

WELCOME HOME

TO

COMPANY H, 34TH REGIMENT, N. Y. S. V.

ADDRESS OF HON. P. E. HAVENS.

The term of service of the 34th Regiment, N. Y. S. V., having expired, the citizens of the towns of Crown Point and Ticonderoga, from which Company H of said Regiment was mostly raised, made preparations to give the surviving heroes of said Company, a public reception on their return home.

The Company being expected to arrive at Crown Point, per steamer, on the 17th of June, the inhabitants of the Southern towns in Essex county, to the number of over two thousand, assembled at the landing, with open hearts, speaking cannon, and sweet music from the band, to greet the veteran heroes as they again set foot on the historic ground of old Crown Point.

Owing to some delay among the mustering officers at Albany, the Company did not all arrive, and a feeling of disappointment at first prevailed to some extent, but adopting the officers and soldiers who arrived as the representatives of the Company, the reception was extended to them in behalf of all, and the proceedings of the day as previously arranged were carried out.

Under the direction of Col. Wm. E. Calkins, marshal of the day, a procession was formed, and passing under the beautiful arch erected by the patriotic ladies of Crown Point, and on

which, with exquisite taste, their fingers had wrought, in evergreen, the words

"WELCOME TO OUR BRAVE DEFENDERS."

The Officers and soldiers present were escorted to the hotel of J. W. Bowman, where a bountiful supply of *rations*, such as none but freedom's land can furnish, was meted out to all.

On repairing to the grove, where a stand had been erected for the occasion, Harvey Spencer, Esq., was called to preside, and after a few pertinent remarks made by him, he introduced to the meeting the Hon. P. E. HAVENS, who delivered an address of welcome, as follows:

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

If there is a scene on earth calculated to stir the blood and fill the heart with emotions too full for utterance, it is the return to their homes of a band of scarred and war-worn soldiers, who have faithfully served their country.

No events recorded in history have been attended with more pleasurable excitement and intense satisfaction than the welcome home of victorious armies to their native land.

When the first Napoleon's veteran heroes of the army of Italy returned from their conquests, and marched with their victorious banners through the streets of Paris, even the refined and delicate ladies of that city could not be re-

strained from showering upon them in rich profusion tokens of fond affection and delight, and the great metropolis of France was lighted up in one blaze of exultation and joy.

If in a war of ambition and conquest, the heart of a great nation could be thus moved on the return of the faithful soldier, most certainly it is proper for us on this occasion, as liberty loving American citizens, to give to the gallant heroes, whose return from war we this day celebrate, a welcome to our hearts and homes, worthy, if possible, of the deeds of valor which they have performed on the field of strife and blood, in defense of our government and our dearest rights.

Officers and Soldiers of Company H, 34th Regiment of New York Volunteers, we bid you a most hearty welcome back to your home of freedom, among the hills and dales of Northern New York. We welcome you to our hearts filled with gratitude and thanks, and desire thus publicly to express our high esteem and appreciation of the heroic and valuable services which you have rendered for your country. We desire on this occasion to do you honor, feeling that you have contributed largely to protect and save the honor and integrity of the nation in whose service you have been engaged.

You have been engaged in no war of conquest incited by ambition and lust of power, but in the holy work of maintaining the only government on the face of the earth based upon the principles of equal rights and equal justice to all who seek its shelter and protection—the only government where freedom and constitutional liberty can have an untrammelled and luxuriant growth—a government which none but the corrupted and debased devotees of slavery would ever have incurred the awful guilt of attempting to destroy.

