Government should exercise its powers to the detriment of her interests and the happiness of her people. These considerations must have been sufficient to satisfy the seeker after with Virginia's right to secede.

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"The court censured Stuart and Longstreet but General Lee suppressed the report and took the blame upon himself. This report, said General Battle, has never been given to the public and would not now be but for the fact that General Lee has been attacked by the late General Longstreet in Virginia to get at war chest with General Meade for the balance of the campaign of 1863, at the close of which General Meade retreated and was replaced in command by General Grant."

Then came the death grapple in the wilderness, in which occurred the dramatic incident of the 30th of July 1863, when Gen. Lee, riding to the front to reform a broken line, was sent to the rear by the entreaties of his soldiers who, when they had seen him in a place of safety, led by the gallant Gordon, rushed forward to regain the lost position. Then by Spotsylvania and bloody Cold Harbor and back to the front, he was again and again forced to withdraw it at anytime the Federal Government should exercise its powers to the detriment of her interests and the happiness of her people. These considerations must have been sufficient to satisfy the seeker after with Virginia's right to secede.

As to slavery he had no love for the institution. He would not have fought for its perpetuation. His own slaves he had freed long before. His father-in-law's slaves had been freed by will. On that score his mind was easy. But just across the river his old commander, Gen. Scott, was pleading with him to remain with the union. "For God's sake, Lee, don't resign the bluff of General Lee, the name of Robert E. Lee, the name of the Federal Government, Gen. Scott had said that Robert Lee would be worth fifty thousand men to their cause, and President Lincoln directed his Secretary of War to have an interview with Lee and secure him for the union by the tempting offer of the chief command in the army."

## WHICH IS CORRECT?

CONFLICTING CLAIMS AS TO CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATIONS.

Expert Juggling With Figures—Cannon Defends the Record of Expenditures of the Republican Majority of the Fifty-Fourth Congress and Says Cannon is Right.

WASHINGTON, June 11.—Chairman Cannon of the House appropriations Committee and ex-Chairman Sayers today made public a joint statement concerning the expenditures authorized by this Congress, discussing them from the Republican and Democratic standpoints respectively. The total amount of appropriations, for the session, including permanent annual appropriations is \$518,753,820.49. Mr. Cannon's statement begins:

"The appropriations charged to this session include \$119,054,160 under permanent laws, of which amount \$50,000,000 is for sinking fund and \$69,054,160 for interest on public debt, or \$3,355,614.40 more than was included at the last session of Congress in the statements of appropriations and is on account of the increase of \$162,315,400 in the bonded indebtedness of the country by the present administration to February, 1895, in excess of the amount provided for in the act of the later bond issue of \$100,000,000 in February, 1896, amounting to \$4,400,000, not being included in the estimates of permanent appropriations."

"The increase in the principle of the interest-bearing debt of the country under the present administration amounts to \$293,315,400, which is in excess of the amount provided for in the act of the later bond issue of \$100,000,000 in February, 1896, amounting to \$4,400,000, not being included in the estimates of permanent appropriations."

"The regular annual appropriations, including deficiencies, made at the last session of Congress amounted to \$383,636,896.97, and included no river and harbor bill. Excluding the river and harbor act passed at this session, the regular annual appropriations for the session of Congress amounted to \$383,636,896.97, or more than \$10,000,000 less than was appropriated by the last Democratic Congress."

Mr. Cannon criticizes the Treasury Department because it has "expended \$7,377,440 for the present year in collecting duties from customs, estimated at \$561,000,000; whereas, for the last fiscal year, 1895, under President Harrison's administration, there was collected under the McKinley tariff act a total cost of only \$6,907,517."

The bill establishing salaries instead of fee systems for officers on the United States Courts, he says, will save \$1,000,000 annually and minimize frivolous and malicious prosecutions. Special attention is called to the fact that Congress made no increase of salaries of employees in the government departments. The following table of appropriations in general, and of the Fifty-second Congress, \$1,027,104,547.92.

Fifty-third Congress, \$959,239,205.69  
Fifty-fourth Congress, first session, \$518,753,820.49.

The revenues for the three fiscal years of the Harrison administration ending June 30, 1895, are given as \$1,150,831,214, expenditures, \$995,132,501.92.

For the two complete fiscal years of Cleveland's administration, revenues \$611,112,094, expenditures, \$723,720,578.

Mr. Sayers in his statement says of the total appropriations for the session:

"The sum exceeds the appropriations made during the last session of the Fifty-third Congress by \$181,719,933.83 and those of the first regular session of that Congress by \$23,529,135.46. It is less than the appropriation by the second session of the Fifty-second Congress by only \$3,744,538.72, although at the later session \$3,352,355.00 more was appropriated for pensions during this session. It is more than those of the first session of the Fifty-first Congress by \$21,803,571.84, and \$25,464,040.80 less than the appropriations at the second session of the Fifty-first Congress."

"The Senate organized this session by a combination of Republicans and Populists, placing the control of the purse in the hands of the Republicans, by its amendments to appropriation bills of the House proposed to increase the total by \$22,920,443.30. By conferences between the two houses this aggregate increase was reduced to \$12,253,518.24. The appropriations at the second session of the Fifty-third Congress exceeded those made at the first session of the same Congress by \$45,767,612.64, or nearly 10 per cent. If the same proportionate increase should be made at the next session, then the appropriations will not be less than \$65,000,000."