

BRECKINRIDGE

An Address on the Kentucky Volunteers

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PREFACE

THE BATTLE of Buena Vista is hardly a name to most Americans today. Fought long ago in an almost forgotten war, its cannon flashes are merely the flicker of summer lightning on the horizon of our memory. Yet in its day it was a notable, desperate and bloody affair. Five thousand Americans, mostly volunteers from what were then our Western states, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi and Arkansas, met fourteen thousand Mexicans in a savage two-day battle. Though technically a victory for the Americans who held the ground at the end of the battle, both armies subsequently withdrew to their original positions.

In July, 1847, nearly five months after the battle, the bodies of a score of Kentucky dead were returned to their home state for a mass military funeral. The fact that the Kentuckians had not exactly covered themselves with glory during the battle may have put their fellow citizens on the defensive, but it also undoubtedly increased the emotional fervor of the occasion. Then, too, one of the dead to be commemorated was Henry Clay, Jr., son of the leading statesman and most popular figure in Kentucky.

The choice of the principal orator of the day was an unusual one. John C. Breckinridge was indeed a prominent lawyer and had already begun that long political career which was to lead him to the Senate and eventually to cabinet rank in the Confederacy. But like many other Americans, though very few Kentuckians, he had greeted the declaration of war with Mexico with little enthusiasm. The call for volunteers received no answer from him.

Nevertheless, his fame as an orator was such that he was asked to deliver the principal address. That his fame was well-founded will be apparent if you will read his speech with an ear tuned to the eloquence of an earlier day, before fireside chats and television press conferences. One result at least cannot be denied. Caught up in the spell of his own oratory, his doubts dissolved and soon afterward he volunteered for the army and was commissioned a major of Kentucky Volunteers.

A. H.



John C. Beckinridge.

AN ADDRESS

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

BURIAL OF THE KENTUCKY VOLUNTEERS,

WHO FELL AT BUENA VISTA;

DELIVERED AT FRANKFORT, ON TUESDAY, THE 26TH OF JULY, 1847,

BY JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE;

WITH THE

REMARKS OF THE REV. JOHN H. BROWN,

ON THE SAME OCCASION.

LEXINGTON, KY.

PRINTED AT THE OBSERVER AND REPORTER OFFICE.

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1847.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

LEXINGTON, JULY 21, 1847.

JNO. C. BRECKINRIDGE, Esq.,

Dear Sir:—We would respectfully solicit, for publication, a copy of the eloquent and appropriate address delivered by you, in Frankfort, yesterday, on the occasion of the Burial of Col. McKee and others, who fell at Buena Vista.

Your compliance, at your earliest convenience, will greatly oblige your ob't serv't.

Very respectfully,

E. OLDHAM,

Ch'n Com. Arrang'ts.

LEXINGTON, JULY 22, 1847.

Dear Sir:

I have received your note of yesterday, and enclose, herewith, the address alluded to.

Very respectfully your obedient servant,

JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE.

EDWARD OLDHAM, *Ch'n of Com. of Arrangements.*

LEXINGTON, JULY 21, 1847.

REV. JOHN H. BROWN,

Sir:—Will you please favor us with a copy, for publication, of the highly appropriate address delivered by you in Frankfort, yesterday, on the occasion of the Funeral of Col. McKee and others, who fell at Buena Vista.

Your compliance will greatly oblige your ob't serv't.

Very respectfully,

E. OLDHAM,

Ch'n Com. Arrangements.

