

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE

Jefferson Council, No. 3,

UNION LEAGUE, MARTINSBURG,

On Wednesday Evening, December 2, 1863,

MAJOR D. TITUS,

12th Pennsylvania Cavalry.

BALTIMORE:

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ADDRESS

Flag Presentation

At Martinsburg, West Virginia.

On the evening of the second of December, 1863, at half-past six o'clock, at a regular meeting of the National Union League, (Jefferson Council, No. 3,) the officers being present, the meeting was called to order by A. BRATT, Esq., President; when J. W. ROBERSON and J. R. HITE, Esqs., were appointed a committee, who waited on Maj. DARIUS TITUS, of the 12th Pennsylvania Cavalry, and conducted him to the stand. On the Major's appearance, and taking the stand, he was warmly greeted by cheers from the crowded audience. Prayer was then offered up by the Chaplain; after which the Major delivered an address of the most patriotic character to a crowded hall, spiced with a gentle sprinkle of some of the loyal and patriotic ladies of Martinsburg.

At the conclusion of the address, the folds of this large and beautiful Flag was spread out for inspection, when the audience manifested much interest and satisfaction in the appearance of the Flag, which was expressed by their hearty *cheers*. The meeting was then addressed by the President, in a short yet most eloquent style, in which the patriotic ladies of Martinsburg were highly eulogized, though really not more than they meritoriously deserve.

After the address,—on motion of Lieut. Col. ADAMS, it was unanimously

Resolved, That the President and Maj. TITUS be solicited to furnish a copy of their patriotic addresses to the Secretary of this Society for publication.

G. F. ULLRICK, *Secretary p. t.*

ADDRESS.

*Mr. President, officers and brethren of this patriotic
and honorable association, the Jefferson Union League
of Berkeley county, Virginia :*

On the occasion of dedicating this hall—the new headquarters of the League—and the presentation of the new flag in the name of the patriotic Union citizens of Martinsburg, I shall find it necessary to briefly advert to the objects and purposes intended to be accomplished by the organization of the great “National League of America,” from which this derives its existence—also, somewhat to the history of our country, as the purposes of the League are to sustain our Union and protect our country in this her hour of trouble. On this subject a wide field is observed for thought. Like the eagle as she flits o’er the earth with her broad pinions, she tips the most prominent peaks, so will I have to call your attention, and briefly advert to some of the most important facts which has and now agitate the nation and the public mind, for your consideration.

America, the great and most admired republic of the world! Yet, like other republics and representative Governments, she is now undergoing—what they have done before—a severe trial of strength and stability. The thought comes home to every American heart: Can it be possible that our Union is dissolved? This young republic, only about eighty-six years since its organization—while other Republics have stood centuries—must crumble to dust, and a monarchy or despotic government reared on its ruins! The thought is revolting to our nature, and with one spontaneous burst of thought we answer. No! never, never! (Cheers.) Yet we cannot help but look at other nations that were once prosperous and happy like ourselves, and mentally ask, Where are they? For instance, Greece, Rome, Switzerland; and where are all the republics of Europe? Where is Venice, who shielded Christendom from the Turks?—who enriched Europe with her commerce? She survived the League of Camby but to experience a severer fate. She escaped the rock, but is lost in the whirlpool. She is subjugated, enslaved, ruined, and is no more known among the independent nations of the earth. Where is the once powerful and flourishing republic of Holland? Where the immense treasures of her banks, the richest in the world? Where her powerful fleets, by which she was able to dispute the empire of the seas with Great Britain? Where her universal commerce, her public credit, her importance, prosperity and glory? It avails her nothing, that she could resist the arms of Philip II and Louis XIV; that she has, by unparalleled industry, turned the most unpromising spot of Europe into a garden. Her sun is set, her glory forever faded, and she is humbled in the dust. Switzerland, situated among the rocks and declivities of the Alps—a prize utterly unworthy of a great conqueror, while she still keeps up a show of liberty and independence—is swallowed in the same gulf. The

story of the brave and virtuous William Tell must no longer be remembered. The days of liberty, independence, honor and virtue of these nations are past, and they must submit to the mandates of a foreign master, or perish by fire or the sword. Shall this be the fate of the republic of America? Shall her free schools, colleges, benevolent and Christian institutions, with her domes, monuments and pillars, these noble emblems of the Christian republic and American liberty, be crushed and crumbled to dust, and on their ruins erect a monarchy or a rebel military despotism? Brethren, speak out in bold defiance of opposition, and from a patriotic, aching heart, shall this be so? (Cries of "No, no, never.")

