

# Oration at the Unveiling of Cumberland's Monument.

MAY 10, 1902.

By E. J. Hale.

(Published by request of the Association.)

*Madam President of the Cumberland Monument Association, Veterans of the Confederacy, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

Nineteen years ago I had the honor to deliver the memorial address, on this day, at the old cemetery. My subject was the need of monuments, particularly statues and memorial shafts of lofty design, to commemorate the deeds of our ancestors, and of similar memorials of our fallen comrades in the great war. At that time, there was but one statue in all North Carolina, that of Washington at the State capital, and even he, though the first of all Americans, was, to its State, an alien. The hope was then expressed that, while our remarkable history in the pre-Revolutionary and the Revolutionary periods had been almost lost sight of, and the men who made it were not pictured to the eye in enduring brass or marble in any of our public places, the unparalleled achievements of North Carolina in the war of 1861-65 would at last set free the dormant historic sense of our people and secure commemoration in books and pictures and sculpture.

The thought which I had, seems to have been a common one; for, in the short space of the two decades that have intervened, a revolution in this regard has taken place in our State. North Carolina history is taught in all of our best schools and its study is engaging the enthusiastic attention of our best men and women. And what a revelation it has presented, even of our last history-making epoch! The seasoned veterans who returned from Appomattox brought back the tidings of the overshadowing part borne by North Carolinians in Virginia, the chief seat of war; but their tales fell, for much part, on deaf ears, so effective had been the jealous work of some of our neighbors, until the official publications of the government and the histories of the Northern organizations that fought us began to appear. These have more than confirmed our most advanced claims; and now the stupendous work of Judge Clark, recently brought to a close, has presented the case in incontestible form. That is a history which is without parallel—in its conception, in its execution, and in the material out of which its parts have been constructed. The most of you know the now familiar story of North Carolina's part in the great war—more troops than we had of voters; more troops absolutely than any other State, and more in proportion to population; twice as many killed and wounded in battle as any other State; possessing but a tenth of the white population of the seceded States, yet contributing a fifth of their armies, and suffering more than a like proportion of their losses.

Naturally, as our army organizations next above the company were State and not county organizations, and the general government came in contact with us through our State (or regimental) organizations, it was to North Carolina as a State that recognition first came of the valor of her troops. But what we are concerned in today, is the record of our own county of Cumberland. Does any one know what that is? The troops were not known as Cumberland, or Roberson, or Bladen, or Harnett troops, but as North Carolina, or Virginia, or Georgia troops, the State being the sovereign entity. There were therefore no county records as such. But can we not tell what Cumberland did? Who knows? "She did her full share," your county pride prompts you to say, without hesitation; and beyond that you know nothing, and it is probable that you would have continued in this state of mind except for the brave women who have made this great occasion possible. Brave women and sensible; persistent; possessing a vast amount of executive ability, and inspired by a patriotism that knows no weariness—the patriotism that took their husbands and brothers and fathers to battle, but which the struggle of life since seems to have dulled if not exhausted in the survivors of them.

In August of last year, these good women set about making a list of the names of the men that Cumberland sent to the war. They perused out among themselves the files of the old Observer—those venerable books of history which had been secreted in Chatham county when Sherman came. They copied the lists of the members of the companies from Cumberland as they went to the front, and carefully sought out and copied all the fragmentary lists of recruits to those companies, or of men sent to companies from other counties; and to these were added the names found in Moore's Roster which did not appear in the original lists. The result was published from day to day and week to week, and sometimes over and over again, until criticism and correction were exhausted. The final result is a Roster of Cumberland troops in the Confederate war as perfect as the well-nigh perfect system adopted could accomplish. It is that which has been placed in the corner stone of the monument.