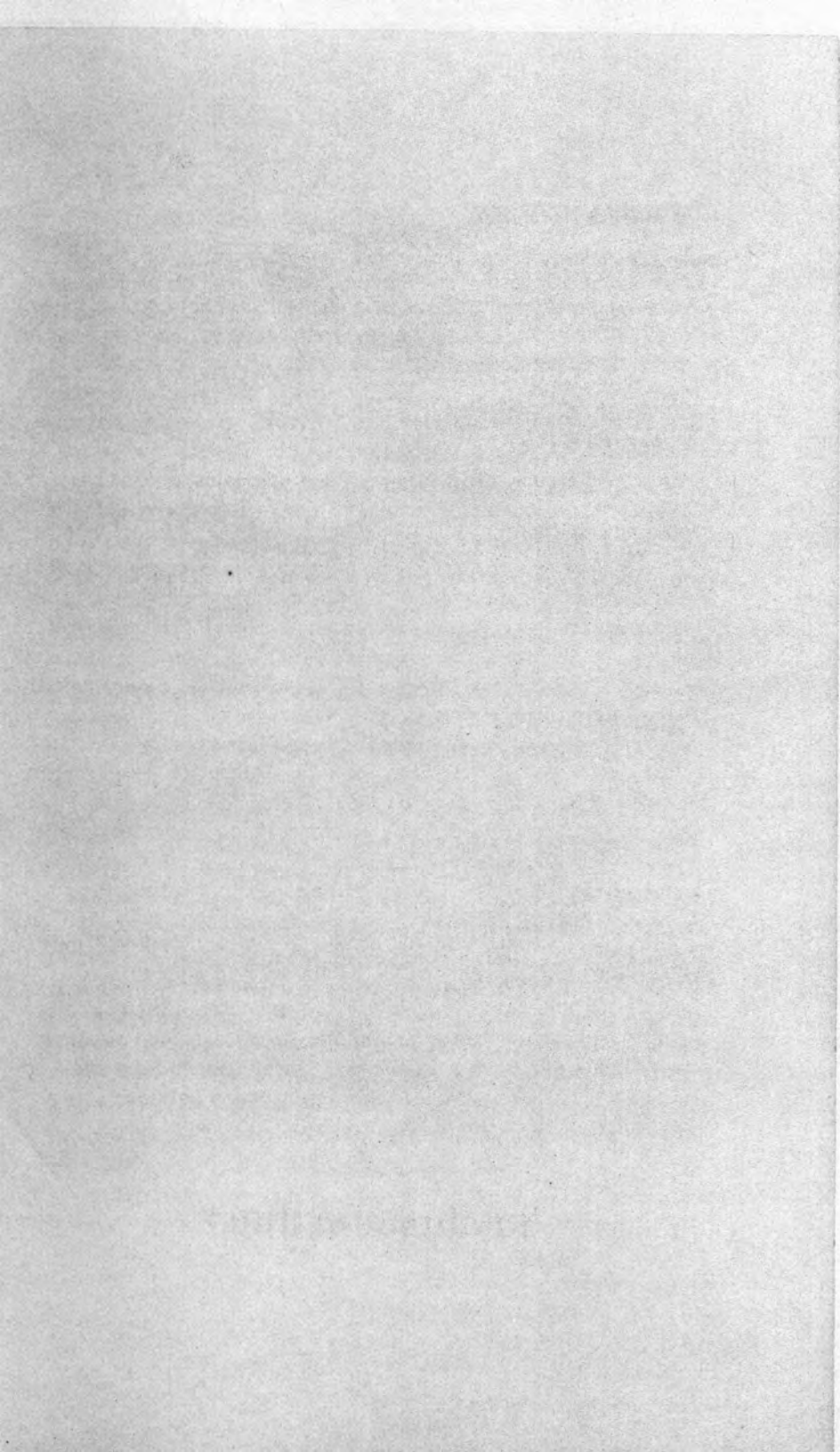
LEXINGTON, JULY 21, 1847.

MR. E. OLDHAM, *Ch'n Com. Arrang'ts.*

Dear Sir:—In compliance with your request, you have a copy of my address delivered at Frankfort on the 20th inst., on the occasion of the Funeral of Col. McKee and others, who fell at Buena Vista.

Respectfully,

JOHN H. BROWN.



MR. BRECKINRIDGE'S ADDRESS.