Our much-beloved country is now groaning under an unjust and unholy war, caused by aspiring and unprincipled demagogues who are in the so-called Southern Confederacy, of whom Davis, Beauregard, Mason and Slidel are among its leaders. Almost three years has expired since the war-whoop first sounded. Thousands have been slain whose spirits now hover around you, my brethren, urging you on to avenge their untimely fate.

The anxious, inquiring hearts of the fathers, mothers, wives and sisters are, "How long shall this unjust war continue?" No one can tell. It may be like the rebellion of the sixteenth century, which continued for twenty years, or that of Germany, the wars of the Reformation and of Charles V, in the sixteenth century, which continued for thirty years, and in the seventeenth century seven years, and we might say with propriety and truth, that the horrors and miseries of an intestine war and strife continued with this nation for more than three centuries. To these anxious inquiries, I can only answer, I know not how long this cruel war, in our once happy and prosperous United States, may continue, and believe that it is not in the power of man to tell. We must bow in due deference to the will of kind heaven—submit and say, "God, thy will be done." I cannot see, through the dark, black and portentous cloud that lowers around our political horizon, the least glimmer of light or hope, of success or termination of the war, until the *accursed institution of slavery* is annihilated and driven from our land. (Loud and long cheering.) It has proved to be an incubus, a withering curse to our nation, and will always prove to be a sin, a reproach and a curse to any people who tolerates and supports it. I know this will be regarded as strong language to be used in a slave-holding State, and in a rebel country, yet the will of heaven directs that you drive the unjust and unholy institution from your land, and then, and not till then, will this most cruel war cease, and, brethren, will you do it? (Cries of "We will; yes, we will.")

It appearing to some of our most high-minded and honorable philanthropists, jurists and statesmen of our nation that it was important there should be a more thorough organization with the Union men of this republic, to assist the present Administration in the support of the Government and the Union, therefore, in order to accomplish this object, a convention was held in Cleveland, Ohio, on the 20th and 21st of May last, and organized the Union league of America, with which you are now associated.

The more particular object of the League is to preserve liberty and

the union of the United States of America; to maintain the Constitution thereof, and the supremacy of the law; to sustain the existing Administration of the Government; to thwart the designs of traitors and disloyalists, and to protect, sustain, strengthen and defend all loyal citizens, without regard to sect, condition or party. No society or combination of men was ever formed for a more noble, patriotic or praiseworthy object. It meets the admiration and the approbation of the patriotic world. It was organized at Cleveland, Ohio, the 20th and 21st of May last. During this short period it has issued over twenty-two thousand rituals or charts for different councils and organizations, containing at the present time over two millions of members, a force sufficiently strong, if well concentrated, to carry death to the hearts of the rebels of the South or the copperheads of the North. (Cheers.) Ohio, the "Buck-eye State," in the election of her favorite son, John Brough, Governor elect, has spoken in her silent way—the "ballot-box." Yet in thunder tones it speaks to the rebels, the traitors and the copperheads, that they have no sympathy there. (Cheers.) Pennsylvania, the "Keystone State of the Federal arch," has in like manner spoken forth, and among her favorite sons there are none who stands higher in the hearts of the patriot soldier than *Andrew G. Curtin*. (Loud cheers.) If they could have had the privilege of voting, the majority would have been twenty thousand more strong. (Cheers.) But the soldier of Pennsylvania who volunteered to defend his country in her hour of peril, must be disfranchised. This public wrong I trust will soon be corrected, that the soldier of Pennsylvania will be permitted to speak by his vote in the fall of eighteen hundred and sixty-four.

It always has been, and is, important that every society or combination of men have some place for rendezvous or headquarters—a place where they can meet, talk over and consult together for subsequent operations; where books, papers, documents and records of the society should be kept. I am informed you have procured this hall for that purpose. I see it beautifully decorated with emblems of your Order. Let it be from to-day dedicated to your use. Yes, brethren, let it not only be dedicated, but consecrated to high and holy motives. Let no copperhead, rebel or traitor contaminate these seats, or their unhalloved breath dedew these walls. Guard well your outward posts, and let your record show that every act or thought was high, holy and above suspicions of wrong. Moved by a Patriot's heart, the love of your country should prompt every act. Then your record will go down to posterity unsullied, and you proud that your name are on its pages; that your children's children can read and know that you were not one of those rebels who seceded and rebelled against the most enlightened, civilized and Christian Governments that the world has ever known. (Cheers.)

