

THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF'S ADDRESS.

A YEAR OF FAITHFUL, FRUITFUL WORK FOR THE GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC.

A Loss of Only 233 in the Net Membership—Gratifying Earnestness and Zeal Thruout the Order—Misleading Talk About Pensions—National Cemeteries—The Blue and the Gray—The Troublesome Transportation Question—National, Department and Post Finances in Good Shape—The Soldiers' Homes.

Comrades: I greet you as I call to order the 43d National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic.

In the month of September, 1908, on the banks of the Maumee, in the city of Toledo, in the State of Ohio, where you were so hospitably entertained by the citizens of that city, you conferred upon me the highest honor within your gift—that of Commander-in-Chief; and now, here on the banks of the River Jordan, in the city of Salt Lake, in the State of Utah, with its churches, its schools, and its palatial residences, in the presence of the most numerous and the most distinguished representatives of the United States of America, rich in agriculture, minerals, minerals and factories, and destined in the near future to be one of the wealthiest and most prosperous States in our Union, we are the guests of the citizens of the Department of Utah, Grand Army of the Republic, and of the citizens of this hospitable city, who are doing all in their power for our entertainment and to make our sojourn among them most happy and agreeable, during this our 43d National Encampment. And I am called upon to render you an account of my stewardship.

When I was elected, I said to you that the Grand Army of the Republic did not belong to me, but that I belonged to the Grand Army of the Republic, and that I was elected to represent the functions of the office to which you had elected me. I should be guided by the best interests of the Grand Army of the Republic, and I should be guided by the best interests of the Nation.

I will not take up your time by any encomium or eulogy of our Order, its origin, its growth, its attainments and its achievements. To do so would be simply to tell you what you already know and what has been told to you most eloquently for many years by my predecessors.

I promised you that with your hearty co-operation and support I would, with all the zeal and ability of which I possessed, endeavor to discharge the duties of this high office to the best of my ability, and at all times uphold the dignity and honor of our organization, to honor our Flag, always having regard for the best interests of the greatest number of our comrades.

How well I have kept my promises and discharged the duties of this office is for you to determine.

Serious Illness.

My report is not as favorable in all respects as I had hoped that it might be. I had anticipated 11 of the Department Encampments; I had appeared 11 times in seven other Departments on occasions of great interest to the Grand Army of the Republic, and had made 16 visits to Reunions, receptions and camps in other Departments, traveling in all 26,121 miles, when on the 1st of May, on the Pacific Coast, I was taken suddenly ill, and from that time until the middle of June was under the doctor's care and unable to attend to the duties of the office except such as I could attend to at headquarters. I was thus prevented from attending 11 Department Encampments, held during the months of May and June, all of which I had made arrangements to attend and fully intended to do so. While I was unable to attend these Encampments, the Senior Vice-Commander came to my aid and visited two Department Encampments; the Junior Vice-Commander visited one; the Inspector-General visited one; the Chief-of-Staff visited two, and my Assistant-Adjutant-General visited six. I afterward attended the Encampment of the Department of Pennsylvania, and had made arrangements to attend the Encampments of Wisconsin, Ohio and New York, but found that I was unable to do so. Past Commander-in-Chief Comrade Torrance very kindly represented me at the Department Encampments of Minnesota and South Dakota. Comrade Van Sant represented me in the Department of Michigan. Past Commander-in-Chief Comrade Robert B. Brown very kindly represented me in the Department of Ohio. I have received many invitations to attend Reunions, receptions and banquets; it being impossible to attend them all. In many of the Department Encampments are held upon similar dates and so widely separated that it is impossible for the Commander-in-Chief to attend them all.

I have answered all communications addressed to me, with perhaps a few exceptions upon frivolous subjects.

I received a warm and cordial greeting wherever I went and found the Grand Army Posts enthusiastic and doing the best they could under the circumstances prevailing in their respective localities.

Visits in the South.