We are assembled on a mission of gratitude, to honor the memory of those who evinced the loftiest patriotism by giving their lives for their country. The place of sacrifice was Buena Vista, a name engraved on every American heart. While our whole country was represented there, to the lot of Kentucky fell an uncommon portion, both of glory and bereavement. The mortal remains of a part of her sons who perished in that battle, lie before us, and will be consigned to the grave with every circumstance of honor. Other citizens fell there, whose bodies lie not beside these, their comrades; but the separation is not eternal. The commonwealth will be careful to recover the ashes, as well as to cherish the memory of all her children; not one will be forgotten; to all belong a common grave and a common monument.

These solemn obsequies are the offspring of emotions as universal as they are noble; confined to no period, clime, or people. The customs of preserving the remains of the dead, of honoring their memory and perpetuating their remembrance, exist in every nation. The most savage tribes bear from the field the bodies of their slain, and celebrate in rude song their virtues and exploits. In many countries, the friends of the departed, at each return of spring, strew flowers over their graves, and thus give the freshness of life to the silence and solitude of the tomb. The earth is covered with memorials of the dead. The cherished relics of friends—their forms preserved in the marble of the sculptor and the colors of the painter—the public cemetery—the family graveyard—every monument set up to human memory—the mausoleum of the great—the simple stone that marks the resting place of the humble and obscure—all, all proclaim the depth and extent of this common feeling of our nature. In obedience to such sentiments, the remains of our heroes were recovered from the soil of an enemy, and are now restored to the protection of their country. Amidst these external proofs of respect and honor, it is proper to express our grateful sense of their courage, their servi-

ces and their worth. Wherefore, on this occasion, I will relate some particulars of their lives and characters, as an act of gratitude to them, and for the instruction of the living.

WILLIAM R. MCKEE was born in the county of Garrard, on the 24th day of September, 1808, and at his death was in the 39th year of his age. He came of patriotic blood. William McKee, his grandfather, was one of the pioneers of Kentucky, and bore a conspicuous part in her early battles. His father, the late Samuel McKee, was a distinguished citizen of the State, and for some years one of her Representatives in Congress. In the war of 1812, though still holding that trust, he shouldered his musket as a private soldier, and served a campaign in the north-west, declaring that the times required every citizen to do his duty, and show his readiness to serve his country in any capacity. The subject of this sketch was early imbued with similar sentiments of duty, which afterwards bore their proper fruit. His education was received at West Point, where he graduated with distinction in 1829, and immediately entered the army as Lieutenant in a company of the third regiment of artillery. He continued in the service until 1836, when, the claims of his family demanding attention, and the army, in time of peace opening no avenue to fortune or distinction, he resigned his commission and removed to Lexington. Here, for ten years, he was largely engaged in business pursuits, occupying a prominent station in society, and adorning that station with all the virtues of social life.

When the war was declared, and a requisition for volunteers made on Kentucky, McKee was among the first to offer his services. He volunteered, (in his own modest language,) "to serve in any capacity in which he could be useful." It was an offering of pure patriotism. The sacrifice was great, for it involved the abandonment of extensive and profitable pursuits, and separation from an affectionate family and devoted friends. It promised no other reward than the gratitude of his countrymen. He never had been in public life; his path led not towards political honors; his feelings were all domestic and social. He esteemed it a privilege to serve his country, and in addition a peculiar duty. Having been educated at the military academy of the union, with the highest sense of honor and obligation, he recognized the national right to his services.

It was not reserved for him to serve in the ranks. With a prop-

er estimate of his merit, the Governor appointed him Colonel of the second regiment of Kentucky infantry. His connection with this command continued, with reciprocal sentiments of love and confidence, until it was severed by his fall at Buena Vista. It is well known, that regiment possessed the high confidence of the commanding General. In the arrangements for battle, it was posted on the right, where the main attack was expected. Afterwards, transferred to the centre of the field, it fought under the eye of the General. When the enemy, in the last combined effort to force Gen. Taylor's position, poured his masses from the left and front upon the centre, the second Kentucky infantry formed a part of the handfull who met the shock. It was here, while leading his regiment with gallantry above all praise, and contesting the ground against odds of more than four to one, McKee fell—fell in the right line of his duty—fell as became his name and his life. His affectionate comrades bore his body from the field; his grateful country restores it, with the last honors, to its kindred dust.

