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# CENTENNIAL ORATION

## THE VOICES OF THE PAST

BY

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*Delivered in the Chapel of the State  
University at Athens, Ga., Tuesday  
Evening, June 15, 1920, at the Cen-  
tennial Exercises of the Phi Kappa  
Society, Founded by Chief Justice  
Joseph Henry Lumpkin.*

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## CENTENNIAL ORATION: THE VOICES OF THE PAST.

By Lucian Lamar Knight.

Delivered in the chapel, at the University of Georgia, Tuesday evening, June 15, 1920, on the occasion of the centennial exercises of the Phi Kappa Society, founded by Chief Justice Joseph Henry Lumpkin.

*Mr. President, Members of the Phi Kappa Society, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

The Sage of Monticello was the writer of his own epitaph. But, on the crumbling tomb of the great statesman, whose heart was the fountain of Democracy, we find no mention of the fact that he was ever President of the United States. Earth's transient honors wore no glitter in his dying eyes. But, with the border lights of an undiscovered country drawing near, his farewell thought—the last fond object of affection upon which his fancy lingered—was an intellectual nursery for the young manhood of America. Men might forget that he was ever the republic's chief executive; they might even forget that he founded the Democratic party; but, side by side, with Freedom's protest and with Religion's bulwark, he wished them to remember that he founded the University of Virginia. If the glorious Georgian, who sleeps tonight upon the banks of the Oconee, in honor of whom this hour's blaze of eulogy is kindled—if Joseph Henry Lumpkin had left behind him an inscription for his monument, it would have told us nothing of his austere work in organizing the Supreme Court of Georgia, but rather, I fancy, would the Great Chief Justice have chosen to inform posterity that he was the father of the old Phi Kappa.

Majestic mother of imperial men! Enriched with the achievements of a century, what a theme for contemplation is Phi Kappa's record of a hundred years! There is scarcely

a page of Georgia's history in which her features are not imaged; and even the barest catalogue of her illustrious names reads like a muster-roll of the immortals. How richly her contributions cluster!—thick as autumnal leaves in Vallombrosa or star-dust on the Milky Way. If he who rocked her cradle when these oaks were young be here to-night, what a sense of ecstasy must thrill his soul to see her now, no longer an infant but a queen—full-stated, fair, and wreathed in all her beauty—standing, like Ruth the Moabitess, amid her garnered sheaves, the hope of Georgia kindled on her brow, and around her the yellow harvest of her golden fields!

Voiced in a syllable, the verdict of the hour is this—"well-done!" There will be no waning of our star of statehood—but glory enough for Georgia, in Phi Kappa wreaths alone, if the record of the next one hundred years be just as radiant.

Whatever of incense I shall burn tonight upon the altar of Phi Kappa is consistent with the profoundest veneration for our sister society, organized when the university opened her doors and named not unworthily for that great Athenian orator, who pronounced the Oration on the Crown. Ever a generous rival, it is not for me to utter one syllable in her disparagement. I feel a Georgian's pride in her rich heritage of renown; nor shall I be tempted to forget that, among her proud alumni, are Toombs and Pierce, Nisbet and Johnson—to say nothing of that peerless soldier who, at Appomattox, commanded half of Lee's immortal army—General John B. Gordon. Deprived of these contributions to our wealth of character, of intellect and of honor, Georgia would indeed be poorer. Many a name on her storied page would disappear; and many a star on her historic scroll would be extinguished.