Now, again, these published lists—which do not include the Home Guards, but only those actually in the Confederate service—have been gone over and over by Miss Mallett, the President of this Association; all repetitions of names—as in promotions, second enlistments and the like—eliminated; and the astonishing result delivered to me by her of 2,416 officers and men contributed to the Confederate service by this one County of Cumberland. Of these, one was a lieutenant-general; five were officers of the general staff; thirty-six were officers of the regimental staff; and six were non-commissioned officers of the regimental staff; and two thousand, three hundred and sixty-eight were officers and enlisted men of the companies. Cumberland had at the outbreak of the war—that is, by the census of 1860—9,564 whites, of whom 1,884 were voters that year. As the white population of the State in 1860 was 629,942 and the number of voters 115,000, and the whole number of troops supplied by North Carolina 125,000, it follows that we supplied much more than our quota, which would have been 1,894. In harmony with these figures, we find that, of the 104 regimental historians whom Judge Clark was able to secure for his great State work, 11 were soldiers who went out from Cumberland; and, of the 19 battalion historians, 2 were Cumberland soldiers; and all natives of the county. That is, a little more than a tenth of these historians were supplied by Cumberland, whereas we had less than a twentieth of the white population. Of course, the metropolitan character of our county capital and

some other circumstances have contributed to this result, but after making all allowance, it is as gratifying to our county pride as it is remarkable and significant. It has not been possible yet to make a list of all those who were killed in battle, as important and desirable as that is; but the work is in hand, and it will be done.

Another great work which should be done, and which the newspaper files referred to offer the means of accomplishing, is a summary of the contributions in money to the Confederate soldiers made by the men and women of Cumberland; of the contributions in kind by the women of Cumberland, and of the great sum of specie turned over to the State government by the banks of Fayetteville.

We have thus the very highest incentive to the commemoration of the deeds of those who have so greatly distinguished our mother county. But this information has come to us *post facto*, so to speak, and we can only attribute the fact that the monument itself is here almost as soon as we knew decisively why we should build it, to that intuition of the gentler sex which knows because it knows, and, so knowing, arrives at conclusions often more accurately than the other by its (human) mathematics and logic.

But, after all, it is not the fact that it has taken the women of Cumberland thirty-seven years to build a monument to their Confederate dead. In the old cemetery, where you will presently witness the closing ceremonies of this day, is the first Confederate monument erected in North Carolina and one of the very first, if not the first, in any of the States of the Confederacy. Mrs. Jesse K. Kyle, Miss Maria Speer, Miss Mallett and Miss Alice Campbell were the ladies who led in that early work. By an agreeable fate, one of them is the honored president of this monumental association, while Mrs. Kyle, though an invalid, and Miss Campbell also honor us with their presence. The other, the venerable Miss Speer, as she was even then, has long since gone to rest with the immortals whose memory she helped to preserve. It is in itself a handsome marble shaft; considering the date of its erection, 1868, it was quite as costly, relatively, as the present noble one; and at its base, each year since, the pious impulses of the women of Cumberland have found expression in appropriate, oftentimes imposing services.

The movement for the building of the present monument was begun July 1st, 1895, by an Association of which Mrs. Neill W. Ray was elected President, but who, being unable to serve, was succeeded by Mrs. John B. Broadfoot. Mrs. Broadfoot, after most efficient service, was succeeded by Miss Mallett in 1898, who has served with great ability since. Last autumn, the funds raised by the Association reached the sum of \$2,262, and the order for the monument, which cost \$2,200, and would now cost much more, was at once given. It is 23 feet high, and the figure of the infantryman, which surmounts it, is of standard bronze and 7 feet 3 inches high.

The inscriptions, it will be observed, are all appropriate, the one facing the north being especially interesting. That reads, "They Died in Defense of their Rights."