Of such a man it is difficult for a friend to speak, except in the language of warmest eulogy; he won favorable opinions from all men—all who knew him loved him. His character inspired at the same time respect and affection. Nature had endowed him with a temper of uncommon firmness. His countenance wore an habitual expression of calm intrepidity—it sat on each feature; it spoke in each lineament. This native resolution was tempered by a kind and noble heart—his life was filled with good offices. Perhaps there is not one who knew him, within whose memory is not recorded some act of his courtesy or kindness. He was prudent, without timidity—amiable, without weakness—firm, without austerity—generous, open and true. He is gone, but his memory remains to testify that he lived not in vain. To his country he left his glorious example, and to his bereaved widow and orphan children, the great inheritance of a spotless name.

On the same field, and at the same time, perished another son of Kentucky, who bore a name honored in this and other lands—a name for more than forty years identified with the history of the Commonwealth and the Union. HENRY CLAY, JR., was born at Ashland, on the 11th day of April, 1811. His childhood received the double benefit of excellent precepts and high examples. His mind began to retain lasting impressions at a period propitious to

the formation of elevated and patriotic sentiments. At that day, the principles and events of the revolution yet engrossed the thoughts and conversation of the people; our national anniversaries were celebrated with enthusiasm; the youthful heart of the country glowed with high and almost romantic patriotism. At the same time, the nation was involved in war. Kentucky embarked with ardor in the cause of her country, and freely shed her blood in its defence. At the family hearth, young Clay caught inspiration from the same spirit that infused its power and temper into the councils of the Union—and the flame, then kindled, burned until it was quenched in his own blood. He was educated at West Point. His father was his companion to the academy; and when they were about to separate, taking the boy by the hand and pointing to the surrounding hills, made memorable by the events of the revolution, he said: "Remember, my son, that from these heights the spirits of our revolutionary heroes are the witnesses of your conduct." Thus nature and education combined to form the high bearing and honorable sentiments that marked his social intercourse. For several years, Col. Clay lived in his native county of Fayette, and represented her, with honor, in the General Assembly. When he entered the service of his country, he was a citizen of Louisville. At the first call to arms, he tendered his services, and was appointed Lieutenant Colonel of the second Kentucky Infantry. At Buena Vista he was with that noble regiment; through all the vicissitudes of the day, he filled his station with distinguished courage, and fell at the moment of victory.

Col. Clay was a man of great nobleness and chivalry. To an impetuous and ardent nature were united the kindred qualities of honor, generosity and truth. For every object of his affections he felt enthusiastic devotion. One of those objects was his country; he served her with the alacrity of a devoted heart, and when he died in her defence, there remained not behind a braver man or better patriot.

On that field, also, fell Captain W^M. T. WILLIS, at the head of a company of infantry from the county of Jessamine. His eulogy may be best expressed in a few words of simple narrative. An eminent lawyer, and past the meridian of life, his position and age might have exempted him from the toils of war; but he sought no exemption. Three noble boys were his companions to the field; they shared his perils, followed his brave example, and happily

survive to bear their father's honors and their own. Capt. Willis was ill at Monterey when the intelligence came of the Mexican's advance. He rose from his bed, hastened forward to the army, and gallantly commanded his company in the battle, until at the close of the day he fell with McKee and Clay, in the last terrible onset. This was patriotism indeed—this was an act to reveal the governing motives of conduct. Oft times, in human life, some signal achievement performed at its close, reflects its character on the past, and discloses the true temper of the heart. Let all men judge William T. Willis in the light of these truths—that he loved his country, and freely died in her cause.