It was due, I am told, to an ancient quarrel, that Phi Kappa on this day, one hundred years ago, unfurled her banner. But the feudal fires no longer burn. The objects sought were these—to stimulate the powers of argument, to develop the god-like faculty of reason, and to multiply the intellectual laurels of the oldest State University in



America. We rejoice tonight, with our alma mater, that her ancient charter, drawn by the great Abraham Baldwin and brought to Athens by the beloved Peter Meldrim, now reposes within her honored walls. Like Roman wrestlers, in the dust of the arena, or Grecian runners, in the Olympic games, these two societies—the Demosthenian and the Phi Kappa—have ever vied. But not for the vain-glorious laurel, not in envy of each other's prowess, not in fratridical bitterness or rancor; but, like the noble Gracchi, whose glory it was to bedeck a parental brow and to kindle pride in the mother's heart of old Cornelia. The Demosthenian and the Phi Kappa! Together, they have written Georgia's history! Both are soon to be represented in the nation's Hall of Fame, where only two statues can represent a State. Long may they live, to enrich the renown of this venerated institution, and, side by side, to journey down the ages, like Castor and Pollux, among the constellations of the firmament!

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Tonight we come, at our mother's call, to celebrate her centennial jubilee. Not a single absent member! For, whether in the flesh or in the spirit, all have come, and to the roll-call of this gala hour answer "here." Hoist to the top Old Glory's rippling colors! Bring forth the timbrel and the harp, and let the anthems swell to heaven from all the daughters of song. But, to warm our hearts, we need no other wine than Memory's. Horace may prefer the old Falernian from the Italian hills. But we'll drink to our mother's health in the rarer vintage of her own purple clusters.

Phi Kappa winds her bugle-horn; and not alone from those whose hearts are beating but from the cold sepulchres of the dead, seen and unseen, heard and unheard, there gathers to her call a mightier clan than ever rallied to the blast of Roderick Dhu. Beyond these lighted walls, in circling ranks of silence, there stretches upward to the stars, a spectral army, a phantom host, which no man can number—there are re-enforcements in the sky above us, hovering there like the viewless chariots in the air at Dothan.

From Laurel Groves and from Bonaventures—from Rose

Hills and from Linwoods—from Oaklands and from West-views—from Summervilles and from Oconees—from every hallowed fane in which Phi Kappa dust is sleeping, these shades have hastened hither. They come from the trailing mosses of the lowland live-oaks, at the ocean's front and from the wandering wild-rose on the mountain slopes, beyond the Etowah. They come from every moldering urn of Georgia's past—from all her cedared hill-tops and from all her winding waters and from all her silent solitudes. They come from senate halls and from tented-fields, from cabinet portfolios and from executive chairs. They come from Manassas, whose arms of victory caught the bleeding Bartow, and from Fredericksburg, where fell an ever-glorious Thomas R. R. Cobb.

“Through burning Argonne's fiery hell  
O'er blazing St. Mihiel”—

they come from those who followed Pershing's star, to tell us of the Georgia lads who linger on the Marne—

“Those boys of ours whose hearts of gold  
Sleep in the dust of France.”

Phi Kappa's crowned immortals all are here. They come in grand procession—soldiers and statesmen—scholars and divines—poets and thinkers—each wrapped in his immortal robes and with the garlands of his fame around him—each bearing in his hand a tribute for his alma mater's altar—and they come from all over Georgia's wide lap, to mingle eternity with time, and to kindle upon Phi Kappa's brow the smile of a century's benediction. Illustrious pilgrims from the past, all hail!

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On the threshold of this hour, I greet with reverent salutation the spirit of our great founder: Georgia's first Chief Justice. Illustrious shade! Unique among all our jurists, there can be no just appraisal of his character which does not “exhaust language of its tribute and repeat virtue by all her names.” Even the barest outline of his life suggests the embellishment of an artist's brush. But there he stands, in his majestic isolation. From his exalted pinnacle among our

public men—from his own peculiar niche in Georgia's Temple of Fame—no power of fate can dispossess him, and there he stands forever. I have called him our first Chief Justice. But the record will sustain me, if I also call him our greatest. Without precedents to guide him, he was a pioneer in pathless woods, a pilot in uncharted waters. He was the incarnate soul of justice, a well-spring of law; but, above everything else, like Hamlet's father, he was a man, and,

“take him, for all in all  
We shall not look upon his like again.”

