

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SECOND ANNUAL REUNION
OF THE SOCIETY OF THE
TWELFTH REGIMENT NEW JERSEY VOLUNTEERS
HELD AT WOODBURY, FEBRUARY 22, 1876.

Pursuant to adjournment of the First Annual Reunion, the members of the Twelfth Regiment New Jersey Volunteers met at the dépôt at Woodbury, N. J., and, after forming in line, marched to the City Hall.

The Society was called to order at 10 o'clock by the President, Colonel H. F. Chew, with a few congratulatory remarks.

Prayer was offered by Comrade George R. Danenhower.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

A Committee on Nominations was appointed, consisting of Captain Frank M. Riley, Sergeant Arthur Stanley, and Colonel Edward L. Stratton.

Pending their report, a recess was taken, at the conclusion of which the Committee reported the following list of officers for the Society:

President, Colonel J. Howard Willetts.

Vice-Presidents, Sergeant Hiram Smith, Sergeant Joseph Burroughs, Private John F. Meley, Private Thomas S. Green.

Secretary, Sergeant John Tonkin.

Treasurer, Captain Charles D. Lippincott.

Executive Committee, Sergeant George R. Danenhower, Lieutenant Elwood Griscom, Hospital-Steward Charles M. Riley, Colonel Henry F. Chew, Captain Azariah Stratton, Private John B. Carey, Corporal Isaac A. Dubois, Sergeant William S. Hinehline, Lieutenant Eli. K. Ale, Sergeant Joseph C. Watson.

On motion, the above named officers were unanimously elected.

Colonel Chew appointed a committee to escort the President elect, Colonel J. Howard Willetts, to the chair. On taking his seat, the President said he was

ever ready to obey a call made by the Old Twelfth. He was here with a warm heart and a welcome hand, the first time he had met the regiment as a body since that memorable 3d of May at Chancellorsville.

The Vice-Presidents took seats on the platform.

The report of the Treasurer, Captain Charles D. Lippincott, was read, showing a balance remaining in his hands from the last Reunion of \$4.16.

The roll was called and dues collected—eighty-seven responded.

Colonel Joseph C. Nicholls and Surgeon J. W. McCullough, together with several other members of the First Delaware Regiment being present, it was resolved that they be invited to sit with the Society as corresponding members.

The out-going Executive Committee reported it had not had two hundred copies of the Constitution and By-Laws printed, as in their judgment sufficient funds were not in the treasury to warrant it.

The Secretary stated he had received the following communications, which were ordered filed, and a vote of thanks tendered the writers :

Mr. John Tonkin, Secretary:—

NEW YORK, February 12, 1876.

DEAR SIR,—I regret that I will be unable to attend the Reunion of the Twelfth Regiment New Jersey Volunteers on 22d inst.

Wishing the members a pleasant time, with kindest regards to all my old comrades of the Twelfth, I am,

Yours sincerely,

JOHN T. HILL.

PHILADELPHIA, February 22d, 1876.

To the Members of the Twelfth N. J. Vols, that Reunite this day at Woodbury, N. J.:—

FRIENDS AND COMRADES,—Although unable to meet with you to-day in person, still my best wishes are hereby extended, and may happiness attend your meeting, and prosperity follow each in the several paths of life.

My kind regards to all, and may we live to reunite a twelve-month hence.

Sincerely yours, one of the Twelfth,

THOS. R. KEMP.

TO THE TWELFTH REGIMENT NEW JERSEY VOLUNTEERS.

Soldiers! do you not remember
When the rebel bullet sped,
And the news came flashing to us,
That our darling boy was dead?

Oh, but our hearts sank crushed within us,
And we could not look above,
Or feel that the great All-Father
Had ordered this in love.

“If I fall,” were the last words written,
“You know that ’tis not in vain.
To die for our glorious country
Is a privilege, not a pain.”

And so through the terrible battles
Of those dark and dreary days,
With "On to Richmond!" for the battle cry—
"Right on, no more delays."

With a purpose, fixed and holy,
To win, or, if need be, die,
He, with you, his chosen comrades,
Dared the rebel hosts defy.