It remains to speak of one whose courage and fate excited mingled emotions of pride and sadness. EDWARD M. VAUGHN, adjutant of the Kentucky cavalry, fell at Buena Vista at the close of a successful charge. His early death, though crowned with honor, quenched high hopes and ended a bright career. He was young, but had known adversity and borne it well. His soul panted for distinction, and he purposed to achieve it. Solitary, but self-relying, his noble resolution depended alone on its own strength. Master of the past, he looked with confidence to the future. No borrowed light shone on his path—no avenue to fame was opened before him by power, patronage, or wealth. When the moment of departure came, he took by the hand his trusted friends—embraced his venerable parents, far descended in the vale of years—and then all ceremonies of separation were over. The public ear was filled with other names; yet he was followed by true hearts that felt he would return with honor, or return not at all. When the day of trial came, his gallant spirit responded to the call of duty; his chosen place was in advance, "on the perilous edge of battle," and there he fell, pierced with four and twenty wounds.

Thus perished young Vaughn, in the morning of life—a man gifted with noble and lovely qualities. His heart was full of tenderness and honor. His whole being was instinct with elevated sentiments. Among his associates, he stood conspicuous in the chivalry of his nature. In a great cause he would have dared whatever man might accomplish; for his country he would have encountered certain destruction; with Roman devotion, he would have held the bridge against a host, or leaped into the yawning gulf.

Beside the bodies of the officers lie those of the private soldiers. The spirit of our people is illustrated in the equal tribute paid to the memories of all these patriots. The distinctions of rank exist no longer. Upon them all, death has set the seal of equality. The limit of devotion was reached in a common death for a common country. They owned the same allegiance—shared the same perils—fell on the same field. It is most meet they should together find soldier's graves. The names of these brave men were W. W. BAYLES, WM. THWAITS, N. RAMEY, THOS. WEIGART, ALEX. G. MORGAN, C. JONES, H. CARTY, T. McH. DOZIER, H. TROTTER, C. B. THOMPSON, and W. T. GREEN; let them be remembered and recorded. Theirs was no reluctant service, but the free gift of citizens who felt that the public honor was their own. Some of them had filled other stations, and were qualified to command where they obeyed. Others were mere boys, transferred from the tenderness of home to the terrors of the battle-field, and well illustrated amidst its trying scenes the native heroism of their blood.

Such were the characters of these soldiers—such their actions. For the rest, theirs was a happy fate; to all concerned belongs congratulation rather than sympathy. Are there here any relatives or friends who mourn for these dead, and in the bitterness of their grief refuse to be comforted? If there be, let them consider the vicissitudes, the temptations, the sorrows of human life—and then rejoice that these were spared to the signal glory of such an end, that they escaped death in every other form, to meet it at a time and in a manner to fix their fame forever, and leave their names a precious legacy to the whole country.

The fate of Powell and Maxey may indeed excite emotions of sadness. It was not their fortune to reach the field, where honors might be won. Struck down by disease, they perished ere they had attained the mark of their honorable ambition, but they died on the path that led to glory, and that path they trod at the call of their country. Therefore, with equal gratitude, let them be interred beside their more fortunate comrades.

Amidst the recollections of that day, much must remain unsaid, yet one character commands the especial tribute of our praise; for who can image that battle to himself, and not pause to view the greatest figure in the scene? The spontaneous feeling of this people is to honor ZACHARY TAYLOR, the man, in whom, to the courage.

of the hero, is united the heart of the philanthropist. The blaze of military glory cannot obscure the greater lustre of his moral qualities. In the storm of battle, behold him, stern, immovable, self-poised; but when the carnage is over, and to the excitement of strife succeed the wants and suffering of the soldier, see the noble exhibition of tenderness, compassion, humanity, to friend and foe; these things more adorn him than all the honors of the battle field. Four times has it been his peculiar fate to be lost to the sight, and almost to the hopes of his countrymen, and as often has he emerged from apprehended disaster, covered with glory. Hence, his name has sunk into the hearts of the people; it has become a household word with every class, from the summit of society to its lowest foundations. Amidst these great events how striking does he appear in his grand simplicity, a model of true greatness, without ostentation. The simple narrative of his deeds will be his eulogy.