Here in Athens, the home of his adoption, where his life was largely spent, the very lanes and streets through which he walked are fragrant with the forget-me-nots of his fame; and here, in the love which his neighbors bore him—here, in a stately mansion of the old regime, with the gentle partner of his life beside him, and his little ones at his feet, he found his labor's recompense. Yonder he sleeps where the waters wind. The tears of a state bedew his couch of rest; and the violets of England are not sweeter on the grave of Hallam.

Test him by whatever touch-stone you will. Measure him by whatever standard you please. View him from whatever angle you may—he commands our homage, our veneration, our love. There never sat upon the bench in Georgia a saintlier character. The ermine which befitted him so well was not purer than the heart which it covered. Nor was the dew, on Yonah's topmost pine, less sullied by the stains of earth or more serenely lifted to the airs of heaven, in the virgin crystal of its mountain home. He was the very Sir Galahad of our judiciary; but not less was he distinguished for those powers of intellect which made him a Saul among giants. It was not a weakling's weapon which he wielded—it was the scimitar of a Saladin; it was the battle-axe of a Richard; it was the hammer of a Charles Martel. Profound in his legal learning, he was unrivaled in his imaginative gifts—a poet in his sweep of vision, an artist in his eye for color, and a wizard in his witchery of

words. These elements of strength fitted him for the forum; but he leaned, with a lover's passion, to the scales of a gentler calling. Even the chancellorship of this University could not unclasp his arms from the embrace of the law. In the palmiest days of Rome, he might have worn the toga of the imperial senate. Had he done so, the laurels of speech, for these twenty centuries, might not have rested upon a Cicero's brow. In the Lumpkin Law School, he was the Gamaliel of many a Paul; and sweeter accents were never heard on the bema of Athens than, in many an hour's discourse, charmed the young Georgians who here sat at his feet.

Incomparably an orator, he scorned the glittering rewards of politics, to give himself, with a devotee's enthusiasm, to the law. That tongue of his—like Apollo's lute—cast a melodious spell even upon inanimate objects. It seemed like a sacrilege to silence so much music—to elevate to those serene but icy altitudes, one whose talents fitted him so splendidly for the arena of debate, who fleshed within himself so much of the Promethean fire; but, in those days, when the court was migratory, moving from town to town, when the multitudes needed to be impressed, when there was no codified law, and when opinions were orally delivered to crowded court-rooms the prince was back again in his kingdom, the oracle and the orator met.

It was not my privilege to know him; but I have often conversed with those who did. In figure majestic, in demeanor dignified, in form and feature an Alcibiades, with waving locks of chestnut hair. His brow was massive; and, from underneath it, his deep-set eyes of gray peered like an eagle's from its mountain eyrie; whilst his quivering lip bespoke a warmth of feeling and a fervor of imagination, ready to kindle into impassioned speech. Never did such extremes meet; but never once were the calm judicial balances disturbed. His voice was a baritone, rich, deep, and musical, one which even a Booth might have coveted. Its register was almost infinite; and with its sweet-toned thunders, which suggested some cathedral organ, he held the court-room in a spell of magic. Keyed to every variant emo-

tion, it was master of all the harmonic chords. Like an ocean's tide, it rose and fell. Its wooing witchery compelled attention. At times, in melting accents, turned to mercy, it was soft and low, like the murmur of some Eolian harp—one seemed to be listening to the Sermon on the Mount; but again, in solemn intonations, stern with justice, it awoke the storm and seemed to recall that scene at Sinai, when Jehovah thundered from the cloud and all the camp of Israel trembled.