And when at last came the triumph,
The news of our country's gain,
Our hearts seemed dead within us,
For Willie was with the slain.

A greeting! hearty greeting! O soldiers tried and true,
That comrade's loved ones give you, and desire to say to you,
That though their brother's form doth lie still on Virginia's soil,
And you, who with him bore the brunt, no longer in turmoil,
Are gathered here in plain attire, to celebrate the day
That gave to us a Washington, his soul has sped away
Where no rebel bullet e'er can reach, or rebel billet say,
"You are the invaders, we, the wronged, for pardon I ne'er pray,"
But with others of your members they rest to-day in bliss.
A glorious home they surely reap who give their lives in this
For their country's life, for freedom's sake. And now shall we
Who meet the remnant left, heartily give "three times three"
To the boys who left their homes, their wives or parents dear,
And faced the dangers to the end, without a 'plaint or fear.
May God's blessing rest upon you, and may you ever be
Honored for having helped to break the chains of slavery.
A greeting then we give you, with holy, heartfelt feeling,
E'en while we mourn that brother lost, and sorrows o'er us stealing,
To see the flag he loved so well, his comrade's happy meeting,
Yet through our tears, brave Twelfth, we give you each a joyous greeting,
E. A. S. CORSON,*

On motion, it was ordered that at future meetings of the Society the original roll of the Regiment be called.

Motions to change the day of meeting to the 4th of September, and also to meet in a grove in form of pic-nic, were, after considerable debate, lost.

On motion, the members of the Society were requested to inform the Secretary of the residence or place of business of all members of the Regiment who do not receive a notice of the next Reunion.

A Committee on Revision of Constitution and By-Laws, consisting of Lieutenant J. Morgan Barnes, Captain Charles D. Lippincott, and Colonel Edward L. Stratton, was appointed.

Printing of the Constitution and By-Laws was deferred for one year.

* Sister of William H. Stockton, Co. E, Twelfth New Jersey Volunteers, killed at Fort Steadman, Virginia, March 25, 1865.

Considerable dissatisfaction being expressed at the absence of music, the Executive Committee were instructed to engage the services of a band for the next Reunion.

The Executive Committee were directed to correspond with the Executive Committee of the First Delaware Volunteers, and others, in regard to Second Corps Reunion.

The Secretary was directed to communicate with such members of the Society who are in arrears, and request them to pay up.

Colonel Chew read the following poem, written by a lady resident of Salem:

WELCOME HOME

TO THE SOLDIERS OF THE TWELFTH NEW JERSEY VOLUNTEERS,

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL H. F. CHEW.

Welcome, heroes, home returning, ye the fight have bravely fought;
 Wondrous are the deeds of prowess in the South land ye have wrought.
 Bravely ye have followed ever, where a Grant, a Sherman led;
 Nobly for your stricken country ye have suffered—ye have bled.
 In the "Wilderness" your comrades found a soldier's honored grave—
 And the dead are sweetly sleeping where the tall palmettos wave—
 Where the fair Potomac wanders, slowly winding to the sea,—
 'Neath the halls of haughty Richmond—on the upland—on the lea,—
 Everywhere our dead are scattered, they the flower of our land,—
 They the young, the brave, the noble, who went forth with life in hand,
 Tears are mingled with rejoicings, for the friends we loved so well,
 For the fathers, sons, and brothers, on the battlefield who fell.
 Lo! the honored dead, the living—all have won a deathless name,
 And your deeds shall be emblazoned in the records proud of Fame.
 We will twine for you the laurel, give to you the victor's meed,
 Who our firesides have defended in the hour of sorest need.
 Ye have watched that we might slumber—for our lives your own ye gave—
 'Gainst the foe, the haughty traitors, fought, your country's flag to save.
 Now returning, with your banner free from soil, or rent, or stain,
 Welcome, brothers, doubly welcome to your friends and home again.
 Grateful thanks to you we tender for the work your hands have done;
 Proudly we recount the vict'ries that your fearless hosts have won.
 Welcome, heroes, brave and loyal, bind the laurel round your brow;
 Home returning with the palm-branch, surely ye have won it now!

