

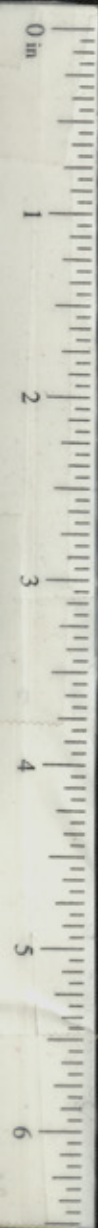
Lecture

Gmally defined ex tempore

No. 16. Vol 8

Analyst

James Fox = Patriotic & Christian



Lecture
Fatherhood, Patriotism & Christianity

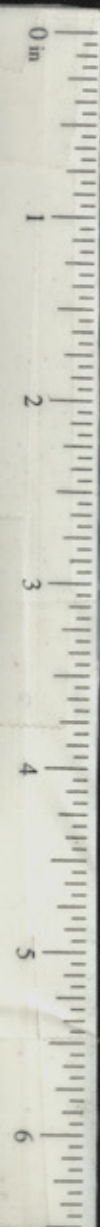
Our word "patriot" comes from the Latin pater, meaning father. A patriot is a person who loves his country zealously, supporting and defending her and her interests, as a true father loves and provides for his children, and is ready to make any sacrifice for his children's best interest. So the genuine patriot loves and cares for his country and will make the sacrifice called for in times of his country's distress. He is, in fact, ready to lay his life upon the altar of sacrifice, if that be necessary, to save and prolong his country's existence.

The connection between the father and the patriot brings to my mind many a crude connection of father and patriot exemplified during the war. For example, there was a young lieutenant commanding at Gettysburg. His captain was absent and he was the senior officer present for duty. He was but nineteen years of age, - a handsome boy, full of energy, ambition and hope. His name was Bayard Wilkeson. He was the son of the Hon. Sam. Wilkeson, then an associate editor of the New York Tribune. In the first day's ~~fight~~ ^{Army} engagement, his battery was sent out to the right of the 11th Corps, and placed in the position where it could do its part in keeping back ^{Confederate} Ewell's enterprising advance. It was about the middle of the day. Before long firing was extremely hot. He, himself was struck by a bullet, and though the wound was severe, he simply staunched the blood with his handkerchief and believed that he would be able to keep the field, but the bleeding became excessive and he sank down, unconscious; ^{and} without aid from his men or from any medical helper, he pled to death beside his battery.

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SOLE AGENT
SPELTERINE HOOF STUFFING.
WASHINGTON RED CEDAR SHINGLES.
GENERAL AGENT
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COLONIAL
LINEN



Gettysburg

A few days after the engagement, I received a letter from the Hon. Sam Wilkeson - a letter full of reproaches. The father said; "My son was neglected. Nobody helped him stay the blood, - no soldier, no medical man, no officer. Nobody cared for him. You didn't care for him. And he was suffered to die when he might have ~~been~~ ^{been} saved."

At first, I felt a thrill of indignation that I should be reproached for something over which I had no control; ~~and~~ ^{of} which I had no ~~control~~ ^{knowledge}; and for which I had no responsibility. But while I was thinking of it, I remembered my own home and my own boys then small, and I said to myself, that letter sprang from an afflicted father's heart. And so I wrote him carefully, as good a Christian letter as I knew how to write, then soon came my reward. By return mail, the father wrote: "Oh, General, forgive me !! Forgive me !!! I know you could not have helped it," and then he went on to enumerate the virtues of his son, - so noble, so strong, so self-sacrificing, so energetic, so whole-souled and generous. "Oh," he added, "nobody could know him like his father and mother!"

Here, then, we have an exhibition of father's and mother's love. Yet this father and this mother sent their son to bear his breast to the bullets of his country's foes. ~~So~~ ^{Yes}, it was the purest love on earth, - the parental love is closely linked with love for one's country. The father and the mother made the sacrifice, and the son, ¹⁸⁶⁹ taking his life in his hands, becomes the patriot - *offering zeal devotion & life itself.*

A few months later in the war, on the 28th of October 1863, a battle was fought in Lookout Valley, called the *Battle of Missionary Ridge*. A single division, - that of General Geary of the 12th Army Corps, H. S. HOWARD.