Marvelous man! He roamed all literature. The whole armory of the Bible was at his command—the letters of Paul, the psalms of David, the proverbs of Solomon, the sublime prophecies of Isaiah, and the wierd visions of Ezekiel. In painting the terrors of the Last Judgment, he possessed the brush of a Michael Angelo; but in holding up his Transfigured Master, he possessed the genius of a Raphael. His eloquence upon the bench was like the now silent but once glorious torrent at Tallulah—it rolled in music over granite rocks and lifted rainbows while it molded cataracts. He delved with Blackstone and Kent, but he soared with Shakespeare and Milton. He reasoned with Plato and Socrates, but he knelt with Calvin and Knox. Said the great Chief Justice Bleckley, himself a philosopher and a poet: “In the spoken word, he was a literary genius, surpassing any other Georgian, living or dead, I have ever known; and he so blended gentleness with justice that, since he has joined the immortals, he may be idealized as our judicial bishop enthroned in Georgia skies.” To quote the brilliant Chief Justice Lochrane, himself an orator: “His sympathies were as warm as the loves of the angels. His addresses were thick to the very top with roses, but the solidity of the mountain was underneath. In his powers of oratory, he had few equals; for he lifted himself to a throne, from which he dispensed words sweeter than the Arabian myrrh. My memory today fills with the light which his first words flashed upon my pathway of life, and if there was but one flower upon the earth, I would gather it to lay upon his grave.” On a tour of Europe, made in the early forties, when overtaxed by professional employment, he found his chief delight, not in the crowded centers of pop-

ulation, but in visiting the shrines of genius, chief of which to him was the tomb of Virgil.

It was said of the great Chief Justice Marshall that he was the "living voice of the Federal Constitution;" and doubly is it true of this unmatched oracle that he was the living voice of our own organic law. Called to the Supreme Bench when Georgia's court of last resort was first created, he spent the remainder of his days in developing the high tribunal, which is today the just pride and ornament of our great state. His colleagues yielded him the gavel; and while the seats on either side of him changed their occupants from time to time, he remained a majestic figure in the center, until he became the very impersonation of the court, its commanding genius, and he was acclaimed "Chief Justice" long before this title was conferred upon him by legal enactment. Finding the courts at war, statutes a-wry, decisions contradictory, he established justice in Georgia; he emancipated it from technicalities and fixed it upon enduring principles. For twenty-one years, he sat upon the bench, a judicial potentate, a supreme Lord Chancellor. His opinions range themselves, in an unbroken file, through the first thirty-five volumes of the Georgia Reports. On the printed page, they lose something of the tropical luxuriance with which they leaped from his lips; but no richer caravan ever bore the spices of the Orient. The great triumvirate of jurists who presided over our first Supreme Bench were worthy of any age or of any land. We might indeed liken them to those three empyreal suns that blaze in the belt of Orion. Warner, Nisbet, Lumpkin! These three, but the greatest of these is he—of the golden tongue, of the golden heart, who comes to us tonight from the golden hills, our venerated father and founder—Joseph Henry Lumpkin.

"Where lies the justice of the case?" That was the question which he unfailingly asked—the spear of Ithuriel with which he detected all imposture, and pierced to the heart every issue of law. "Ruat coelum, justitia fiat!" That was the motto which, like an aureole, blazed above him in the court-room. It was ever with a hand fearlessly impartial, inflexibly just, that he held the scales; and now that he has

quit the realm of mortals, it requires no stretch of fancy to picture him among the spirits of Elysium, an immortal Rhadamanthus. Glorious old jurist, welcome back to Athens! Here still your gentle memory lingers; and, in all the years which you have spent in Paradise, you have not forgotten the city that you loved, and whose children's children still love you.

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Next I salute the shade of that illustrious Georgian who comes to us from the historic groves of Liberty Hall—whose noble life, from its beginning to its end, was a commentary upon the words of Aristides: "O, Athenians, what Themistocles proposes would be greatly to the advantage of Athens, but it would be unjust!" Handicapped by physical infirmities, a life-long sufferer, pale and wan, he has found at last an old, old prescription, which has made the invalid well. Who of us that knew him in his last days can ever forget that roller-chair, that attenuated figure, that fine-spun but musical voice with which he so often charmed the listening multitudes?