SALEM, June 24, 1865.

A.

Sergeant William S. Hineline, the Orator of the Day, was introduced, and delivered the following address, which was received with applause:

Comrades,—Fifteen years ago, amid the buds and blossoms of early spring-time, a long threatened storm broke with fearful violence upon our happy land, awakening an unwarlike nation from its restful peace to a sad realization of a sanguinary rebellion against its very life and the best interests of humanity. From that moment—from the moment Sumter's alarm guns broke the stillness that brooded over Charleston harbor—from the moment the encircling forts

gave full throat to the angry utterances of treason and overt rebellion against the lawful authority of the best government and the fairest land that the sun has ever gilded with her beams, a nation of warrior-heroes sprung from the mighty loins of Liberty, each one of whom chose rather to die than that the glory and the honor of the nation should fade away, and its power succumb to that of an iniquitous rebellion.

The history of the causes which led to the rebellious attitude of one section of this country is yet fresh in our memories. We remember that a section vanquished in a political contest for the control of the affairs of government sought to retrieve its lost prestige and attain sectional victory by withdrawing from the councils of the nation and asserting self-sovereignty. It attempted to sever the golden bonds which held us together in their strong grasp. The South for a time nullified the laws of the country and bade defiance to the power which had attempted to enforce them; it made cotton king, and his throne rested upon the backs of slaves; it robbed our arsenals, armories, storehouses, navy yards, and other depositaries of the nation's property, and bankrupted the treasury, and with its plunder sought to annul the laws of the land and establish an oligarchy. What was the attitude of the nation in the face of this gigantic revolt? How kindly she treated her recreant, rebellious and unrepentant sons! Her first act was to sue for peace. Like the prodigal's father she was ready to forgive and forget their baseness and their treason. She even went so far as to humiliate herself, and *begged*, rather than *commanded* them to come back to her love and to her forgiveness. Not with arms in her hands and vengeance in her eyes, but with kindly voice she pleaded with them and adjured them to return to the national hearthside they had wronged and plundered, and only when she had been insulted and assaulted—when it was cowardice and treason longer to hesitate—when her own safety became imperilled—when treason threatened the very existence of civil and religious liberty, as embodied in the Union of States, did the sword of justice usurp the peaceful office of mercy. The story of the war is chiselled upon full many a marble slab in our quiet cemeteries; it has been written deep on the hearts of thousands in their northern homes, and thousands more in the land of the orange and palmetto. It is traced upon many moss-covered hill-sides of the South, and in her green and luxuriant valleys, and the crimson tide has poured upon her mountain crests, and mingled with the silent stream as it coursed toward the gulf. From the border to the sea, from the rivers to the lakes, and the lakes to the distant prairies, and from Lookout Mountain to Gettysburg, a broad red path, hedged with death and misery, has borne sorrowful evidence of a bloody rebellion, and a giant struggle for national supremacy and national existence. The world had never before witnessed such a gigantic rebellion; it amazed and startled the universe; as compared with it all others were mere mimic displays of the glory and tinsel and pageantry of war. We look in vain in ancient or modern history for a companion picture,