But many of the patriotic men who filled your ranks are not here to-day to share this festive greeting. Their brave hearts are still in death, and will never more be disturbed by the turmoils and conflicts of earth. But while we lament their loss, we can but envy them the glory of such a death. If there is anything on earth, aside from the Christian religion, which can lighten up *with a halo of glory* the dark valley through which we must all pass from time to eternity, it is to die for our country, in

the discharge of the highest, noblest duty which can be imposed upon us. The names of those who have risked their lives and who have poured out their blood upon the battle-field to save this Republic, will be cherished in the memory and enshrined in the affections of future generations, while the names of the Southern traitors and their sympathisers at the North, will rot in everlasting infamy and disgrace, increasing in intensity as this free Government, redeemed from the assaults of all its enemies and purified from the curse which has so long preyed upon its vitals, shall continue more widely to diffuse its blessings upon mankind.

I will not on this occasion attempt the discussion of those political issues which some are now endeavoring to thrust upon the country. I confess that I have lost all appetite for politics and political discussion.

In the great struggle now culminating to its final result, for the weal or woe of the nation, I have no heart to enter upon the discussion of side issues, or anything else short of the one great theme—the *defense of our country*.

You will allow me, therefore, at this time, to submit a few such general reflections upon the war and our duty to ourselves, our country and our God, touching the same, as the occasion may suggest.

If no longer needs argument to prove that the war which we wage against rebellion is warranted by every consideration of loyalty, justice and humanity; that our cause is holy and just and that our efforts to maintain it will receive the sanction of high Heaven.

The slur and stigma which the infamous Vallandigham and others of his stripe, who breathe the poisonous breath of treason, have attempted to cast upon the war, will have no influence upon the verdict of Christendom, when truthful history shall have done its work, and will only re-act with crushing power upon the heads of its authors and sink them still lower in the depths of infamy to which they are doomed.

The cry that this is a needless war of abolition, has lost all its power and political significance—is dying away with the gust of passion and political excitement that gave it birth, and is now heard only from lips accustomed to the dialect of treason and disloyalty.

Nor can it be charged that this is a war of con-

quest and subjugation or a war to spread carnage and bloodshed over the states in revolt—but on the contrary, it is a war to stay the hand of violence which those states have raised against us,—it is bringing them back to their allegiance and to maintain the government of the country which they have wickedly conspired to overthrow, and thus to preserve the Constitution and the laws which we and they have sworn to support.

I deny that this war has any other avowed or real object than this, but I hail with inexpressible delight the great truth that as an *inevitable result of the conflict, the dark blot of human slavery is to be forever wiped out on this continent*, and if there is a man who hears me to-day whose eyes are so blind to the endless train of evils which slavery has inflicted upon our nation and whose heart is so insensible to the cries of suffering oppressed humanity, that he will not also rejoice with me, that the triumph of our arms, while it restores the nation to its integrity, removes forever the great cause of all our troubles, I will not say whether I have the more of pity or contempt for that poor benighted man.

No man has ever heard me utter a thought in favor of *waging this war for the purpose of abolishing slavery*.

I have ever maintained and now declare, that its legitimate primary object is, and should be, to maintain the government,—to defend our republican institutions,—to put down rebellion and restore the country,—the whole country—to the state of peace, prosperity and strength which it has so long enjoyed to the wonder and admiration of the nations. This is the sole object for which we send forth our armies, poured out our treasures and sacrificed our sons and brothers on the bloody field.

But while I say this, I will not be deprived of the right to rejoice that the great struggle is to be attended with *some compensatory blessings to the nation—that the curse of southern treason is to be mitigated by the extinction of the mother which hatched it into life, and produced a military necessity which sealed its own doom and secured its final overthrow*.

Indeed, fellow citizens, I have sometimes indulged the thought that this war would be worth to the nation all that it will or can cost us.

We should not forget that this war is not for ourselves alone or our posterity, *but for the world and for all time*.

The question of the possibility of maintaining free institutions is now on trial before the nations,—the problem of free government is now to be settled, and if we fail—if the grand experiment inaugurated by our fathers, and so long and so successfully carried on in our hands shall now fail and our country sink into a state of anarchy or be divided into separate sovereign states—contiguous, jealous and ever exposed to make war upon each other, for one I should feel that the sun of freedom had gone back on the dial plate of time for generations and for centuries, and might never rise again.