I see him first a beardless youth. He has traveled on foot almost the entire distance from Crawfordville to Washington, Ga. Twenty miles from home, he is scarcely known. He is to appear in a case, on the opposite side of which is a lawyer, whose very name is a tower of strength. But the trial proceeds. This youngster at the bar is making the spectators lean forward. He knows every twist and turn of procedure. Nothing escapes him; nothing takes him unawares. At his tongue's end are the statute law of Georgia and the common law of England. He is a perfect encyclopaedia—an index rerum. Even the judge on the bench rubs his glasses to get a better look and to wonder "how one small head could carry all he knew." Who is this cadaverous youth? Has Chatterton come back to earth? Is Creighton re-incarnate? Has old John Randolph, of Roanoke, started his career all over again? Or does Orpheus in disguise revisit us from Mount Olympus? But, hark! The young eagle has commenced to soar. Men lean still further forward. But a moment ago, all were exchanging glances. Now every gaze is transfixed; not a head is turned,

lest a syllable be lost. The jury hangs upon his accents. It retires, for a moment only; then returns. Not a man in the court-room but has felt the spell of a genius new to the public life of Georgia; and some doubtless there were who thought of a stripling by the name of David who, having met and slain his giant at the brook, was now ready to mount the steps of the throne of Israel.

But again I see him in the Georgia House of Representatives. It is the summer of 1836. There is pending a measure for the building of a railroad. To most of our Solons motive power means a mule. The Iron Horse is something new to the legislative mind. It is therefore under suspicion, a horse of evil omen, perhaps a Trojan horse, like the one which overthrew the house of Priam and sealed the doom of Hector. Opposition to the bill runs strong. Intemperate arguments are made against its passage, all of which are tantamount to this, expressed in almost the exact words of the priest of Neptune: "Beware of the Greeks! Back of this monster may be some crafty Ulysses."

"Timeo Danaos, et dona ferentes!"

But the young statesman from Taliaferro possessed the vision of a seer. He was in the secret of his times. He saw in this grim monster of iron the herald of a new day; and in its untried power he recognized the mighty force which was destined to revolutionize all industry and to surpass the magic "presto" of the Arabian Nights. But the argument was chiefly of one sort. It was insisted that in the country to be traversed there were mountains "so steep that a spider would break his neck in trying to scale the cliffs." Wearily the debate wore on. Most of the members sat listless, when suddenly from underneath the gallery, in piercing tones which cut their way to the front, like silver-tipped arrows, there came a voice:

"Mr. Speaker!"

Instantly a profound silence falls upon the House. That musical alto is heard for the first time in a legislative body. All eyes are riveted upon the attenuated figure. New



thought is injected into a dull debate. The future of Georgia is foreshadowed with prophetic ken. For more than an hour he charms the assembled legislators. It is a task for Hercules which this youth of twenty-four has attempted. But the tide is turned. The road is built—one of the first in either hemisphere of the globe. It runs from the Chattahoochee to the Tennessee; and Georgia today owns the Western and Atlantic Railroad. It is a property worth millions of dollars; and to the common schools of Georgia its annual rental is a revenue of gold.

I next see him in Congress. For sixteen years he is there—a watchman upon the walls of Zion. Strangest of enigmas! What is there in a frame so weak to feed so powerful a brain—where are its mighty forces hidden? It is the marvel of Washington. On entering Congress, he weighs but ninety-six pounds. Each speech which he makes is felt to be his last. When overcome with exhaustion, he takes his seat, one thinks of the death-bed scene of the Earl of Chatham in the House of Peers. Three times his demise is prematurely announced—his obituary is written—the newspapers of the state are in mourning. But the little giant is still needed in Georgia and “man is immortal till his work is done.”

On the floor of the great Convention at Milledgeville, in 1861, with marvelous prescience, he again reads the future—to him an open book; and in one of the mightiest arguments ever heard in Georgia he opposes the ordinance of Secession. But he accepts the result. When a government for the South is organized at Montgomery, he becomes Vice-President of the Confederate States of America. The war ends. He is elected to the Federal Senate; but a Republican majority refuses to accept his credentials. Then he writes his “War Between the States.” Later, he takes his seat once more in the House. Eight years elapse; and then, from the executive chair of Georgia, at the ripe age of three score years and ten, this strange figure—this Hamlet of our history—bows farewell. On his tomb at Crawfordville is chiseled this inscription: “I am afraid of nothing on earth, or above the earth or under the earth, except to do wrong.