Mr. President, I have here a flag to present to you from the Union and loyal citizens of Martinsburg and vicinity. I am authorized to say it is for the benefit of the "Jefferson Union League of Martinsburg," Berkeley county, Va., a memento not only of their respects and approbation of the principles inculcated by the League, but more fully to show their loyalty to their Government, and their wish that the Union

should be preserved. The stars and stripes, emblems of our national worth and glory! The flag of our Union, that has floated triumphantly over every sea, ocean, continent and isle! Every nation of the earth bows to it with due deference and respect. Never has it been lowered in disgrace, or its honorable folds prevented from unfurling to the breeze, until the base, insidious traitor's hand tore it from Fort Sumter's "Heights," causing it to drabble and droop in disgrace in the dust, causing every patriot heart to burn with indignation for conduct so base; ashamed that a brother's hand must be the one first to bring disgrace to our nation, and without a just cause, only to gratify the selfish ambition of a few aspiring demagogues. (Cheers.) The inquiry comes home to your hearts to-day, as I presume it has a thousand times before, Why have our Southern "brethren"—as we were once pleased to call them, but now compelled by their acts to call them Southern rebels—brought on this unjust, unholy and bloody war? Is it because the General Government, through Northern influence, has treated them unkindly—showed partiality in her laws? Certainly not. That cannot be the fact, for the South has always been the privileged class. The selection of our chief Executives has been principally from the South. From 1787 to 1824—with the exception of one term of Mr. Adams—Virginia has furnished all the Presidents, viz., Washington, Jefferson and Monroe. In 1825 there was no election by the people, and the House of Representatives placed John Q. Adams in the Executive chair. Then came Andrew Jackson, from Tennessee, and served eight years. Thus for twenty-eight of the first thirty-six years of our history, Virginia and Tennessee furnished the Presidents; and no complaint, no resistance was manifested. No double terms have been served by any President since Jackson. On the *Tariff* question they always held the reins of Government, so they had that their own way. On the slavery question the Constitution gave them the privilege of calling their slaves citizens, and in taking the census of their populations, it took only five negroes to make three white men. Yet they were not content. They wanted the negro to be by law "property." So, in the "Dred Scott case," a majority of the Supreme Court of the United States, being Southerners, they decided that the negro was property. So the slave-holder could call them man or *beast* as suited his interest or convenience. (Cheers.) And the slave-holder, not yet content, must have a law compelling the North to return a straggling negro to his master. So they accomplished this in that unjust and unequal law known as the Fugitive Slave Law, virtually making the whole free Northern population subservient to the will of the South. No longer should so unjust and unequal law remain on the archives of our country's history, and I would recommend that there be three black lines drawn around, and written across its pages—expunged! expunged!! (Cheers.) And the South not yet content! In the contest for Presidency in 1856, Mr. Buchanan and General Fremont being the rival candidates, the former received 174 out of 296 votes. Eleven States were greatly disappointed at the result. But they did not revolt, nor attempt to block the wheels of the Government. When the time came to select a candidate to succeed Mr. Buchanan, the Democratic party divided, as did also their opponents, by which procedure four candidates were put on the course,

viz., Breckenridge, Douglas, Lincoln and Bell. There was unusual animation in the preparatory proceedings. But all things were conducted under the same forms and with the same guards that had attended every previous election. There was no pretence of frauds, or violence, or unconstitutionality in a single step of the process, and Abraham Lincoln was found to be the choice of the people, as he will again in the Fall of 1864. (Cheers, long and loud.)