It was not long since said by the French statesman, M. Fould, to an American citizen: "Your Republic is dead. And it is probably the last the world will ever see. You will have a reign of terrorism, and after that two or three monarchies."

If this revolution succeeds, the prophecy of the sagacious Frenchman is likely to be verified and fulfilled.

I have never felt alarm as to the final result, except upon one ground.

If the forces of the North become divided, and their efforts are paralyzed by quarrels and contentions, the rebellion will succeed and our country will surely be lost; but if they become firmly united and work in union and harmony in the great contest, the final result cannot be a matter of doubt.

Then, for the sake of our beloved country and all the momentous interests involved in the issue, let us strive for a union of all parties in this war. Let us in mutual sacrifice discard and rise above our personal preferences and party attachments. The great exigency in which we are placed calls for the union of all true men in the one great issue now pending before the country, and on which the fate of the nation hangs.

Let none contend for old party lines—nor attempt to form new parties—and least of all to cry peace, compromise, adjustment, while the roar of cannon is in our ears or the sword at our breast.

We may differ as to many things in the past

—we may differ as to many things in the future —but we now act for the present.

And for the present there is but one course for us to pursue in order to save our government and vindicate its authority. There should be no hanging back—no drawing off into little squads or parties—no secret counsels and plots devised in conclave to embarrass our government or lead any to withhold from it their hearty cooperation and support.

Our duty in this crisis was eloquently expressed by the lamented Douglas in his last great speech at Chicago, a short time previous to his death, in the following memorable words:

"Whoever is not prepared to sacrifice party organizations and platforms on the altar of his country, does not deserve the support of honest people. We must cease discussing party issues—make no allusion to old party tests—have no criminations or recriminations, and indulge in no taunts one against another, as to what has been the cause of these troubles."

I can forget and forgive all that I have considered amiss in this great statesman, when I read the burning words of eloquence and patriotism contained in this last and noblest effort of his life. As strong as were his party ties and feelings, his love of country raised him above them all, and in his last great speech he left a legacy to the American people, of more value than the gold of California, and which will render his name illustrious while time shall last.

This speech of Mr. Douglas contrasts strangely with the speeches of a certain few politicians of the present time, who hesitate in their support of the government, and impose conditions to their loyalty.

They are willing to give the government a cordial support, if their own views as to the conduct of the war are carried out, and the Constitution, in all its provisions, construed and enforced as they understand it; otherwise, they threaten to falter and withdraw their support.

Soldiers and fellow citizens, this is not the doctrine and rule of action to save this nation from destruction. The government needs the unconditional loyalty of every citizen, in this hour of its peril.

Grant that the government is at fault in some of its measures, and has given an erroneous construction to some of the provisions of the Constitution. I demand to know whether that is any reason why we should falter in its support. Shall we, for such a reason, abandon our country and allow the rebellion to succeed and all to be lost. Because perfection and infallibility does not bear rule at Washington, shall we therefore aid the rebellion by opposing the war.

No man of common reading and information would expect that this war, more than all other great wars, should be exempt from its train of evils—evils, excesses and mistakes which no human wisdom has heretofore been able to avoid; but since the struggle commenced, I have scarcely found a man worthy to be called such—who did not believe that the President, whatever may be his errors is conducting this war in the integrity of his heart, and with none but an honest purpose to put down the rebellion and restore the supremacy of the Constitution.

I grant that we have a right to differ in opinion and that political parties are ordinarily useful and necessary, and tend to preserve the purity of the government by their mutual check and watchful vigilance over each other, but in this awful moment of peril I ask, in the name of all that is dear to us as American citizens, shall we involve ourselves in controversies and quarrels over comparatively unimportant matters and thus divide and weaken our strength and prevent that union of effort without which the rebellion cannot be crushed and our country saved?

P-If I rightly interpret the signs of the times and the present indications of popular sentiment, we are to have no such unhappy, disastrous divisions as our enemies have counted upon.

