

1913

Daughters of the Confederacy, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I shall not offer any apologies for what I have to say this afternoon; for any man who will accept an invitation to talk upon so important a theme as this upon so short a notice as 48 hours should at least refrain from confirming his misanthropy by making excuses. I regret that circumstances necessitate constant reference to notes, but it is Notes or no with me this afternoon.

I have no patience with hero worship but one of the failures of our present day Civilization is a lack of deference, a lack of respect for superiors, we fail to teach it to our children and we fail to practice it in our own lives. It is most fitting and proper, therefore, and I heartily commend you, the Daughters of the Confederacy, for annually commemorating the birth of Gen. R. E. Lee and J. J. Jackson. May your example reach the masses of our people and also touch the lives of our children.

On an occasion of this kind nearly 48 years after the war closed I doubt the wisdom of an attempt to add anything new to the



stock of known facts about the two distinguished heroes of the Confederacy, I do not doubt the inability of the speaker to bring you new facts. It will perhaps not be improper to make some study of our National growth and development and show the place these men occupied in the formation of the American Republic, and what Lee's life has meant in its subsequent growth and development.

If one reads the history of civilization and interprets the great movements he is struck with the fact that every nation stands for some definite idea. Ofttimes the clashing of men is due to personal differences but the clashing of nations is always the clash of ideals. National conflicts are always due to opposing ideas each striving for the mastery of man. Had we the time to make a study in outline of European conditions in the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> centuries we would see clearly why men came to America and in it all we could see the underlying idea of the American Government. In religion at one time Protestants dominated and Catholics flee ~~at~~ another time Catholic dominates and Protestants flee. Each comes to America that he may worship God as he sees fit.



Just as these people had religious persecution and consequent emigration, just so they had Political and industrial persecution and consequent emigration. In each case the persecuted come to this country to find freedom. Settlements were made in America and thru the French and Indian wars the 13 Colonies became English possessions. In England, including the colonies, the people finally by bitter conflict won from the government individual freedom and for the people at home Political freedom, i.e. the right of the people of England to govern themselves but the right for the English people living in the colonies to have a voice in their government was denied and so we have the American Revolution. Today it is recognized even in England that the people in America were fighting to uphold the English Constitution (The conflict for Home Rule now on in the Eng. Parliament is the same fight) America got her independence and it was not a fight for "No taxation without representation". It was a fight for "No legislation without representation".



After the Rev. War was over we find 13 independent Governments along the Atlantic seaboard, bound together by a straw agreement called the Articles of Confederation. Good for nothing when the war was over, binding upon no one and with no power to ~~comp~~ enforce its decrees. Confusion follows and grows worse until a few of the wiser heads to adjust trade relations call for a Convention to modify the Articles of Confederation, this Convention does nothing but the second one meets for the same purpose and we have our first Constitutional Convention.

These men, perhaps the greatest assembly of patriotic men our Nation has ever had, met and argued, debated, discussed and finally with a series of compromises drafted our first Constitution, the great fundamental law of our Nation. Among the weighty problems that confronted them, there was one question they could not settle and it was left open and was never settled until 1865.



The question that confronted that convention was "Is this new government we are now forming to be supreme over the 13 States forming it or are the States to remain sovereign?"

Had they said the Federal Gov. is to be supreme the Federal Gov. would never have been formed. Had they said Each State's supreme there would have been no central authority. It was the one question they could not solve and at the same time form a union. The Union was formed with this the great open question. Ninety percent of the people at that time believed the States were sovereign, so believing they adopted the Constitution. This fact in reality makes the believers of later dates in States rights the true supporters of the spirit of our U.S. Constitution. But the seed had been planted and the harvest must be reaped.

This Constitutional convention placed before the American people two ideas States Rights vs A Strong Central Government that were destined to grow and clash and



finally plunging our Nation into the most bloody civil conflict the world has ever seen.

I realize that when a man attempts to give the causes for the great civil war in America, he, perhaps, puts himself in a most dangerous position before all historians as well as the American people so far as his reputation for truthfulness and fairness goes. On the other hand the man who shirks this responsibility for fear of his reputation proves himself a coward.

It is not my purpose this afternoon to re-fight the civil war, neither is it my purpose to show who was right or who was ~~was~~ wrong. But you may put this down as a universal axiom. No people ever go to war without there being a real principle ~~at~~ underlying each side and at least some justice with each. When two parties seriously differ the truth usually lies between them.