I was treated with great cordiality upon my visits in the Southern Departments, and in and out of the Grand Army of the Republic, held a joint meeting with Clement A. Evans, Commander-in-Chief of the United Confederate Veterans, and the Stars and Stripes were conspicuous, while the Stars and Bars were not in evidence. Our open and public discussion upon the subject of the relations between the Northern and Southern States and between the men who had stood upon the firing line upon both sides was most pleasant. In a Southern State, where I appeared as an American citizen who had a right at all times to appear in any part of this country so long as he obeyed the laws of the land; and in concluding my remarks said to Gen. Evans, Commander-in-Chief of the United Confederate Veterans, that representing the Grand Army of the Republic as I did, and addressing him as the Commander-in-Chief of the United Confederate Veterans, it should be our aim and our purpose, as American citizens, to uphold and maintain the Government of our fathers and its institutions, a Government of the people, by the people and for the people, and under one Flag.

The Flag of our Union—the only Flag that was ever has been recognized in this country or ever would be; a Flag that had never known defeat and never would know defeat—the Flag of united America and of our Union forever and forever; and upon these principles and sentiments in the presence of our respective followers, we clasped hands, amid the great applause of the entire audience.

I met the Confederate Veterans again in Denison, Tex., and at a public meeting there I divided the time with them upon the platform. I met them also in Birmingham, Ala., at a public meeting. At the Encampments of those two Departments and in both cities I found a most generous display of our Flag by the citizens in honor of the G. A. R. Encampments in those places, and I am satisfied from all that I could see and hear and learn that the men who stood upon the firing lines in the Southern Confederacy had had enough of the war and were anxious and willing to support the Government of the United States of America under its Flag, and that were it not for others who did not participate in that great struggle, but who are still laboring to keep alive the lost cause, there would be no difficulty in cementing the bonds of union between the North and South.

Funds.

The funds of the Grand Army of the Republic are the General Fund, kept separate and by itself; the Southern Memorial Fund, kept separate and by itself; and the Permanent Fund, under an amendment to the Rules and Regulations of our Order, passed at the last Encampment, is kept separate and by itself in the care and custody of trustees elected by the National Encampment.

The General Fund is made up of the per capita tax and sale of supplies and such donations and bequests as are made to it from time to time and out of which are paid the expenses of the National Encampment and the purchase price of supplies, and such sums as may be voted from this fund to the Southern Memorial Fund by the National Encampment. No money has been drawn from this fund during the year except the salaries which are fixed by the Executive Committee of the Council of

the Grand Army of the Republic.

By the consolidated report of the Assistant Adjutant-General, dated June 30, 1909, before any of the Spanish War Veterans were interred therein, I find that there were interred in the National Cemeteries 353,285 comrades, of whom 201,282 are marked by name and 152,003 are marked "unknown." Of these interments 3,300 are of Confederates who are interred in the National Cemeteries at Camp Butler, Cypress Hills, Flinn's Point, Fort Smith, Hampton, Jefferson Barracks, and Woodlawn. Of this number of interments I find that 109,132 are interred in the cemeteries of the Northern States or States which did not join

the Southern Confederacy. Of this number 20,376 are interred in the cemetery at Arlington, Va., leaving the number of interments in the Southern or Confederate States in the National Cemeteries 244,153. I have been thus particular in giving you these figures, that some action may be taken by this Encampment, or some future one not too far distant, with a view that some arrangement may be made for the proper observance of Memorial Day and the strewing of flowers upon our deceased comrades' graves in these Southern Departments when the Departments of the South will be unable to perform that duty.

In finding from actual inspection and examination that the Superintendents of these cemeteries place the flags upon the graves of our deceased comrades on the day preceding Memorial Day, and the day succeeding Memorial Day take them up and put them away for future use. Thereby the Government is not called upon to furnish \$2,000 worth of flags every year for the purpose, but for a very considerable number, and if this economy is used, a large portion of the \$2,000 annually appropriated by the Government might be well expended for the proper observance of Memorial services and the planting of flowers in these cemeteries. I

leave this matter with the Encampment for their consideration.

Permanent Fund.

As to the Permanent Fund, there was appended to the report of the Trustees at the last Encampment, invested by them the sum of \$22,000, together with a balance in bank of \$1,259.44. The Vice-Commander presented the last Encampment presented the Grand Army of the Republic with a check for the sum of \$1,000, which donation was made by the Ladies of the G. A. R. This money could not have been transferred from that fund to the Permanent Fund without the vote of the National Encampment, and I am satisfied that the money was not needed in the General Fund, and in order that the money might be invested and be drawing interest, I assumed the responsibility of transferring the check over to the Trustees of the Permanent Fund, and directed them to invest it in a bond or bonds in the Permanent Fund, which was done, as will appear by the Trustees' report, and I hereby most respectfully ask that this Encampment confirm my action in this respect.