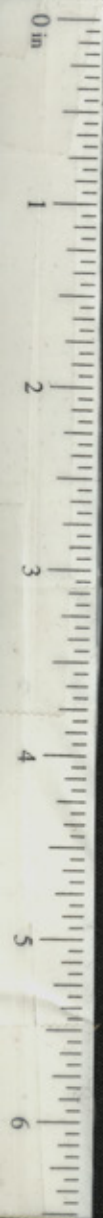
with the enemy at Beverly Ford. Colonel Davis, familiarly called
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had been left at a cross road three miles back from my junction with the Army of the Cumberland, ^{a junction made} with my two divisions of the 11th Corps. In the night, the Confederates sent a division of infantry to capture Geary and his wagons. They sent ^{also} a smaller force to occupy some hills and hold me there from coming to Geary's help. After the battle had been fully ^{joined} in my vicinity in the night, - for it was a night attack, - with some cavalry as an escort I galloped over to Geary ^{hugging} ~~the~~ ^{close to the foot-hills of} the Raccoon Mountains, so as to keep out of range from the Confederate bullets.

When I arrived there, I found first that the Confederates had been repulsed, and that General Greene, with his brigade, was nearest to me. When I came to Green, - who is still a young man of about ninety-six years of age ~~at this time~~, and who so wonderfully distinguished himself the second night at Gettysburg, - I found him ^{there at Washington} fearfully wounded, a bullet having passed through both cheeks, and removed a part of his teeth. When I asked for Geary, he ^{silently} pointed to a thicket and knoll 50 or 60 yards distant. I went over at once and took Geary by the hand. Geary was a man of great size and strength. He had had experience in war in Mexico, and he was a healthful, energetic and able commander; but that night, though the enemy had been repulsed all along ^{his} ~~the~~ line, and in fact all along my own also, and we were now joining hands; I noticed that ^{the} strong man trembled, and as we stood hand grasped in hand ¹⁸⁹¹ his voice weakened ^{BURLINGTON, VT.} like that of a man breaking down. In a moment he told me the cause, as he pointed to his beloved son, ^{commander of a} battery, ^{who in death was} lying close to his feet ^{and} ~~and~~ ^{man} ~~and~~ ^{always} After that night, Geary was a changed ^{He spoke with more gentleness} man.

with the enemy at Beverly Ford. Colonel Davis, familiarly called
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and appeared to enjoy riding by my side and talking with me - not only of the departed, but of those hopes and assurances which rest upon faith. He was feeling after that anchor, sure and steadfast, anchored within the veil. Here again, was an exhibition of a father's tenderness and a father's love - a father's hopes for the future in which the son ^{had} stood forth as a staff and a stay for his old age. And here, also, was an exhibition of patriotism. The father - General Geary - was a true patriot. He had laid his own life upon the ^{altar} ~~altar~~ and shrank from no duty or exposure which his country's defense demanded ~~of~~ him; but he also permitted his son to stand by his guns in the great conflict and offer his young ~~life~~ for the preservation of his country's life. There they were together - the one taken and the other left. The young man was the epitome of the patriot and showed the patriot's love in the highest sacrifices which he could lay upon his country's ^{battle field} ~~field~~.

The exhibition of patriotic devotion was by no means ~~confined~~ to us on the Union side. I had at West Point a classmate by the name of Deshler. He was from the State of Alabama. His brother had been appointed to the Military Academy some years before myself and while bathing in the Hudson was accidentally drowned. This young man, James Deshler, the surviving brother, came to the Academy with myself in 1850. We and I were steadfast friends. At graduation we separated, never to meet again.