either as regards ferocity, heroism or stubborn bravery. The legions with which Cæsar crossed the Rubicon, with which Alexander conquered the then known world, with which Napoleon and Wellington confronted each other at Waterloo, whose shock agitated the very world to its centre, were not more gallant or heroic than the blue legions under Grant, Sherman and Meade, or the gray legions which did battle for an unholy cause under Lee, Jackson and Johnson. I couple these names together because they were the very *beau ideal* of American soldiery, although one set fought for their native land and the other against it. The story of their daring has passed together into history; I would not, even if I could, separate them. The world has already passed opinion as to their respective merits, and in this great and now happily united country the remembrance of who they were, and what they did during the existence of a great and bloody era in the life of the nation, will be treasured up so long as liberty shall endure. Futurity will read that Grant, Sherman and Meade, and thousands of other chivalrous spirits, unsheathed their swords in defense of the precious heirloom transmitted by the men who planted the seed of a great and powerful country, and that Lee, Jackson and Johnson drew their keen blades against the country they had sworn to love, protect and cherish even unto death. Within some narrow defile, or at some mountain pass, perhaps some of you, comrades of the Twelfth New Jersey, now remember the story of a bloody Thermopylæ; again and again during the war were there charges as brilliant and as bloody as that of the glorious six hundred at Balaklava. We need not read French or English history to recall deeds of daring, because the full pages of our own history are bright and glorious with them. Where, I ask you, can you point to more heroism than that displayed by the noble army of which we formed a part? Its record reads like a fiction at this late day. The magnitude of its endurance, of its grit and pluck, has never been written, and never will, because the task is too great for the feeble pen of man, and it hesitates before the mighty undertaking. It has been said that the Army of the Potomac was the greatest army, in every respect, ever created on this continent. I do not intend to assume the justness of the claim, or to draw comparisons, or invite criticism, but if it were not true, why was it that the greatest of all the rebel generals and the very flower of the rebel hosts always confronted it?

Certain it was, and you, my comrades, know it too well, that its career was as checkered, as changeful, and as varied as the face of a spring sky, 'thwart which the ever-moving clouds are prone to fit. It was now victorious and again defeated, now jubilant, and again depressed and disheartened, but always ready to wrestle mightily with the opposing forces, although at times it seemed to be battling against very fate itself. Although at darksome periods the victim of incompetent generals, and at other times betrayed and defeated because of petty official jealousy, cowardice, or conduct verging on treason itself, it never for an instant faltered in the performance of duty, whether unsurmountable obstacles

appeared to loom up in the way, or the road was level and the prize secure. It made no difference whether the slippery and treacherous heights of Fredericksburg lay in the way, or the dark, frigid waters of Mine Run separated it from the foe, it needed no urging. The bugle-call found it ready for action, from which it frequently issued triumphant, and sometimes defeated but not dismayed, and never clothed with dishonor. Whatever else may be charged against the Army of the Potomac, it can never be truthfully asserted that it ever betrayed a trust, or ever deserted its post without a severe and deadly struggle, and bereft of many of its dead yet unconquered heroes. From the beautiful river which courses past the last resting place of the Father of his Country to the very gates of the citadel of treason, the State which gave a Washington to the nation is ridged with the peaceful wounds of those who, like us, surviving comrades of the Twelfth New Jersey Volunteers, left their homes and fought in the Army of the Potomac in defense of our imperilled liberties, the honor of the nation, and that freedom might indeed not be blotted out in this great and glorious land of ours.

Ours was not a selfish motive; no mercenary purposes welled up within our hearts when we formed a common brotherhood in our pleasant camp within the borders of this beautiful city, and swore, like young Hannibal, eternal enmity against the enemies of our country. Gold could not have lured us from the homes of our loved ones, from the scenes of peace and plenty, from the fair and beautiful landscape of our Northern homes, then rich with their golden offerings of harvest time. It could not have tempted us to confront the uncertainties of the future, and love of glory and renown could not have prompted us to face the deathly hail that smote like the sickle of death the brave men who, like a wall of living fire, stood between us and national destruction. Why then did we forsake all the enjoyments and endearments of home? Why the aged sire, whose locks were withered o'er? the comely maiden whom we loved so well? the gentle wife and the prattling little ones? The answer is, *amor patria*, and duty, and patriotism called us to arms! They spoke to us in trumpet tones at a time, indeed, "that tried men's souls"—a painful and dangerous period in the history of our country, when peace had flown and dark winged war shrouded our national horizon. We mustered at a time when rebellion was at the very height of its power, and when the life of our country trembled in the balance. We marched resolving to offer our lives upon the sacred altar of patriotism, that liberty and Union might be triumphant, and this fair and God-blest nation might live and treason perish. Not as hirelings, proceeding to battle for filthy lucre; not as professional soldiers, having no occupation, and a love of war and thirst for glory, but as patriotic citizen-soldiery, unacquainted with the art of war, fully alive to the importance of the issue at stake, with our hearts pulsating with the blood of patriotism, we members of the Twelfth New Jersey Volunteers, on the seventh day of September, 1862, departed from this charming city, whose love

of liberty is engraven on yonder memorial shaft, to do battle against wrong and for the right.