The National Cemeteries.

During my tour thru the Southern States, I paid close attention to the National Cemeteries and to the number of comrades buried in the National Cemeteries and their proximity to these cemeteries. I found that in many instances the Posts had to travel long distances in the observance of Memorial Day in order to pay proper tribute and respect to the comrades who lie in these cemeteries, taking the whole day, with car fare and meals. It could hardly be expected that small Departments with so many comrades could perform this duty without being helped in some way to bear the necessary expense. The comrades who lie in these cemeteries are comrades who fell on the field of battle and who were starved in leathern prison pens, and while the Government furnishes the flags which are put upon their graves by the superintendents of the various cemeteries, the comrades of the Southern Departments hold their Memorial services in them and distribute the flowers.

Upon an examination of the list of National Cemeteries prepared in the office of the Quartermaster-General of the War Department, bearing date June 30, 1906, before any of the Spanish War Veterans were interred therein, I find that there were interred in the National Cemeteries 353,285 comrades, of whom 201,282 are marked by name and 152,003 are marked "unknown." Of these interments 3,300 are of Confederates who are interred in the National Cemeteries at Camp Butler, Cypress Hills, Flinn's Point, Fort Smith, Hampton, Jefferson Barracks, and Woodlawn. Of this number of interments I find that 109,132 are interred in the cemeteries of the Northern States or States which did not join

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Department of Texas.....	\$ 20
Department of Miss. & La.....	200
Department of Va. & N. C.....	200
Department of Tenn.....	200
Department of Ark.....	200
Department of Ga. & S. C.....	200
a total of.....	\$1,105

leaving a balance on hand of \$1,236.73 in the Southern Memorial Fund, and also appear by the Quartermaster-General's report.

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Numerical Strength of the Grand Army.

The consolidated reports of the Assistant Adjutant-General, dated June 30, 1909, have not all been received, hence the Assistant-Adjutant-General cannot tabulate and consolidate them for the benefit of this Encampment. It is impossible to state our numerical strength on June 30, 1909. The National Encampment reports for several years have been consolidated, and the reports of the Assistant Adjutant-General, dated Dec. 31, 1908, preceding the National Encampment, and this report is based upon the reports of Dec. 31, 1908.

On Dec. 31, 1907, by the report of my predecessor and his Assistant-Adjutant-General, the members in good standing of the Grand Army of the Republic numbered 225,157. The number remaining upon the suspended list at that date numbered 13,439. Making a total of 238,596.

By the consolidated report of the Assistant Adjutant-General, dated Dec. 31, 1908, the number remaining in good standing on Dec. 31, 1908, numbered 220,616. The number remaining on the suspended list at that date numbered 17,980. Making a total of 238,596.

The number of comrades reported as having died between Dec. 31, 1907, and Dec. 31, 1908, numbered 10,134.

Thereby showing that notwithstanding this large death rate there were remaining on Dec. 31, 1908, in good standing and suspended only 23 comrades less than there were on Dec. 31, 1907.

Our gains during the year have been as follows:

By muster-in.....	7,434
By transfer.....	948
By reinstatement.....	7,146
By gain from delinquent reports.....	3,626
Total gains.....	21,154

The consolidated report of the Assistant Quartermaster-General shows that the expenses of the Department charity by the Posts between Dec. 31, 1907, and Dec. 31, 1908, numbered \$107,597.35. The Southern Memorial Fund and Others relieved 1,332.

The Suspended List.

I am sorry to state that the admonition of my predecessor to Posts and Assistant Adjutant-Generals has not been heeded. Complete returns by the Assistant Adjutant-Generals are not being made, and it is almost impossible to get the numerical strength of the Grand Army of the Republic in good standing and those particular in giving you these figures, that some action may be taken by this Encampment, or some future one not too far distant, with a view that some arrangement may be made for the proper observance of Memorial Day and the strewing of flowers upon our deceased comrades' graves in these Southern Departments when the Departments of the South will be unable to perform that duty.