A few restless, disloyal spirits, whose lips are blistering with the hot breath of treason and opposition to the war, may assemble in our metropolis, under the leadership of Fernando Wood, and denounce the government and the war, and raise their voices in vociferous cheering at the utterance of sentiments exciting to revolution and civil war in our own Empire State. But I will not slander the Democratic party, by an intimation even, that they approve or sympathize with such demonstrations.

It was not enough, in this recent Peace Convention, to declare open opposition to the war and defiance to the government, but because the American pulpit at the North, with hardly an exception, has raised its voice in defense of our free institutions and the maintenance of our government against the encroachment of the slave power, their leader, Fernando Wood, had the audacity publicly to utter, amid the cheers of the minions who surrounded him, the following most extraordinary sentiment:

"Among the thousand spires which rear their lofty turrets to a benignant God, not one covers a pulpit devoted to the true principles of Christ."

Desperate indeed must be that cause which requires its devotees to take such an issue with the high-toned principles of piety and religion which adorn the American pulpit.

Instead of regarding this peace movement as an indication of schism and division among the loyal ranks, I believe it will tend more firmly to unite all who love their country in a more vigorous prosecution of the war waged in its defense.

The great body of the American people will not fail to see through their hollow pretenses, and to discover that these peace makers are taking the surest course to light the torch of civil war in every state in this Union, and to produce that reign of terrorism and anarchy which have been so often predicted by European monarchists as being in store for this nation.

I here publicly venture the opinion, that there will soon be but two parties at the north: one will be the great Union, loyal party who, laying aside all former political differences, and all questions of minor importance, unite their strength in support of the government against the rebellion; the other will be composed of these peace croakers—the legitimate descendants of a similar party of Revolutionary times—who would abandon the war, yield to the claims of the rebels, admit the doctrine of secession, sacrifice all that is valuable in our government, and inaugurate a reign of anarchy and terror.

Soldiers and citizens, I still trust with firm reliance upon the loyalty of the great mass of the American people, and take hope that all will yet be well.

We have much to hope from the great moral forces which are on our side. The wheels of Providence always move forward, and never backward. We live in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, and the forces to which I refer have, during that long period, been gradually but surely developing themselves—gaining strength and extending their influence in the world.

Science, literature, religion and civilization will lend no aid in establishing a confederacy, and building up an aristocratical government, based on slavery as its corner stone, and for the purpose of extending and perpetuating the domain of slavery; but, on the contrary, they are all opposed to it, branding slavery as a relic of barbarism, and utterly inconsistent with free institutions and all true progress of society.

I regard this as certain as any problem in mathematics, and a government based on slavery, or in any way dependent upon it, has an element of rottenness in its very heart, and must sooner or later fall to decay and ruin.

Equally certain is it that the great moral forces to which I have alluded, exert their whole power in favor of freedom—freedom of speech—freedom of the press—freedom of the elective franchise—the diffusion of general education—the support of free institutions and of true republican government.

These reflections should inspire us with confident hope of ultimate success, and give us patience to hold on in the struggle until the consummation of the great plan of Providence in advancing human society, shall crown our efforts with a victory which will be worth a thousand times more to the world than all it will have cost the present generation.

That victory may not be to-day nor to-morrow. It may even be long delayed, it may cost many millions more of treasure and many thousands more of the lives of our sons in contending with our maddened foe, but come it will, as sure as truth and righteousness and knowledge and civilization and freedom shall prevail over ignorance, barbarism, tyranny and crime. We can wait for the issue if need be; wait in patience, good courage and hope, seeing we are moving on in the line of causes, fixed as the throne of God, and sure of triumph as his own eternal kingdom of truth and righteousness.

