



A MONUMENT TO
ABRAHAM LINCOLN



ADDRESS.

No. 6, Vol. 9.

SUBJECT.

Generals McClellan and Grant.

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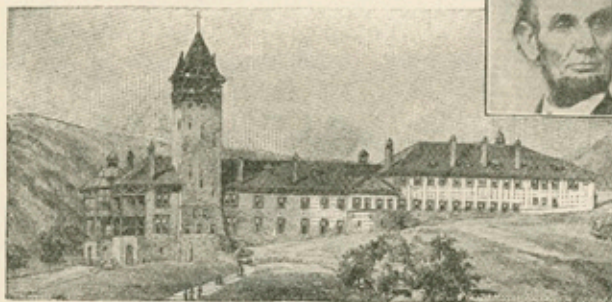
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Burlington, Vt., _____ 1900.

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McClellan & Grant - Adams

When McClellan came back from Mexico I saw him at the Military Academy where he was stationed for a short time and where I was a cadet just beginning my military education. He was then, I judge, about twenty-eight years of age, in the prime of young manhood. In Engineer uniform he appeared to me as handsome a man as I had ever seen; a little taller than I, with perfect figure, with a head as shapely as if chiselled by an artist, a pleasant, fearless eye and a gait that indicated self-possession, firmness and courage. The same individual appeared to us in the person of the young general eleven years afterward when McClellan came from his successes in West Virginia to take command of our armies and organize the Army of the Potomac. In the eleven years he had gained much experience abroad as well as at home in the early struggle. He had added to that experience many trials in civil life. With other officers of the Army of the Potomac at quite a distance from him I soon added to my early favorable view

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13.
of McClellan as a man great love and loyalty to him as
my Commander. At times I had from him a word of apprecia-
tion and praise. He was ever before us a complete gentle-
man, never a Martinet. He was able in every thing that
pertained to military affairs. His plans for the whole
country, that is for all our armies, could not have been
better. His character was pure, Christian, without a
blemish. Yet his Peninsula Campaign against Joseph E.
Johnston, Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson failed.
Why? Because McClellan lacked in himself some elements
that Thomas, Sheridan, Sherman and Grant possessed.
The first in my judgment was an over estimate of the num-
bers, ability and strength of his foes. The second, his
want of sufficient confidence in his officers and in his
men. Third, in his never planning to take a prompt offen-
sive, quick and energetic with the material at hand.
Had he possessed these elements he would have broken or
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Porter who had the bulk of the Confederate Army before
him, and have broken Magruder's thin lines with the rest of
^{his} the army in solid column, and thus forestalled the crushing
operations of Lee and Jackson which ended so disastrously
and with so much shame to him at Harrison's Landing.
These small defects in execution I do not lay altogether
at the door of McClellan. He was deceived every day by
his information bureau; his staff was showy but in those
early operations never effective, and even his best generals
were many of them then new at the business. One more
source of trouble to McClellan, beyond estimate, was the
fact that he remained conservative and became the head,
politically, of a conservative party, while the great
majority of our people were being slowly led on with the
great Lincoln at their head to see and to know that human
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Several comrades this morning requested me to give my estimate of some other of the generals of the war, besides that of General McClellan and those whom I have mentioned in this lecture. Grant was remarkable for one thing, he always took the offensive. Again, it was Grant's purpose to bring together superior numbers, and it was the true way against an enemy so much like us in skill, courage and war-like appliances, such as the splitting of a common country would certainly produce.

Grant was obliged to attack positions of great natural strength, and the best kind of artificial protection, such as intrenchments and breastworks, and often regular forts like those at Vicksburg. This he did also at Chattanooga, as elsewhere with skill, steadiness and vigor, yes, with persistent, resistless energy.

In the battels about Chattanooga I served under both Thomas and Sherman. After a first reconnaissance, by Grants order I marched over to the North end of Missionary Ridge to support Sherman's attacks. It was always a

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pleasure to be under Thomas. His smile of welcome was pleasant and cordial. When I went from him into battle his words of confidence drew toward him my whole heart. If I succeeded, he commended me without stint. If my attack failed, he quickly saw the cause and never, as did some others, put the blame upon me in order to shield himself. When the Blacks came near him, he befriended them. He often gave the escaping slaves free protection papers and sent them North. He was habitually kind and gentle and eminently just; his horse, the mules around him, and the cat that followed him purring at his feet, received unflinching marks of his gentle soul.

