Memorial Day

Comrades: On this day we look back over an interval of thirty years, to the epoch whose achievements this Anniversary of the Grand Army is designed to celebrate.

A generation has almost passed away since it ended. The great majority of those who marched with us, fought with us, triumphed with us, have already crossed over and answered to roll-call on the other side — in the silent realm whose echoes come not to our ears.

The names of our leaders fall today on unfamiliar ears. And the battles which we fought belong to history now! Only a few remain to whom still they are memorables. Others

we recount what we saw and did and suffered, what we endured, attempted and achieved, we see in the faces of those who listen wonder, ~~in~~ but rarely comprehension. * Time has blotted ~~the~~ out the ~~fieldmarks~~ fieldmarks of strife. We trace with difficulty the roads along which we toiled. A few fields are marked with monuments; but bronze and marble are poor substitutes for living men. The roar of battle still echoes in our ears and wakes us from peaceful dreams.

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We hear the clash of arms, the word of command, the shout of victory, the moans of the wounded, the volley with which we bade the dead farewell. But others do not hear them; we know they are but dreams — the dreams of those who turning to the rear ~~But the soldiers who look on~~ see the long shadows which the ~~raised as they were~~ sunset throws upon our front.

~~But~~ The motives and impulses which inspired us then — they were dreams too, — the dreams of youth and early manhood which crystallize into deeds

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and tendencies. Is today our debtor for worthy achievements or were our dreams mere vain delusions? Was self the spring of motive? Was ambition, hate or greed the animating impulse of those who fought and fell, of those who lingering lived on strengthened and matured, built down their arms, when there was no further need for them and ~~fought other~~ and took part in other conflicts, + ~~the peaceful struggles~~ — the struggles on ~~who~~ ~~the~~ which prosperity and progress depend.

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But for the valor and fortitude of those who fought, the wisdom and sagacity of those who led and the blessing of Him whose eye watches over the destinies of Nations, what had been the outcome of the great struggle. What would be the condition of the world today if those we fought had triumphed; if the Southern Confederacy had won the place it sought in the family of Nations or even if they had succeeded in forcing a

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compromise by which the
Federal Union had contin-
ued a slave-republic and
the blight of injustice and of-
pression had continued to
blast the impulses of enter-
prise and the achievements
of free-thought? How much
of the marvellous story of
the past thirty years would
have been unwritten, if
the verdict pronounced
at Appomattox had been
terms of peace had been
dictated not by the sim-
ple-minded soldier, who

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— a debt not to be paid with silver ~~or~~ and gold, an obligation ~~unstained with greed~~ which the lapse of ages cannot weaken or corrode.

As the ranks of the Grand Army lessen in number the blessings they conferred upon the Nation and humanity will grow brighter and brighter until "the new birth of liberty" is ~~complete~~ perfected in malice toward none and charity for all."

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~~did not wait even to re-~~
~~move the stains of strife at~~
~~Appomattox~~, splashed with
the stains of swift pursuit
at Appomattox, but by his
opponent!

Let us turn back
the leaves that intervene,
slowly and carefully, oh
comrades of a thousand
battle-fields, let us read
the myriad marvels there-
on ~~written~~ enrolled
day by day our com-
and as ~~we sink into~~
rades sink into
the grave, let us ask the
busy rushing present, which
has come so often to sneer

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at our motive and ignore our achievement, which of these marvels could have been wrought had we not triumphed. Today is ever inclined to forget the debt that is due to yesterday but few today have owed such boundless obligation to their yesterday, no yesterday so lavish of good will, so abounding in unselfish endeavor or more glorious in grand achievement.

Never before was life so little stained with hate: never

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before so great a war in which lust of conquest and greed of gain and glory played so slight a part. Never before did millions of free men offer their lives for the liberty of an enslaved and despised race. Never before could so an army truly sing as it marched toward the field of strife, (as he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free. Never before did so great a war end without prosecution, punishment or punishment of any leader. Never did such swift and overwhelming prosperity so swiftly follow after strife. Never did a conquered enemy so soon and so vauntingly exult in a lost cause! Never were the taxes of

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~~but also~~ by strange inclination
Union had become a slave-re-
public. Slavery sought to ~~and it~~
undermine its whole foundation. We
~~destroyed~~. ~~We excavated a new foun-~~
~~dation down to the foun~~
excavated a new one — and
planted a new nation on
equal right and equal citizen-
ship for all. We ~~cemented it~~ consecrated
with our blood ~~and then~~
~~gave our strength to rebuild~~
~~the new built temple~~ a new
temple of liberty, and then
gave our energy and our
strength to its upbuilding
and advancement. What the
Republic is and is to be; what
humanity and ~~liberty~~ the world have gained
~~by this new birth~~ by the over-
throw of slavery and the equal
unrestricted assertion of ~~human~~
rights, that is the measure of
the debt the future owes to us —

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war so soon effaced by the generous rivalries of peace. Never did a nation so soon forget the issues of right and wrong that underlay the strife.

The struggle is over. Those who felt its hot breath are passing swiftly away: but its lessons like its blessings are for all time. ~~First~~ Among them is the ~~wondrous~~ wondrous fact that ~~regard for the rights of others for for the~~ ~~rec~~ fact that he who fights for the rights of others has no room for malice toward his foes. Another, which the thirty succeeding years have abundantly proved, that nothing brings prosperity, so swiftly and surely, as the ~~guaranty of equal~~ gift of liberty, equal ~~lif~~ right and equal opportunity to all. Founded on the declaration of ~~equal rights~~ Independence, the Federal

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