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When the war came on, Deshler, with great apparent reluctance, broke off his usual army associations, resigned and ^{joined the Southern} ~~joined the Southern~~ army. His old father, an Alabamian, had been living in Philadelphia. At the breaking out of the war, he left Philadelphia ^{and moved to} ~~and moved to~~

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Alabama. At the battle of Chickamauga, Dishler, who was now a Brigadier General in the Confederate Army, fell in the thickest of the fight and gave up his life. ~~After the war was over~~

After the war was over, on one occasion when I was travelling through the northern part of Alabama, I met Deshlers^{father} who was a powerful man - over six feet tall - then I should judge between 60 and 70 years of age. When he met me, knowing my intimacy with his son, he was overcome with grief. He held my hand in both his own, the great, hot tears poured down his face, and it was some time before he was able to utter a word. Here I had an exhibition of a father's love, a father's tenderness, a father's *unchanging remembrance*.

I could not help feeling that it was the same spirit which actuated our own Geary when he was robbed of his son; ^{that same} which was in the heart and the mind of Mr. Deshler. ^{that aged man} He loved his country, according to the teachings which he had received from youth, doubtless as sincerely as Geary loved his, and it did not lessen the affliction to recognize that now the cause for which he made the sacrifice was lost.

Again, in passing through another part of Alabama, I was reminded of another battle scene - it was of the last battle in which I was engaged - that of Bentonville, North Carolina. ^{at that time} General Sherman was swinging along with his right and left wings. I commanded the right and Slocum the left of his troops. General Johnston ^{that ablest} Confederate commander, had gathered a heavy force on our left front, near Bentonville, as by configuration on the country and the roads ^{the direction of} he could do. ^{our ways} Separating, our ^{wings} ~~wings~~ were divergent, the one from the other. Johnston struck a heavy blow against Slocum's front and for a time

H. S. HOWARD,

SOLE AGENT

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appeared to be successful. Slocum, however, after some preliminary discomfitures, made a strong and effectual stand and my wing swept around and came up ^{on his right} into the battle. General Johnston ^{finally} was defeated and retired before us. In that conflict Lieutenant General Hardee commanded a division or corps. He had one son, Willie Hardee, about 16 or 17 years of age. In that battle this son was mortally wounded. It was his first and his last engagement. Now, before the war broke out I had been very intimate in General, then Colonel, Hardee's family. I knew his daughters and his son, so that I was not surprised to find a note left for me in Raleigh from one of his remaining children, asking a favor for the household of a friend that had been kind and hospitable to the ^{Hardee} family and the wounded boy, - ^{it was} the household where he died.

It was in Alabama, years afterwards, that I met General Hardee and one daughter travelling. It would be impossible for me to describe the extreme sadness of that meeting. The General did not shed tears, but he could not smile. I saw from the greeting that all hostility was over, but he still grieved for his ~~son~~ ^{son - that only son}.

Hardee, in the beginning had told me substantially, "Howard, there will be two confederacies, and as I am a southerner, I do not want to belong to a northern republic. There really was no wickedness in General Hardee's heart, and he bore his part according to ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ his conception of what was his duty. We ^{cannot} ~~cannot~~ sit in judgment upon his motives, however much we may be obliged to condemn his action in aiming blows against the old government of the United States.

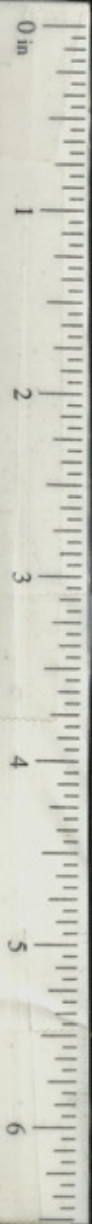
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SPELTERINE HOOF STUFFING.
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GENERAL AGENT
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THIRTEEN

COTTON



again with Hardee

Here I saw evidences of the beating of a father's heart and the sorrow of one greatly bereaved, and it was of a kind like that of the Hon. Sam Wilkeson. ^{Hardee's} ~~His~~ boy, too, was very young, brave, energetic, generous, self-sacrificing and patriotic, according as he understood patriotism.