At this period dark forebodings, like hungry vultures eager to feast and fatten on their prey, hung over the destinies of the land we love so well. Rebellion thus far had not been thwarted, but was apparently stronger and more belligerent and insolent than ever. The disastrous Peninsula campaign had ended, and the weakened and defeated Army of the Potomac had hastened back to the defense of the threatened capital of the nation. The very altar of Liberty itself for a time was menaced by the victorious hordes of rebellion. The second defeat at Bull Run,—where our own gallant Kearney fell,—through the treachery or cowardice of the second Arnold, whom we soon after consigned to disgrace and oblivion, had plunged the nation into the profoundest depths of despondency and gloom. In the West the victorious armies of the rebellion and its gun-boats blocked most all navigation of the Father of Waters, and the rebel guns reverberated defiance along the borders of loyal states, creating consternation and grief, and louder than ever spake treason's guns along the Atlantic Coast, bidding defiance to our country's flag as beautifully it kissed the breeze from full many a mast-head. The energies of the nation seemed to be paralyzed, divided sentiment reigned in the councils at Washington, and bold, bad men plotted treason at home, and openly declared "the war for the preservation of the Union a failure." Never before had there been such a dark period of distrust, of doubt, and of fear. 'Mid all these checkered scenes, while stars in our country's sky shone dimly and hope was almost lost, when the nation was drifting on an unknown sea, almost without chart and compass, and the rocks and the reefs were near her, we comrades unsheathed our swords or shouldered our muskets, and with the heartfelt and silent prayers of our loved ones following us, sadly, yet willingly, bade farewell to home and kindred and marched toward the distant battlefield.

Ours was no ordinary regiment, for as regards moral training, intelligence, wealth, muscle, and *esprit du corps*, it was composed of the very nobility of South and West Jersey,—men who were fitted to fill most any station in life,—in brief, the flower of the rising generation. But few, if any aged soldiers were in our well-filled ranks, and therefore it fully represented the youth, rather than the middle age of man. It may be assumed that nine-tenths of the men who bore muskets were less than twenty-five years of age, some were younger than twenty, and the remainder not older than thirty-five or forty. Of the officers, with but two or three exceptions, all were less than thirty-five years of age, and a few of them under twenty-one. It was, as has been intimated, an intellectual regiment, and therefore it bore "thinking bayonets." The ranks were filled alike by the intelligent mechanic, the thoughtful plough-boy, by rising barristers, unmaturing financiers, and half-fledged ministers. All trades and professions were fully represented in this regiment, whose noble deeds we have met here to-day, on a fitting

occasion—the birthday of the immortal Washington—to commemorate. We can and do point with pride to the fact that, in most emergencies, where thoughtfulness and steady nerves were required, we were equal to the task. I seek to institute no comparison; I would not dim the glory of a single banner that was borne aloft amid the shot and shell of battle during our country's peril, but I do put it on record here, and now, that for all the qualifications mentioned no better, and many inferior regiments entered the field of conflict. When we had been brigaded was there a gallant officer needed to lead a forlorn hope, or men ready to follow him? They came from the Twelfth New Jersey. Was there inventive genius called for? It was found in our regiment. Was there desperate work to be done? Yes, often; and the material was found in the Twelfth New Jersey, with ready sword and musket, backed up by brawn and muscle.

On the record of its achievements I need not trespass, for behold, on its battle-scarred flags are emblazoned in imperishable letters the history of its struggles and its victories and defeats. Deep on the tablets of memory, and deeper within the recesses of our hearts, is indelibly written the story of our devotion to the cause of liberty and national freedom, and our hatred to rebellion. From Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Falling Waters, Auburn Mills, Bristow Station, Blackburn's Ford, Robinson's Tavern, Mine Run, Morton's Ford, Wilderness, Spottsylvania, Spottsylvania Court House, North and South Anna Rivers, Talapotomy, Cold Harbor, Petersburg, Deep Bottom, Mine Explosion, North bank of James River, Reams' Station, Fort Sedgwick, Hatcher's Run, Boydton Plank Road, Hatcher's Run (again), Dabney's Mills, Hatcher's Run (again), Boydton Plank Road (again), Capture of Petersburg, Sailor's Creek, High Bridge, Farmville and Appomattox, comes up the story of our hardships, our victories, our conquests, and our final triumph over armed rebellion. We boast not of our record; there it is, behold it!