I am authorized to say that the good women who have conducted this work thought that certain teachings of the youth of the land at variance with the truth, rendered a summary declaration of the kind just quoted an appropriate inscription for such a conspicuous and substantial memorial as this. They never, of course, entertained the idea of saying "They Died in behalf of a cause They Believed to be Right," for that would suggest that they subscribed to the erroneous doctrine that "Might makes Right." Nor was it necessary, in changing from the mourner's to the historian's view of the war, to discard entirely from the list of inscriptions those softer sentiments which are so grateful to the ear and consoling to the heart, and which usually have been employed in these womanly tributes. But they believed that the time had come to check the impressions referred to, and to teach the rising generation, in this signal way, the noble truth re-iterated. And what does that truth signify? It covers every phase of the ground upon which the South appeals to history for its justification in taking up arms. If the Constitution, the supreme law of the land in 1860, be held to have replaced the monarch under the dynastic system, as, in the ultimate analysis, it must be, then they were, morally, rebels who professed allegiance to it and yet violated it. If the ultimate sovereignty resided in the reserved rights of the States, which seceded to the Union under the Constitution, then they were loyalists who obeyed, each one, the commands of his seceded State. And, so far as I am aware, no publicist or constitutional writer of note in the outside world denies that the South was right, and consequently the North wrong, in their respective views upon the abstract question of the right of secession. Eventually, that must be the universal view. It was upon the question of the expediency and the necessity of secession that differences existed between the border States and those further removed from the probable theatre of war. In this respect, we of North Carolina have cause for immeasurable pride.

We are not a warlike people. Democracies, in the nature of things, cannot be. War is the personal weapon of the monarch, waged for his aggrandizement by those who owe him allegiance. Where the people constitute the State, they are fools who suffer the warts of war of their own will, except in defense of their rights or for the protection of vital interests. As the laws are silent in war, peace is the ideal condition where the people make the laws. War is the opportunity of tyrants. As the war of 1861 immensely strengthened the central power, so the war with Spain came opportunely for those centralized interests which 33 years of peace were showing signs of dispersing. The statesmen who controlled the destinies of North Carolina in 1890-91 were deep students of history and they refused to take the chance of war until the existence of the conditions mentioned rendered war the wise course. Though, with exception of her daughter, Tennessee, the last to withdraw from the Union, North Carolina was the foremost in all that was required to make her act good, and, as we have seen, she poured out her blood and treasure in greater volume than any of her sisters.

"In peace, was never gentle lamb more mild;  
In war, was never lion raged more fierce."

Now, while the truth of history, no less than the dictates of self-respect, require that the memorials of the war adhere to the one and satisfy the other, a recognition of our duty in that regard is by no means at variance with the new obligations which the adverse siding of the great contest imposed. The war settled the question of the priv-

ilege of secession, and, outside of the existence of African slavery, nothing more of a fundamental nature.

Considering, then, that monuments are erected with the object of preserving the memory of persons or events, let us consider the lesson which this one teaches and take it to heart.

As long as the right of secession was a living claim, ultimate authority rested in the several States. When that doctrine was destroyed by Force in the war, our form of government was changed; but it was changed to that extent only, and the effect was not the establishment of unlimited Force. Ours, therefore, may be described as a limited Federal State—the supreme, because ultimate, authority resting in the Federal government—but with its powers limited by the Constitution.

If we keep this great fact in mind, we are enabled to realize that the South—the Anglo-Saxon section, the section which is freest from the view of the relations of the State to the Federal government which the new States of the Northwest entertain, a view which naturally differed from that of the "original thirteen" because they were the creatures instead of the creators of the Federal government—if we keep these things in mind we are enabled to realize that the South still has a great mission to perform, and that is, to strive with all its might and main to minimize the doctrine of Force, that odious idea put into the minds of Americans by war.

See what General Sherman, the great commander of the Western army, said:

"Headquarters Military Division of the Mississippi, in the Field, Rome, Ga., October 29th, 1864—Brig. Gen. Watkins, Calhoun, Ga.: Cannot you send over about Fairmount and Adairsville, burn ten or twelve houses of known secessionists, kill a few at random and let them know that it will be repeated every time a train is fired on from Resaca to Kingston."