To attribute the civil war to any one thing in my judgment is wrong. Some historian has said "The Cause



of the civil war ~~was~~ the negro" and this statement has been pretty generally accepted as true. As a matter of fact the negro question has been as much of a question since the war as it was before the war and that is saying a great deal. The war did not settle the negro question it only shifted it.

The habits of a people in their efforts to make a living have a great deal to do with their habits of thought. If you will draw a line beginning in ~~N.Y.~~ at about Trenton, come South West thru Md. at the foot of the hills, down the east side of the Mts. in Va. N.C. to Ga. then cross to the West and go up thru East Ten. & Ky. to the Ohio River at about Cincinnati and from there due West until you reach the desert part of the plains, you will find on the South side of this line of people (at that time) engaged pretty nearly in the same kind of pursuits. They thought alike and by nature their political interests were identical. Having soil, climatic conditions very much alike and all of this well suited to the negro, these people found the slave profitable to them



in their business. The negro becomes a political factor because of an economic environment and is an incident in the misunderstanding, but the conflict would have come if there had been no negro. It is noticeable that North of the line just mentioned the people sided with the Federal Gov. and South of it they sided with the Confed. Gov.

Again the R. R.'s and lines of communication ran East + West instead of N. + S. as a result the people of any one section knew much more of the people E or W of them than they did N or South of them. Intercommunications avoid misunderstandings. There was but little commercial intercourse between the N. of the North + the S. of the South.

In the early history of our Nation there was a more rapid growth of wealth and population in the South than in the North. This gave the Southern States a preponderance of political power. So true was this that Southern men practically ran the Gov. from the time of Jefferson until the outbreak of the war. But as population grew more rapidly in the North



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and political majorities were coming from this section the South saw itself losing its political dominance. (This was more of a factor than is usually attributed to it) The next step after one loses power is to feel that he is not getting justice — usually he does not. The South felt that it was not getting fair treatment (and it was not) and that it would come nearer getting justice out of the Union than in it. That out of the Union they could demand and command better terms than in it and so seceded.

Coming to the crucial test of the whole thing, I believe all men are gradually coming to the realization of the fact that underlying all the misunderstanding and political disputes there was at the bottom two ideas of ~~po~~ Gov. And that the Civil War was nothing more nor less than a battle to the death between these ideas. They <sup>of necessity</sup> were ideas that grew and crystallized from the life, economic condition and



General environment of the people.  
In the North — Closed Communities —  
necessity of Concerted Action, Necessity for social  
+ economic union. Result they believed in  
Strong Central Gov.

In the South — Large plantations  
no intercourse with neighbors — a King  
whose word was law — individuality  
vs. Community — opposed Union for  
States Rights.

The one idea grew up naturally within one  
part of the U.S. and the other idea flourished just  
as naturally in the other part of the U.S.

Often historians try to show the inconsistencies  
of the two Sections; for we find men  
favoring the Southern idea in the North & vice  
versa. They forget that we had to be a  
nation long enough to get settled and to  
develop certain ideas of Gov. and long  
enough for these ideas to crystallize. This  
of necessity took two generations. One to  
get over the Rev. War and one to develop  
ideas that were not dominated by the  
Rev. War. This is just what we did



Thos. Jonathan Jackson  
Born Jan. 21, 1824, Died May 19, 1863

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Robt Edward Lee was born  
at Stratford on the Potomac  
in Westmoreland County  
Va. Jan. 19, 1807. He  
was the 3d son of Colonel  
Henry Lee and Anne Hill Carter,  
(Col Lee's 2d wife)



And this explains the apparent inconsistencies of in Calhoun and Webster. The Calhoun - Webster generation Crystallized the ideas and the one following fought the war for the ideas. In this conflict of ideas alone, in my judgment, may be found the whole cause for the war. And the seed for this was sown in the Constitutional Convention that gave us our Constitution and in the debates for its adoption.

My position is upheld in the words of Lincoln & Lee. Lincoln when he said "I am trying to save this union etc" Lee when he said he would never take up arms again save in the defence of his native State.

Lee as a General

Lee as a Christian

Lee as a Teacher

An example for his people. He saw the hope of his people was education -

He is ~~there~~ the idol of the South, a hero of the nation and an example for all men.