Around our tempest-riven colors—precious emblems of the free and now happily united country, comrades and brothers in a common cause—fell the companions and tent-mates of our ripened youth—those with whom we bivouaced, marched and fought—those with whom we trusted confidingly, knowing and *feeling* that so long as life lasted they would be true to us and the cause they loved so well. We recall our grief, which unbidden came, when we saw them fall with their faces toward the foe, and drop an honest tear to their memories; while to-day some of them may be looking down upon these earthly scenes—this reunion to commemorate the success of the cause in which they fought so well, and, alas! fell; to attest our fidelity anew to the sacred and triumphant cause, and to make closer the bonds of love which should hold us closely to each other's hearts. Around those glorious folds under which our gallant standard-bearer, Cheeseman, and others not less gallant, closed their eyes in death, as the flag-staffs dropped from their powerless hands, fell some of the warmest hearts that have ever throbbed—the cavalier-like Davis, the impulsive McComb, the gentle-

manly Fogg, the warm-hearted and ambitious Rich, the chivalrous Lowe, the brave Stratton, the genial Horsfall, the astute Pierson, and the noble Townsend, and other brave and true men, bearers of swords and muskets. Near them, amid the heat and the searching hail of battle, those twin-beloved commanders, the gallant and lamented Hayes and Smythe, yielded up their precious lives. These did not witness the triumph of the cause they had baptized with their blood, for they died ere the crimson tide engulfed the rebel hosts, and the dove of peace, with sweet healing in her wings, had planted her olive branches in both northern and southern soils. They did not live to see the crowning glory of the close, but the work went on, and to-day the nation saved by them, and us, is stronger and more enduring, because it is cemented with so much precious blood.

A partial cost of the American war is admirably condensed into a paragraph in a recent report of Mr. S. G. Bridges, of Keokuk, Iowa, who has the contract for furnishing all the National Cemeteries with headstones and blocks, the former bearing the name of the dead soldier beneath, when it is known, and the latter indicating the grave where its occupant is unknown. There are buried to-day in National Cemeteries 253,000 Union soldiers who lost their lives in the great war. Of these 104,000 are unknown. Add to these 50,000 resting in cemeteries at home, and we have an army greater than that which marched with Sherman to the sea, or fought the battles of the Wilderness, lying buried in the tracks of the great struggle, or in northern cemeteries, one-third of which is unknown, and no man can tell the name of a single soldier in its ranks. Most of these unknown dead are buried on the battlefields. Of the twenty-four interred at Ball's Bluff, not one is known. At Vicksburg 12,687 nameless heroes sleep their last sleep. There was scant time in those dire days of desperate struggle to treat reverently the memories of those who fell. Even in the Arlington Cemetery, where the most favorable conditions existed for making the record accurate and complete, there are 1,798 graves tenanted by unknown dead. They were soldiers under the flag, they fought and died—that is all.

Two memorable events will be celebrated in a few months in the city from which, nearly a century ago, rang out clear and strong the death knell to kings and tyranny in this country. It is not designed to celebrate the two separately, but together—because you cannot separate them. The first will be the birth of the nation and subsequent triumph over British tyranny, and the second will be the salvation of the nation from those who would have destroyed it fifteen years ago. They will permit of no division, for they are as inseparably and firmly united as the links in the chain, and when you celebrate the success of the one you must inevitably celebrate the success of the other. Both are important epochs in American history, and both victories over despotism, because in both we broke the fetters, and became freemen, and because we *are* freemen. We propose to celebrate the two together—first our salvation and secondly our deliverance. And why not? We have already celebrated striking events in our history—the destruc-