"W. T. SHERMAN,  
Major-General Commanding."

That order is printed in the war record, serial volume No. 79, page 494.

On October 19, 1864, General Sherman wrote to General James H. Wilson from Summerville, Ga.: "I am going into the very bowels of the Confederacy and propose to leave a trail that will be recognized fifty years hence."

To Col. A. Beckwith he wrote of same date: "I propose to abandon Atlanta and the railroad back to Chattanooga and sally forth to ruin Georgia and bring up on the seashore."

To General Grant he wrote on that date: "I am perfecting arrangements to break up the railroad in front of Dalton, including the city of Atlanta, and push into Georgia, break up all its railroads and depots, capture its horses and negroes and make desolation everywhere."

Is it any wonder that, with this example before him, General Smith in the Philippines issues an order to "make Samar a howling wilderness," and to kill all "males over 10 years of age" or that the Secretary of war of our Christian Republic approves of these acts of diabolism? or that he approves of the suppression of the reading of the Declaration of Independence, even on the 4th of July, in the Philippines; and of the imprisonment of editors there of newspapers who criticize such acts of tyranny? In harmony also with the doctrine of Force, recent investigations by authority of Congress disclose the brutal nature of the hazing of the present day at the institution where our young soldiers are taught the art of war, in contrast with the harmless nature of the initiation to which they were subjected when the army and the government were controlled by Southerners.

See how the modern American of a certain class gloats in the savagery of war. Here is an extract from a war story in Everybody's Magazine, one of the standard monthlies of the day, describing a victorious charge:

"They had seen hard sights. Behind them lay a barrier which they would not pass. Headless trunks still spouting blood; men with faces shot away and life still in them; men strangling with the blood from drilled lungs; men with Minie bullets below the belt, writhing and calling on heaven and earth to ease them. Here one bleeding to death with a leg gone from a grape-shot. There one with a little hole between his eyes and the back of his head blown out."

"The regiment had seen these things in the millionth of an instant, and had not retreated. Therefore it was become a terrible thing; an engine of war, a pitiless, bloodthirsty thing that would kill and mangle in the blood, and kill again, till food for its bayonets failed."

"Driving through the seething inferno of smoke and fire and lead they went unseeing, unbearing, dumb, but mad with the blood-lust of the brute. Down upon them poured a stream of lead like lava from Rtna. The survivors pushed on, always the survivors, for each instant cut them down. No longer a line, but a crowd of men fighting, each to wet his bayonet first, elbowing each other to get to the front, stumbling with oaths, but plunging on because they didn't know when they were whipped, because they didn't care an idle curse whether they lived or died; up—up—up they went, swearing, sweating, murdering mob. Twenty-five yards, fifteen, ten, and staggering over the crest they fell upon the trenches. Then, well, revenge is sweet, and they had suffered much. Those in their front who escaped not quickly escaped not at all."

Again, is it any wonder that we read this in an Associated Press telegram from Lynn, Massachusetts, giving the formal statements made by two returned soldiers from the Philippines, La Belle and Bertrand? They conclude their description of the "water cure," which they were ordered to administer to the helpless natives, with this awful avowment:

"La Belle and Bertrand say that while at Dugang the soldiers came to a hut, where a native woman had just given birth to a child, the husband was made a prisoner and the woman and child were dragged out on to the ground, the native shack was burned, but La Belle and Bertrand do not know what had become of the woman and child."

You, who are standing almost on the spot where your State adopted the Constitution—do you now comprehend the lesson that monument teaches? May you take it to heart, and teach it to your children, and children's children, that North Carolinians hate the doctrine of Force as they have ever hated Tyranny, that they have never loved War for War's sake, and that their highest endeavor in the future should be devoted to confining the powers of the Federal government to its lawful sphere. You may thus yet save the Republic.

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Take Local Express Daily Express Train. At Lexington, Va. the money is taken to one E. W. Grove's signature of each lot. \$50.