The feeling itself which I have illustrated, which animated so many thousand fathers and mothers who sent forth their sons to the sacrifice during our great contest, is genuine. It springs from patriotic devotion. It is the feeling of the father for his child. Days like this - Memorial Days - are intended to remind us of the sacrifices and of the feeling of devotion and to foster the same in others.

King David had a son - probably no more beautiful boy ever went forth from a father's home. He was perfect in form, grand of appearance, and with a head and face for which the proudest father or the most devoted mother would have been proud. His name was Absalom. Absalom was lacking in every endowment of the soul which we expect in a son. He had all the semblances of filial affection, but ^{he} was hypocritical and bad. We have seen such sons. Little by little he pursued a course to alienate the affections of David's subjects, soldiers and citizens. He arranged a conspiracy and carried with him a large proportion of the people, - a conspiracy against his father and his King.

David with a small force that remained loyal to him fled before Absalom. He staid in the gates of Mahanaihim, - a considerable city. His generals had begged him not to go out to the battle against the force of Absalom. As they went forth, David charged his generals to be careful and not harm his son Absalom. The watchman staid over the gate and in the distance they saw some men running toward the city.

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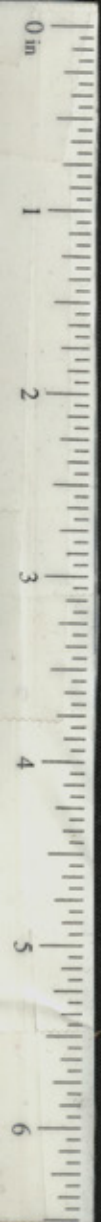
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The first messenger drew near. He had outrun the other. The watchman told David of his approach. How eager he was ^{as} he watched his ^{coming} approach and as soon as he recognized him ^{Achimach - he} spoke to him gently, and when he came up to the king and began to tell David how the battle had gone in his favor, David cried out, "How is it with Absalom?" The messenger's answer was mixed at first, so he made him stand ^{aside} while the watchman warned the king of the approach of another messenger. ^{from} He drew nearer, and when he came up to the king to give the clearest news ~~the~~ the field of the victory, David's heart was still upon his son. "How is it with the young man, Absalom?" Then the reply came which went through his heart. "May all the enemies of my lord, the king be as that young man is. So David knew that he was slain. Then he went in through the gate crying: "Oh, Absalom, Absalom, would God that I had died for thee, my son, my son, Absalom."

It is the father's heart and it goes beyond everything else. It forgives everything, it sacrifices itself for the child. Here we have in our Bible an exhibit of the father's love, - strong, tender, pure,

We would not have to go far to find its equal, its complement, its co-ordinate, if not its superior in the mother's love. There is nothing in this life more tender, more lasting, more true and pure than the mother's love. It gives itself for the child. There are exceptions to the father love and the mother love, but they are indeed exceptions which prove the rule that there is nothing on earth so transcendently good, as genuine, ^{combined} parental love.

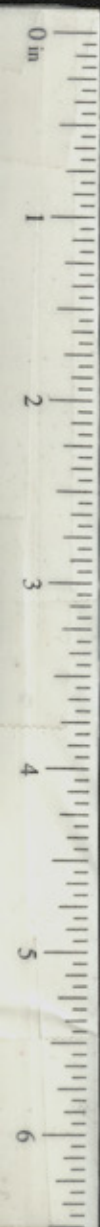
This compound affection is an emblem of the Heavenly Father's love. Expand it as far as the imagination can reach and you have

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but a drop in the ocean of God's love. And we are his children. The human love at its best is blind and limited, but God's love for his children is clear sighted and infinite. And what a wonderful exhibition we have of it in the very foundations of our religion, - the Father loving the Son hath given all things into his hands. He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life, and he that believeth not the son shall not see life.

One more instance, my comrades, and I am done:

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