For all the dead, the limit of eulogy is to say they were present at Buena Vista, and performed their duty. The contemplation of that great engagement fills the mind with wonder. The resolution to meet the enemy there, presents an example of moral grandeur without a parallel. Gen. Taylor, being at the head of less than five thousand men, learned that the Mexican army was advancing in force over twenty thousand. Well do we remember the gloomy apprehensions that pervaded the Union, as rumors came thick and fast of the situation of our troops, and the numbers of the foe; the best hope was, that, after a toilsome and bloody retreat, the exhausted remnant of our army might lie panting behind the fortifications of Monterey. Gen. Taylor resolved to give battle; his purpose taken, he chose his position and calmly awaited the approach of the enemy. The odds were fearful, but nothing was desperate to the hero of Palo Alto, Resaca, and Monterey. On the 22d of February (an auspicious day to the Americans) the long lines of the Mexican army were seen advancing up the beautiful vale from which the field derives its name. They came, confident, exulting, and already in imagination driving before them the handful of their enemies. At Buena Vista, the American army, drawn up in order of battle, was prepared to receive them. The Mexican chief paused before that firm array, as doubting the reality of the purpose it indicated. An indecisive skirmish proved the temper of our troops, and their resolve to greet him with bloody welcome.

The valley was narrow, a range of mountains rose on either hand—the actions must needs be face to face. The remainder of the far spent day sufficed not for the great struggle! each army slept in position on the field, and on the morning of the 23d, the terrible conflict began. With impetuous valor the vast columns of the enemy advanced to the onset; every element of war performed its dreadful part—the blaze of musketry flashed over the field—the lance and bayonet did their work—the earth shook beneath the rush of cavalry—the mountains trembled to the roar of artillery. The shock was met by spirits worthy to hold the honor of their country. Upon the right, the left, the centre, the conflict raged with unabated fury. The field was narrow, yet too large for its few defenders. From point to point they rushed with ardor, wherever danger threatened most.

“From rank to rank their volleyed thunder flew;”

and celerity, constancy and courage atoned for want of numbers; yet the combat deepens; can human valor, strength and skill combined, longer sustain the unequal contest—must not the brave perish, must not our flag go down? not on that field—not before that foe; for see!—the freshening breeze throws aside the shroud of battle—and behold! that Spartan band, with unbroken ranks, press back the routed masses of the foe—their standards full high advanced, and the voice of victory on their lips. Again and again followed the charge, the struggle, the repulse; as rooted to their position as the eternal hills around them, the diminished, exhausted but unconquered few, from sun to sun, sustained the ceaseless shock, and fought as if conscious that the genius of their country hovered over the scene, and pierced with anxious eyes the cloud of battle, to discern the bearing of her children there. The strife is ended—the day is won—the American army is victor of the wondrous field! Honored, thrice honored be the living and the dead. To the memory of the fallen, we render the last honors due to exalted services; to the survivors, we pay the willing tribute of admiration and gratitude.

The mind in vain attempts to think of that battle as an event of this generation; it grows on the imagination as some grand dream, or tale of conflict fought in the heroic ages, and transmitted by tradition. Far from their country, their communications cut off, encompassed by overwhelming numbers, and in the presence of a relentless foe, our little army stood like the ten thousand Greeks in

heroic deeds. The nation that rewards the devotion of her sons will never want defenders. To the patriot, no consolation can be more precious than the assurance that he will be remembered by his country. On the bloody field it nerves his arm, and at the moment of dissolution soothes his parting spirit.

“Come to the bridal chamber, Death!
 Come to the mother when she feels
 For the first time her first born's breath;
 Come in consumption's ghastly form.
 The earthquake shock, the ocean storm;
 Come when the heart beats high and warm
 With banquet-song, and dance, and wine
 And thou art terrible. * * *

But to the hero, when his sword
 Has won the battle for the free,
 Thy voice sounds like a prophet's word,
 And in its hollow tones are heard
 The thanks of millions yet to be.”

We will bury our dead in that beautiful cemetery overlooking the river of the State, and in view of the Capitol. The voice of their great example will instruct the public servants, and quell the tumults of faction. Discord, ere she tears the vitals of the state will pause, rebuked by the silent eloquence of the place. In times of public peril, the ashes of these dead will better serve their country than a thousand bayonets. In the extremity of the Commonwealth, though all else should be lost, the worth and patriotism of the State will rally to the great memories that cluster there, as around household Gods and draw from them inspiration to redeem her.