I urge upon the Department Commanders and the Assistant Adjutant-Generals the importance of making accurate returns of the standing of their respective Posts in order that the Assistant Adjutant-General might give a complete and accurate report in their respective Departments. Nine Departments show that no account is kept of the standing of the comrades suspended in their respective Departments, thus showing, first, that the Post Commanders did not make accurate reports in this respect to the Assistant Adjutant-Generals, and, second, that the Assistant Adjutant-Generals have not insisted that these reports should be made accurately; hence the Assistant-Adjutant-General could not make an accurate report to National Headquarters.

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are hundreds and thousands of Union soldiers who have not joined the Grand Army of the Republic nor taken any interest in the organization who find that they are now drawing pensions which have been secured to them by the earnest and untiring efforts of the Grand Army of the Republic, and if approached in a proper spirit would gladly join our organization. I find from visitations thruout the various Departments that there are many Posts which have accumulated property during the many years that they have been in existence and now feel that, after all these years and having accumulated property, it would not be fair to the old comrades of the Posts to take in comrades at this late day who have saved outside the organization and allow them to participate in the profits of the investment. This matter can be easily adjusted by allowing new comrades to participate in the profits of investment made after their becoming members of the Order. I can readily understand how a Post incorporated upon a stock basis and certificates of stock issued to each individual member and becoming the owners of the stock can, at their death, leave the stock to their families, but a Post incorporated upon any other basis and the property belonging to the Post thus incorporated, the property of the Post will revert to the survivors, and I feel that the Posts which are strong and have property should encourage enlistments into our Order from desirable comrades, who would like to join even at this late day upon equitable terms, for as far as Post property is concerned without difficulty. I feel, also, that no Post would knowingly allow a worthy comrade to be suspended and dropped from our Order if acquainted with the facts and circumstances of his financial ability to keep up his dues, nor would they allow the Woman's Relief Corps or the Ladies of the G. A. R. to pay dues of such comrade to save him in the Grand Army by reason of his financial inability to remain in the Order.

Financial Condition of the Posts.

I have taken considerable pains to look into the financial situation of the Grand Army of the Republic as reported by the various Posts of their respective Departments to their Assistant Quartermaster-Generals and from a tabulated report, made by the Quartermaster-General, I find that 35 Departments own real estate of the market value of \$923,135.39. That the Posts of 42 Departments have cash in Post and relief funds amounting to \$992,812.37. That 22 Departments own furniture and other cash assets of the value of 706,132.72.

Total value of Post property, cash securities, etc., in the above Departments, \$2,622,538.38.

This is a good showing of the thrift of the Grand Army of the Republic from a financial standpoint.

Pensions.

The Pension Committee at the last Encampment read a long and interesting report of the pension laws as they stood upon the statute books down to that time, and among other things said: "The Grand Army of the Republic has always stood for general pension legislation and never for an especial class. In view of what has been accomplished in the rounding out of a code of laws which generally bestows a sum of money, impossible in any other country, annually upon the dependent ones, and who are now contributing to the work of general pension legislation for at least a few years closed."

See Journal of 43d National Encampment, page 213 to page 216, inclusive. The report of the committee was adopted as a whole by the Encampment. This report of the Pension Committee was read in the afternoon of the 1st day of the Encampment, just prior to the election of officers, and at a time when there were perhaps more representatives in the Encampment than any other time.

The Encampment passed a resolution recommending that the McCumber law should be amended so as to make the maximum of 70 per cent to apply at the age of 65 years instead of 75 years, as now provided. Comrade Brown, Chairman of the Pension Committee, amended the resolution in that the request of the Woman's Relief Corps on the subject of widows' pensions. It was suggested that a motion be made that all of these resolutions be referred to the incoming Pension Committee, to take such action as in its judgment shall comport with the best interests of the comrades of the Grand Army of the Republic. It was carried affirmatively. (See pages 284 and 285 of 43d Journal.)

I have received many letters during my administration from comrades with in the Order and many old soldiers of the civil war outside the Order and others condemning the action of the 43d National Encampment in refusing to ask for further pension legislation in the interest of the veterans.