The path of duty I shall ever endeavor to travel, fearing no evil and dreading no consequences." This glorious old statesman comes back to us tonight—without his crutch—no pallor on his cheek and no wrinkle on his brow. In Phi Kappa's name, let us greet the grand old Commoner and welcome to her courts once more the illustrious sage of Liberty Hall—Alexander H. Stephens.

Out of all the State, two Georgians have been chosen by our Legislature for the nation's Hall of Fame in Washington. One of these is the Great Commoner. The other, by a singular coincidence, is his old room-mate at Athens, a Demosthenian, with whom he often crossed swords—a Georgia doctor of the old school, who lifted surgery from its couch of pain and registered a new era in the history of medicine, who robbed the knife of its terror and delayed the grave of its tenant, who brought to earth the twilight sleep of the gods, and whose claims to the ethereal honors are now recognized and uncontested by the world—the great discoverer of anaesthesia—Dr. Crawford W. Long.

Nor can I think of the Great Commoner, without calling to mind that kingly Georgian, to whom for half a century his soul was knit, as a David's soul to Jonathan. He, too, was a Demosthenian. Whenever he rises up before me, a prodigy of strength, I think of Hercules slaying the Nemean lion or of Samson lifting the gates of Gaza. Said Mr. Stephens: "His is the greatest mind I ever came in contact with, and its operations, even in its errors, remind me of some mighty waste of waters." Tonight, then, let us remember that glorious Mirabeau of secession—that Robin Hood of Georgia outlaws—that unpardoned scion of a race of rebels—Robert Toombs.

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But, in the clouds which canopy this scene, I behold the spirit of another matchless Georgian—a Prometheus, with whose very name we associate the celestial fire of the gods. He left us when a pall of darkness hung heavily upon the state—at an hour when his going made it all the darker. Long have we missed his face amongst us, but his name still lingers lovingly upon our lips, his memory is still green in the hearts of all Athenians. Georgia has not forgotten

him; and when iniquity in public life has called for exposure and rebuke; when right has gone down in defeat and wrong has triumphed for a time; when virtue has failed of its reward and wicked men have risen to power—often, in such anxious hours, has she sighed for her beloved Boanerges and longed for her glorious Son of Thunder.

His eloquence was a flaming sword—the dread and terror of all who trifled with liberty—his, too, the mantle of that elder Jackson, who called down the fire of Heaven to consume the iniquitous records of the Yazoo Fraud.

It was in the days of Reconstruction, when the accursed carpet-bagger was in power and the infamous scallawag was an encumberer of the earth; when the State which you and I love was a subjugated province, with a government forced upon her by bayonets; when this noble old State of ours, whose veins are rippled by the purest of Anglo-Saxon blood, was a slave in the thrall of an Ethiopian bondage; when military despots, drunk with an unbridled license of authority, were reveling in the citadel of law and when Georgians there were who fraternized with them and fawned at their feet; it was then that, in a prayer to Heaven, this grand old patriot cried out:

“O, for some blistering word that I might write infamy upon the foreheads of these men!”

Elijah, the Tishbite, on Mount Carmel, was not grander, when, with the fire of God, he consumed the iniquities of Baal.

Paul, the Apostle, was not grander when, in chains at Rome, he stood before Agrippa.

Cicero was not grander when, with impassioned eloquence, he scourged a Cataline.

Demosthenes was not grander when, with burning Greek, he denounced a Philip on the throne of Macedon.

Knox was not grander when, in highland speech, he rebuked the Crown of Scotland.

Luther was not grander when, at the Diet of Wurms, he defied the power of the Pope and, in his feeble but heroic hands, lifted the banner of the Reformation.