tion of tea at Boston Harbor, the battles of Bunker Hill, Trenton, Princeton, White Plains, and other battles fought during the Revolutionary war for our independence, and why not the success of the battles which have saved the nation? If not this, then the *fact* that the life of the nation has been saved through the blood and treasure of her loyal sons? I cannot understand how we can very well prevent a grand jollification over the double event, because when we rejoice over our birth and our *continuance* as a nation, we must, as a necessity, glorify the men and applaud the means that have contributed toward both. I would be the last person to sow seeds of dissension in the great gathering which shall meet at Philadelphia, for I believe there will be laid the foundation of an enduring peace, and the beginning of national prosperity anew, but I maintain that during the Centennial it will be impossible to efface the scars or the recollection of a bitter and bloody rebellion. It is one of the pages, and the blackest page in the nation's history. But while celebrating the two prominent eras, the first (our birth) will overshadow the other, and while contemplating it, and our present grandeur, we can afford to forgive those who wounded us, and have since sworn allegiance anew to the cause they had once spurned. I believe that we, my comrades, are ready to meet those against whom we fought half-way, but we do not intend to go the whole way, nor humiliate ourselves, nor reflect discredit upon the cause for which we fought, and for which hundreds of thousands of our brave comrades have yielded up their lives, by toadying to our late enemy, as, unfortunately, for their self-respect, some Northern soldiers already have. We have nothing to be ashamed of, and nothing therefore to apologize for. We may and do forgive our erring brethren, and for the sake of peace will condescend to call them rebels no longer, but brethren of a common household; *but while we forgive we can never forget.* It is an impossibility! Can we destroy memory and yet live? Neither can we obliterate, as it were with the dash of a pen, the remembrance of the bloody drama in which they and we have played such an important part.

I reiterate that this annual recurrence to-day brings freshly to mind the sacrifices made by those at whose shrines a nation pays homage. It calls us back to the time when brave men, good men and true men, gave up all of luxury, of peace and happiness incident to the roof-tree of their beloved ones and imperilled their lives in defense of a sacred trust—men who foreswore most everything that makes life buoyant—men who suffered and died, that the nation, by their deaths and through their deaths, might issue from the terrible storm pure, strong, united and victorious over treason and traitors. Into the contest was thrown the energies of the youthful brains and muscles of the land—the beardless youth and the budding manhood of the country; many fell, but many survived, and forth from the smoke and blood of battle stepped matured men, fit for any responsibility or station in life. They were men bearing the red scars of battle, which spake, and still speak in stronger and nobler language than the Cross of the Legion of Honor, or the Iron Crosses, with their imperial crests, for these honorable scars represented

valor and suffering exhibited in defense of the life of the American nation and liberties of the American people, and in defense of the only asylum in the world for the oppressed of every clime.

But of the great army which was mustered out under the shadow of the National Capitol, of the vast army which quietly and peacefully disbanded, and scattered as the leaves of the forest fall, many have passed away, never to return. The Army of the Union no longer exists; its depleted battalions are fast falling before the sickle of death, the remorseless reaper. Not by platoons, or in files do they fall, but one by one, as the ripened fruit falls before the withering breath of autumn, they fall and are buried. Yet a few years more, and the men who carried the old flag and planted it on treason's battlements will have ceased to exist, will have died and been buried from the sight of man. The history of their daring will live always; nothing can tarnish it or steal a single glory away. It will live in hearts that are not yet; it will be printed on the memory of a nation that will stand on the dizzy height of power, glory and renown, and future ages will pay the debt of gratitude to the veterans of 1861-5 that a nation now withholds.

A vote of thanks was tendered Comrade Hineine for the foregoing address.

Surgeon McCullough and Colonel Nicholls, of the First Delaware Volunteers, together with several other comrades, were called on, and responded in brief addresses.

A vote of thanks was tendered the Woodbury Hall Association for the use of their beautiful hall, tendered the Society to hold its annual Reunion in.

No further business being presented, the Society adjourned until February 22, 1877, at 10 o'clock A. M.

The members and friends then repaired to the hotel of Joseph Paul and partook of their annual dinner.

JOHN TONKIN, *Secretary.*