The 43d National Encampment did not so refuse, on the contrary, recommended amendments to the McCumber law, as above stated, and the amendment to the widows' pension bill. Only one member of the Pension Committee, being present, these matters were referred to the Pension Committee to be appointed by the incoming administration. The widows' pension bill was amended, striking out "and" and inserting "after" the passage of this act. Thanks to the earnest efforts of Senator McCumber of North Dakota, Senator Curtis of Kansas, and others, the bill passed the Senate and went to the House. The amendment to the McCumber law was introduced, but did not get before the Senate. I attended the National Congress upon different occasions in an attempt to have the Pension Committee meet the Congressional Committee, but it was impossible at the last Congress to get a meeting of the Grand Army committee with the committee of the House of Representatives. The investigation will show that there have been many bills introduced in the National Congress upon different lines, called "widows' pension bills," asking for the veterans upon different lines, and in prospect of any of them becoming a law. The Grand Army of the Republic, standing united, has in the past years secured and placed upon the statute books such pension laws as are in force, and the Grand Army of the Republic will continue to ask for such relief as shall seem to be equitable and just. And it does not stand in the way of other veteran organizations securing such legislation from the National Congress as they may by their influence obtain.

Much Misleading Talk.

Many letters have been written and much has been said disparagingly of the Grand Army of the Republic in its honest endeavors to secure suitable legislation, not for the Grand Army of the Republic, but for honorably discharged soldiers of the civil war.

I quote a letter, copied with the address of the Hon. Isaac R. Sherwood, of

Ohio, delivered in the House of Representatives on Feb. 26, 1909, in speaking of the National Soldiers' Homes and turning from that subject to pensions, advocating many different schemes in the interests of the Grand Army of the civil war, except the Hazen address has been printed and distributed broadcast thruout the Grand Army of the Republic. This letter is printed in many papers in connection with the body of delegates, for as was present at the Toledo Encampment, when at the very last moment, when less than 100 were present, the "House of Lords" in the Encampment passed the resolution declaring that the G. A. R. would ask for no further pension legislation for three years. I had not ceased since to denounce it as a great outrage, and no representation of the feeling of the general comradeship."

Another letter from the Department of Kansas, which expresses thanks for the stand taken by Congressman Sherwood on behalf of the veterans, says: "I propose to have a resolution passed in Encampment denouncing the action at Toledo. It was not taken by the body of delegates, for as was present, and it was done by just a few members of the 'House of Lords.'" (See page 11 of said address.)

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The resolutions passed by the Union Veterans' Legion, referring to the bill reported by the Military Committee, House of Representatives, are now in the calendar, awaiting passage. He says: "I do not see any excuse for politicians dodging the officers' retirement because of any action of the irresponsible House of Representatives. Known as the jurisdiction is not recognized by the commissioned officers. Most of the officers belong to the Veterans and Loyal Order of the Moose, and are not men and shorter-term men, at a stated meeting of the Grand Army of the Republic at Lima, O., refusing to endorse legislation favoring the Sherwood pension bill, now pending in Congress, a measure which would benefit only real soldiers of the war; and whereas the House of Representatives is now passing the idea of a per diem service pension bill for all soldiers, according to the length of service, and as the provisions of the bill are such as to deprive the veterans of their pensions, (See page 13 of said address.) There are other letters of like character appended to this bill of the House of Representatives."

Never Opposed Pension Legislation.

I am not aware of the fact that the Grand Army of the Republic has ever opposed any bill introduced by the Union Veterans' Legion, based upon a resolution of the Grand Army of the Republic rendered to the Government. It is the proud sentiment of the American soldier, sailor and marine that as American citizens we should stand for patriotism and loyalty to country, and freely offer their lives that the Nation might live. And many entered the service during the first year of the war, and many during the second and third years of the war, as soon as they were old enough to bear arms and respond to the call of the President to defend the Nation, and they were entered during the first and second years. And all did valiant service until the close of the war in 1918.

The question of compensation must not and should not be considered with a question of pensions. Compensation means a price to be paid, either expressly given or implied, for services rendered or a duty performed, while a pension is a periodical payment of money to a person retired from service on account of age or other disability, and especially to men who have been wounded or otherwise disabled in the public service, and to the families of the deceased or sailors who have been killed in action.