The field whereon our heroes fell, will remain their monument forever. Another is theirs, erected in the hearts of their countrymen. To mark the consecrated spot where their remains repose, the State will set up a column to their memory, and inscribe on it the narrative of their actions. When, hereafter, Kentuckians, as they muse amidst these memorials of the dead, shall look upon that column, pointing heavenward, and read the inscription on it, and remember the sacred dust beneath it, they will elevate their hearts in gratitude to Almighty God that he gave the Commonwealth such children, and turn from the sad but glorious spot, purer men and better citizens.

REMARKS OF MR. BROWN.

It has been customary in all ages and among all nations to commemorate great names and great events—to record for coming ages the lives and memorable deeds of great and good men. And however this custom may have been abused, sometimes to serve the interest of a party, and at other times for ends wholly unwarrantable, still, avoiding the abuse, it is our duty to transmit to posterity in some permanent form, the memory of the wise and the great, the valorous and the good. By so doing, some of the noblest feelings of our nature are improved. Such monumental records are incalculably useful to posterity—constituting, as they do, a class of great outstanding facts, as incentives to those who follow on the stage of action. Frozen indeed must be that heart, that could withhold due respect from the illustrious dead—from those who cheerfully went forth to the toils of the camp and the perils of the battle, who jeopardized their lives in the high places of the field—and who fell in defence of their country's honor, their country's rights. The names of Patriots and venerated Statesmen have ever been cherished and handed down to posterity. It is right that it should be so. There is a principle in our nature impelling to this course. Therefore its universality—its observance in all ages and among all nations. 'Tis in obedience to this impulse we are assembled to-day. And surely, at such a time as this—a day set apart for the interment of those who were our associates—our friends and our relatives—and having before us the remains of those who so lately fell, and whose remembrance is still so dear to our hearts—surely, the sense of all these, and the sight of all this funeral attendance—cannot fail to make a deep impression on our hearts. Sad indeed, fellow countrymen, are the recollections which the present solemnities force upon the mind. Alas! Alas! But one short year has elapsed since those brave and patriotic men—without the compulsion of authority, and without the prospect of gain—voluntarily tendered their services to march to our south-west border and repel the invasion of a sister Republic. They nobly and generously disengaged themselves from strong

and tender ties that twined about their hearts—ties calculated to retain them at home in luxury and ease, and in the enjoyments of the domestic circle—ties that would have influenced them, had they been less noble and generous, and patriotic and brave—they promptly obeyed their country's call—they left in the pride of manhood, the vigor of health and the bouyancy of hope; and now the only return, is the fleshless skeletons enclosed in these coffins, and which are this day to be deposited in the companionless cemetery to await the resurrection of the last day. A few months only have elapsed since your tears flowed for him who fell at Monterey—who lies silently in yonder cemetery—and now you are again assembled to shed them over others of Kentucky's sons, to-day to be deposited at his side. This seems to be an illusion. Would to God it were. Many a widowed and orphaned heart would leap for joy if it were. But our eyes behold it, and we are no longer permitted to doubt. The cemetery which contains the ashes of him who fell at Monterey, is soon to receive the ashes of others who fell at Buena Vista.

These are the results of international difficulties when settled by an appeal to arms. In war, death reigns without a rival; without control. War is the element, the sport, the triumph of death. This is manifest, not only in the extent of his conquests, not only in the number of his victims, *but* in the richness of his spoil. In other forms, which death assumes, the feeble and the aged, are usually the victims—but in war his checks are drawn upon the young, the vigorous and the strong. "In peace, children bury their parents; in war, parents bury their children." How great the difference! children lament their parents sincerely indeed, but with that moderate and tranquil sorrow, which it is natural for those to feel who are conscious of still retaining many tender ties—many animating prospects. Parents mourn for their children with the bitterness of despair. The aged parent; the widowed mother, loses, when deprived of her children, *every thing* but the capacity of suffering; her heart, withered and desolate, admits no other object—cherishes no other hope. She is like Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted because they are not. *Such*, at least, is one of the evil consequences of war. How many a heart has been withered and crushed by the stroke which has called us together to-day. True, we mingle our sympathies with theirs, with bereaved parents and widows and orphans, and in obedience