From that moment he represented in his person the Sovereign or Executive power of the United States of America; but before his accession to office, the most open and positive determination was expressed in the Southern section of the country to renounce their allegiance to the Constitution or Government of the country; and the insurgents, and the most insidious rebels and traitors did violently seize and hold forts, arsenals, custom-houses, post-offices and other property of the United States; declared themselves absolved from all allegiance to the Government which they had covenanted to support. They formed themselves into an independent nation, with a new title and flag, and demanded recognition as such at home and abroad. Immediately the war-whoop was sounded; the cry, "to arms, to arms!" and the din of battle, the thunder of cannon, the *clash on clash* of arms was heard in our land. On the battle-field thousands on thousands are slain. Blood like rivers flowed. A requiem, a wail comes up from the battle-field to every hearth-stone and fire-side. The father, mother, the widow and orphans, are now clad in deep mourning for a friend, a father, brother, husband or son they have lost in the strife, and now fills a soldier's grave, or lies mouldering to dust on the battle-field, or perhaps lives to die a death more intolerable by starvation in Richmond "Libby Prison." (*Great sensation.*) We see them, at least in our imaginations, in their lonely closets, or at the midnight hour, with eyes and souls upturned to heaven, beseeching their heavenly Father to protect them and stay the ravages of this ungodly war. And let their living friends return! From that aching heart the scalding tear freely flows, and from this midnight aspiration there seems to be some holy angelic spirit comes to us, brother soldiers. As I see many familiar faces here that I recognized of seeing on the battle-field and in the hour of peril that tried men's souls, and says to us, Gird on the armor of war, and as you love your homes and all that renders life a blessing, unbare the arm and bosom again to the battle strife, and boldly drive those audacious rebels hence. Let your conduct be of that bold, patriotic character that it will not only cheer the hearts of your friends at home, but also that of a Meade, a Grant, a Burnside, and our old friend Hooker and General Kelly, that they may know that they have soldiers here that for their country's cause they fear not *death*. (*Cheers.*)

Brethren of this Union Council, citizens of Martinsburg: Believing you have long since become satisfied that the right or privilege of one State to secede from another, is in violation of the Constitution and the fundamental principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence—and that this rebellion is unjust, uncalled for—and that the great mass of the people of the Southern States have been deluded, deceived and misguided by aspiring demagogues, it affords me great pleasure, Mr. President, to present, in the name of the Union men of Martinsburg, this Flag. Take, sir, this noble emblem, not only

of this League, but of a great nation. Let its folds be unfurled to the breeze, and although silently it unfurls its folds, yet it speaks volumes and in thunder tones to the heart of the rebels and traitors of Virginia. It says to them that here in Martinsburg the spirit of Union yet burns with enthusiasm in the hearts of the people, and that "Old Virginia, that never tires," will ere long return to her sister States in the Union. (Cheers.) Keep this flag untarnished from rebels hands, nor let a stripe or even a star become obliterated. Keep it as the sacred emblem of the principles of the Jefferson Union League of Martinsburg. Let it go with the records of your Order, to nations yet unborn, that they can, when they read the history of this war, see and know that at this time—December 2, 1863—while the pillars of American Liberty trembles and totters at their base, there are patriotic and Union citizens of Martinsburg and vicinity who dare publicly hoist the Union flag, inscribed thereon, in large legible letters, "Jefferson Union League of Martinsburg, Berkeley county, Va.," and publicly declare themselves in favor of the Constitution and the Union. And, Brethren, while you thus support and let this emblem of your patriotic, high and holy Order float triumphantly, let your motto be, "The Union must and shall be preserved," (cheers,) and that you will hand down to posterity the Republic of America, pure and *unsullied* as it came from the hands of our highminded, noble and patriotic sires. (Long continued cheering.)

A. BRATT then rose, and in his usual happy style, highly complimented Maj. D. Titus for his noble qualities as a Brother, a citizen, a gentleman, and a soldier, and was proud to receive this flag, the memento of our country's moral and political importance, and more particularly so, because of its emanating from so praiseworthy a source: the patriotic citizens of Martinsburg and surrounding country, and being presented to him by his much esteemed and respected friend, the Major; and then said the request of his friend, on the presentation of the flag, should be carried out to the extent of his ability. That this noble emblem of their patriotic Society should go down to posterity pure and unsullied as now received from the hands of the honorable donors. (Cheers.) He then spoke of the strong arm of protection guaranteed to the ladies of this fair republic by the Brotherhood. He further remarked, that he felt proud that his lot had been cast in a land where the ladies exhibit such unparalleled loyalty. He said Pennsylvania might sing of her John Burns, Jennie Waits, and others, all of whom we also feel proud, but Martinsburg can boast of heroines, whose noble deeds of daring, I hope to see ornamenting the pages of history and be deeply engraved upon the tablets of every mind, both male and female. (Cheers.) They have on all occasions exhibited the most consummate bravery in defense of that flag under whose folds our common country has grown to its present importance and unparalleled wealth and influence among the nations of the earth. When the rebels returned from Gettysburg, dragging with them the prisoners captured from the Federal army—famishing for want of *bread*—the ladies of Martinsburg were seen rushing through the streets, regardless of the threats and uplifted sabres of rebel officers and their deluded minions, and dared them to strike, until they had distributed all their scanty stores. (Tremendous applause, amidst which he took his seat.)