Lee had numerous friends; Stonewall Jackson had his large following - those that loved and cherished his memory; but Verginia did not furnish through the entire war, a better general or a better man than George H. Thomas. Sherman, too, has his own peculiar photograph. The Mississippi campaigns, including Corinth and Vicksburg, which gave Grant his groundwork of national fame, ever

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needed and ever had the friendship like that of Jonathan to David of Sherman to Grant. Sherman bore any part, however obscure, and gave the most unselfish and untiring support to his noble chief. No wonder that Grant loved him.

Grant was of medium size, ^Sshort neck, square shoulders, with well proportioned head and firmly knit frame. His smile lighted up his face, bespoke humor and good fellowship and to Sherman the utmost friendliness. Sherman appeared tall beside him; his forehead two stories high, his hair light and sandy, his eye keen and piercing, and his frame, though not so compact, supple and expressive of health and energy. Grant inspired you in his wholeness like a fertile prairie; Sherman like a hill country abounding in choice knolls and mountain heights. His bouyant coming put one at ease; his deep pleasant voice rivited attention, and his fast flowing sentences rewarded your silence.

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before his death, we parted with much show of feeling on my part. But Grant had the same complete self-possession as always, was cheerful without a lisp of impatience or complaint under his affliction. My comrades, his was the submission of a great heart in its own unstudied way to the Heavenly Father, the Eternal Friend. Grant had confidence in himself, but it was because he knew of a power beyond self, because he was helped and strengthened by that real power beyond self.

When in the outset, in 1861, he sought McClellan to go on his staff, but turned back in self-distrust, when afterward trying his memory over forgotten military knowledge he hesitated to take his first assignment, when set aside by Hallack without any men to command he followed humbly in the march, being about to leave in despair, when Sherman in pure friendship urged him to stay longer, at these times there was no self-confidence. Oh, no, they came, - the confidence, the strength, the sturdiness, the self-abnegation, the imperturbable face behind which surged

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all the strong emotions of a strong man, with all the qualities of mind and heart and character to make him a successful leader of the host - they came from the same source whence Washington obtained his nobility, Jefferson his wisdom, Andrew Jackson his indomitable patriotism and Lincoln his great ~~hearted~~ ^{hearted loving-} kindness. It was from Him who is in all things; over all things; from Him who cares for the unicorn but forgets not the sparrow - from our Almighty Father and Friend whose great spirit dwells in the hearts and souls of men. Plans like that of Vicksburg, which rival in conception and execution any of Napoleon's, and those which terminated in the final victory over Robert E. Lee at Appomattox, which victory in results exceeds in every way the Waterloo of Wellington - these were not attributable to lucky ventures. No, they came from a solid brain, warmed and brightened by a strong, true heart, all of which were helped to enlargement by the true adjuster of human events, the King of kings.

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honored tomb, where on the banks of the Hudson, whose bosom will for ages bear teeming millions to and fro, few of the passers will go by without desecrating at Riverside and naming the place where this Savior of his country rests.

As it is of use to mariners to study the charts of the sea and note the labors of successful voyagers, so it is of first importance to youth to examine well the map of human life and carefully note the character, work and conduct of successful men. First, the skill beyond price must be sought out, that skill which makes the very heavens and earth contribute to safety, to fame, to greatness, to success; and, second, the craggy banks, the rocks and the shoals of human souls should be known in order to be shunned. General Grant whose work on earth is done furnishes a map of life. Tried by any standard, measured by any ^b plumline, human or divine, his was a remarkable, nay a marvelous career. And that life had its fitting close. Amid great bodily suffering he made a last supreme effort

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by which he earned and gave to his family a handsome competency, then he said, " If it is within God's providence that I should go now, I am ready to obey His call without a murmur". His faith, as I observed it, was as simple as that of a child, like that of his mother. Surely mother and child are to-day in the arms of the Beloved. In the large universe of God there are many mansions prepared by the expansive love of Christ. Let us go there to find this hero, leader, brother, friend.

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