Toast

Medal of Honor Legion

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Subject

The Soldier

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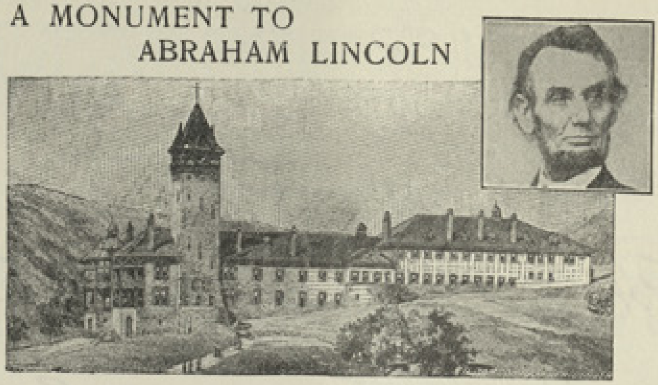

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Medal of Honor Legion

The Soldier

The word soldier is like certain Chinese words which have several meanings according to the accent or drawl by which the word is uttered. The bona fide soldier, with a strong emphasis on the whole word, represents a stalwart fellow with a well developed chest, a well poised head, a neck inclining to stiffness, arms that can wield a saber with swiftness, or point one with accuracy, or carry a rifle in either hand; his legs are shapely, muscular, with ability in them to walk twenty-five miles a day, with small fatigue, or mount a horse with ease, choke ~~him~~ his proud neck into obedience and enable the horseman to ride with elegamce having a seat so firm that he can laugh at a foreign dragoon, who, though vain, lets too much light pass between himself and his saddle. He is proud of his hands because they are deft, of his feet because they are trigg and swift. It is no detriment to him to have a well chizzeled head, and brains enough to garner in sufficient practical knowledge of his profession, and make him appear anywhere and everywhere a man among men with or without a uniform, a plume, a breast-plate, a rosette or other badge whether of brass, of bronze, of silver or of gold. After all, the most distinguishing characteristic of the man, who is an emphatic soldier, is found in the quality of his heart. It must be a heart which can quicken, and strengthen the nerve at will - a nerve that stiffens his neck in battle, and steadies his eye in a charge.

A heart which ~~will~~ gives fortitude in defeat and defies the ridicule of friends or enemies. — A heart which can promote joy in victory, and satisfaction over well earned achievement, A heart that is large enough to have tender spots in it, tender to wife and children, one always loyal to women, and one that understands instinctively the old Norman Frenchman's phrase: "Noblesse oblige" which freely translated means a heart that will yield to the dictates of a high-toned conscience.

Now, equip such a man with proper clothing arms and ammunition, put him on the roll of an army and you will find him every inch a ~~soldier~~ man

Stalwart

I mean a patriot to love and protect the best interests of his country, whether in peace or in war, whether at home or abroad. Of course he needs training, and discipline enough of them to make him obedient, without growling and patient under suffering.

Again, permit me to say that if you subtract anything from your beau ideal of a complete man you take something from the proper emphasis to be put upon the word soldier.

Drinking alcohol, insulting the almighty, degrading the mind the heart or the body by monster vices unlawful pillage, petty thieving or other criminal practices these spoil the ~~American~~ soldier of any nation America finds the true undepleted type in the Medal of Honor Legion. Why not?