The Grand Army of the Republic has ever stood for general pension legislation, believing that the families of comrades who were killed in action and comrades who were wounded and disabled upon the line of battle should be pensioned, no matter what their term of service might have been.

I am informed that several Departments have passed resolutions along different lines of favoring different laws from those which have been passed in the Grand Army of the Republic. These resolutions will go to the hands of the Pension Committee and after their report thereon will receive the consideration of this Encampment. I invite your careful consideration of the subject-matter of these resolutions.

The number of survivors of the civil war at the close of the last fiscal year (June 30, 1908), as shown by the annual report of the Commissioner of Pensions, was 620,955. The number of survivors on the pension roll May 31, 1908, was 696,411. The amount appropriated for pensions during the year was \$162,000,000.

I find upon investigation that there are 10 National Soldiers' Homes in the United States and 30 State Homes. That during the year ending June 30, 1908, 24,949 members were cared for in the National Homes, and of this number 19,913 were maintained thruout the year. That in the 30 State Homes there were 29,147 disabled soldiers and sailors cared for, 11,436 being maintained thruout the year. The whole number

The amount appropriated and spent during the year ending June 30, 1908, in the National and State Homes for support, maintenance, etc., for old and needy soldiers was the sum of \$1,187,261. Total, \$163,187,261.

Soldiers' Homes.

My attention has been called two or three times to letters from inmates of the Soldiers' Homes, anonymous letters, complaining of ill-treatment and irregularities in the homes. All of these matters have been carefully investigated and the complaints found to be without foundation.

I have given the subject of Soldiers' Homes a very careful consideration and have visited many, and I find the officers in every one of the Homes are veterans of the civil war, except the Hazen Home in Virginia, where the Governor was an officer in the Spanish-American War and seriously wounded. Many of the Surgeons are civilians, as it is difficult to secure medical officers who are active enough that served in the civil war. Our comrades should be satisfied that the inmates of the National Soldiers' Homes are retaining in position in the Homes these of the civil war who are able to do and perform duties required of them.

My attention was called to a letter purporting to have been written by an inmate of the National Soldiers' Home of Virginia, published with an address delivered by the Hon. Isaac R. Sherwood, of Ohio, in the House of Representatives, Feb. 26, 1909. The Hon. Mr. Sherwood was speaking to a bill relating to Soldiers' Homes, and said he desired to make a few remarks on House Bill No. 1234, introduced in Congress by Mr. Boutwell, known as the civil war officers' annuity honor roll, and in said address Congressman Sherwood advocated an amendment to that bill giving certain honorably discharged soldiers \$1 per day pension, which said address was printed. (See page 12 of said printed address.) This letter stated:

"I am glad Congressman Sherwood is the soldiers' friend and is pushing the \$1 a day pension. We are 4,000 disfranchised veterans, and there is not a civil war soldier in any position of authority on the grounds. Our treatment is deplorable, and to complain means to be put out the gates."

I investigated this case especially on my visit to said Home, spending almost the entire day there. I found the Governor of the Home a kind-hearted and humane man, and from careful investigation he seemed to have the regard and respect of all those under his charge. I found that the other person employed in this institution were veterans except the Surgeons and some of the nurses in the hospitals. I found the inmates of the Home were divided into companies and each company had a Captain, who was one of their comrades, and who received pay and was responsible for the conduct of his company to the Governor or Commandant. All of the positions in the Home, except as above stated, are filled by the old comrades, who are receiving compensation for the same, they are not in the Home for the day in the week, and were informed by one and all that it was, and no complaint could or would be made by any Inspector with the director of the Home, which it was served. The Governor and Surgeon in charge kindly and cheerfully answered all questions put by me, and gave me the information that I desired in the proper investigation of the Home.

National and State Homes.

I find upon investigation that there are 10 National Soldiers' Homes in the United States and 30 State Homes. That during the year ending June 30, 1908, 24,949 members were cared for in the National Homes, and of this number 19,913 were maintained thruout the year. That in the 30 State Homes there were 29,147 disabled soldiers and sailors cared for, 11,436 being maintained thruout the year. The whole number



Now For a Little Diversion.