to the divine injunction would weep with them that weep—*still*, this is but a slight mitigation of the horrors of war. 'Tis still true, these noble and brave men, fell victims, not to disease, not accident, but to war. Thou demon of war! how many hast thou slain! When, O! when, will thine insatiable thirst for the blood of human victims be quenched? when? When the nations shall learn war no more—when the sword shall be beat into the ploughshare and the spear into the pruning hook—when all these implements of death shall be buried, and the moisture that nourishes the root of the tree under which they are laid, shall eat more deeply into their edge, and more completely destroy their temper—when all nations with one voice, shall pronounce an awful malediction upon the fiend who shall attempt to dig them from the earth, and again give sharpness to their edge. Then shall the river of peace flow uninterruptedly through all lands and all kingdoms, then will our world, so long convulsed with the storms of strife and tempests of war, like the waters of a peaceful pool reflect the image of *Him* who is the Prince of Peace.

But you will allow me to remind you of a truth enforced in this Providence, which we are slow to learn and prone to forget. We contemplate too little the scenes of futurity—we fasten the eye too exclusively on the life that now is: this world is too much our home; its cares occupy too exclusively our attention, and its treasures claim too high a place among the instruments of our joy. That man is a pauper who extends not his views to another life—who has no prospects of enjoyment in a better world. The concerns of this life are too small to engross the energies of an immortal mind. When I feel myself allured by its charms, and when I see so many, engrossed exclusively in these sublunary scenes, I feel that we degrade our vocation and have a poor enjoyment. Under the solemn circumstances surrounding us to-day, I wish to warn myself and this immense crowd of fellow immortals, that *this* world is not our home—that there awaits us a dying bed, and a lonely grave, and perhaps a sudden transit into the presence of the heart-searching Judge, with whom is no respect of persons, and *before whom* none will be advantaged, because of adventitious elevation, or factitious distinction among his fellows: but the high and the low will find their destiny fixed, and their sentence awarded agreeably to the eternal principles of right. It is recorded of Saladin the Great—the Emperor of the Saracens—that after

having subdued Egypt, retaken Jerusalem, conquered cities without number, and performed exploits almost superhuman, that he finished his life by the performance of an act that deserves to be handed down to the latest posterity. A few moments before he breathed his last sigh, he called to his bed side the Herald who had attended him in all his wars, and borne aloft his banners in many a hard fought battle. He commanded him to fasten to the top of his lance the shroud in which the dying warrior was soon to be buried—go, said he, go through the streets of the city—carry this lance, unfurl this shroud; and while you lift this standard, proclaim—*this, this*, is all that remains of Saladin the Great, the Conqueror, the King; *this*, only remains of all his glory. Fellow mortals, I would this day perform the part of this Herald. I would invite you to gather around these hearses, clad in the weeds of death, and bearing the habiliments of the grave; let the eye be riveted upon them, reduced as they are to a piece of crape, a winding sheet, a coffin, and a few feet of earth—and remember, O man, around whose brow the laurels have been most thickly entwined; *this, this*, is all that shall shortly remain to you of all the honors and goods of earth. As are these, so thou soon must be.

These bodies will soon be committed to the tomb; we are now to perform the last mournful duty and lay away their bodies in the Cemetery. But even then, our work will not be done. They shall not *then* be forgotten. We will *never, no never*, forget their toils and their dangers. We will cherish their memory, onward through life, and in after years, when we visit yonder beautiful cemetery, we will softly draw near to the memorable spot where we deposit their remains, we will lead our infant children to the graves, and while we read the inscription on the marble reared to mark the hallowed place, we will recount to our little ones, the history of their lives, their sufferings and *death* in the memorable victory of Buena Vista.

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