We may be sure the Almighty did not pre-serve this land of ours till so late a period in the world's history, and then plant here the tree of liberty, of knowledge and religion, finally to be overrun with despotism, with slavery, with ignorance and barbarism. No: the tree He planted here He will defend; the institutions established here by our forefathers, under His guiding hand and fostering care, will be preserved and the Constitution and government which were secured for us by the great and good men who fought the battles of the Revolution and which have blessed this land as no other land was ever blessed, for more than three-fourths of a century, will continue to bless those who are to live after us, for generations to come.

Officers and Soldiers of Co. H.: No Regiment engaged in the war has covered itself with greater glory than the noble 34th in whose ranks you have served.

The history of your deeds of valor has been written and preceded your return. The country has watched your movements with proud satisfaction, and confident hope has been inspired in all our hearts that our country can never be lost and our government broken up so long as we have such brave and patriotic defenders.

From the time when on the 31st of April, 1861, your Regiment crossed the Chickahominy on the bridge of floating logs and led by the heroic Sumner, made that brilliant bayonet charge, which decided the fate of the day, scattered the forces of the boastful Hampton Legion and caused their leader to bite the dust in death, through the hard fought battles of *Peach Orchard, Savage Station, Nelson's Farm, Malvern Hill, South Mountain, Antietam, Falmouth and Fredericksburgh*; in nearly all of which your regiment had the post of honor and danger, and won for itself the laurels of immortal fame, the eyes of the North were upon you, and a grateful country exulted over the glory shed upon its arms, proving to the world that the blood of our revolutionary fathers has not degenerated in the veins of their sons.

It is a source of peculiar pride to the inhabitants of Essex county, and especially those towns from which you enlisted, to know that

in the 34th Regiment no Company bore itself with more gallantry and honor than Co. H.

We welcome you back as good and faithful servants, entitled to the honor and thanks of your country, and the fostering care and protection of the government for which you have so bravely fought. And when this great contest of the nineteenth century between the powers of slavery and freedom shall have terminated and its sad history been written—when through the guiding hand of an overruling Providence, the great events now so rapidly transpiring shall have worked out their final results, whatever may be the fate of our unhappy country, you will have what will be sweeter than life itself, the pleasing satisfaction that you did your whole duty in the great struggle to save this chosen land of freedom from the empire of darkness, tyranny and crime.

At the conclusion of the address the Rev. Mr. Bradshaw, of Crown Point, from the committee on resolutions reported the following:

Resolved, That the present occasion, when the brave defenders of our nation's cause, those who first left us at her call, are permitted to return to us, is a day of thankfulness and joy; which, calls for heartfelt gratitude to that benificent Being who has kept and defended those dear to us, amid the many perils and dangers to which they have been exposed, to gladden our hearts and homes by their safe return.

Resolved, That the cheering accounts which have from time to time come to us of their patient endurance, of their brave and soldierly conduct on the field of battle, has awakened a just pride of heart in their behalf, assuring us that the spirit of self-sacrifice and heroic valor which animated our fathers in days past, is not extinct. That while we shed a tear of regret over those who have so nobly fallen in their country's cause and embalm them in our memories, we will cherish a just esteem for those who still survive, and honor them as the patriots who defended their country in the hour of peril.

Resolved, That the day of our country's distress, the crises which led these our brethren, so nobly to bare their breasts to danger in her behalf, is still upon us, and still calls upon every good citizen for a like devotion to her interests,—to preserve our glorious Constitution and our noble country undivided,—to transmit to generations yet to come, the birthright of freedom, that precious inheritance which our fathers have left us.

After able remarks from Rev. Mr. Porter of Crown Point, and from Messrs. Flavies J. Cook and Clayton H. Delano, of Ticonderoga, all of which breathed the soul of union and pat-

riotism, the resolutions were adopted by acclamation.

A vote of thanks was given to Hon. P. E. Havens in approval of his course in the last legislature, and for his address, and requesting a copy of the same for publication.

Three cheers were given to the cornet band of Ticonderoga, for the soul-stirring music with which they had enlivened the occasion, and with hearts mutually warmed and nerved with determination and hope for the future, the assembly dispersed.