Would to Heaven that, in these recent years, we could have waked that tongue of fire to thunder its phillipics against the enemies of his country—to lay the scorpion lash upon slackers—to call down the lightnings upon profiteers—to stigmatize the Bolsheviki—to denounce pro-Germanism and to characterize with fit opprobrium, those who, in high office, when the country was at war, have sought to obstruct the administration and to weaken the arm of a Democratic President.

Think ye that, in such a voice, there would have been any comfort for Kaisers—any humiliation for Georgia—had its thunders been loosened in the American Senate?

Seldom has a life been lived so high above the fog-belt, so fixed in its principles of right, so rich in its clustering recompenses of reward. Speaker of the American House of Representatives—Secretary of the Treasury—Governor of Georgia—President of the Provisional Congress of the Confederate States—Major General in the Confederate Army—these were some of the great commissions which he held, and back to the people he returned them all unstained.

From that great Bush Arbor speech of 1868, in which he denounced the enormities of Reconstruction—with its withering invective still warm upon his lips—with its burning patriotism still unextinguished in his heart—he was called to his reward; and he literally arose to heaven in a chariot of fire. But, lo, in a cloud of incense and of memory, he descends to earth. Tonight, let us send up our shouts to greet him in the air; and, with gratitude welling in our hearts, let us salute the immortal shade of Howell Cobb.

If this prince of Georgians ever had an equal, for power of invective, for vigor of intellect, for intrepidity of soul—he was equalled, in all the annals of our state, by only one man—a Demosthenian—that great orator of orators, who uncloaked a Mahone—who discomfitted a Blaine—who defied the military usurpers, and, in Davis Hall, bared his unprotected breast to the gleam of Federal bayonets: Benjamin H. Hill.

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Once more I look, and on the key-stone of Phi Kappa's arch of glory, I behold the youngest of all her immortal

faces. He comes to us in the ascension robes of the New South; and around him, in a wreath of stars, I can read the divine beatitude: "Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God." It seems but yesterday that, in his manhood's prime of beauty, he fell upon sleep—that, on a Christmas day, whose saddened sunshine is remembered still, we laid him down to rest among the hills. Had he lived but the fraction of a decade longer the toga would have been his—the toga of a William H. Crawford and of a John Forsyth—his, too, "the applause of listening senates to command." But, alas, "God's finger touched him and he slept." Where, in all the annals of our state, has a private citizen, at the age of thirty-six, ever wielded such a wand of power?

"No cloak of office from his shoulders hung,  
He wore no title, played no usual part;  
Yet left an epitaph on every tongue  
And found a sepulchre in every heart."

Eternally a youth, I can see him now, in a boyish caprice of rollicksome enthusiasm. It was in the fall of 1884, when the election of Mr. Cleveland was in doubt. Days elapsed. But at last the good news came. Organizing a body of Democrats, he starts for the capitol, where the Legislature is in session. Flag in hand, he brushes past the sergeant-at-arms, and, planting himself in the aisle, shouts:

"Mr. Speaker, a message from the American people."

Colonel Lucius M. Lamar, of Pulaski, speaker pro. tem., was at that moment in the chair; and catching the import of this sudden interruption, he replied:

"Let the message be received."

Advancing to the speaker's desk, this bold intruder takes the gavel from the hands of that astonished officer; and, rapping for order, he exclaims:

"In the name of Grover Cleveland, the next President of the United States, I declare this body adjourned."

Shades of Oliver Cromwell! Never was a legislative body dispersed in such a manner; and while pandemonium reigned

in Georgia's capitol, there must have been an answering shout in England, from the ghost of the old Puritan Democrat, who once adjourned a parliament.

Then, in a series of volleys, a cannon from the ramparts of the Constitution, thundered the joyful news. But, alas, the sequel! Four years later, draped in the national colors, the little gun was ready to belch its fire again. But the dispatches told a story of defeat. Unruffled, the young captain of artillery took a pencil from his pocket, and, scribbling on a piece of paper, he put into the cannon's mouth, this gentler blast, from the muse of Charles Wesley:

"A charge to keep I have."

What a marvel this man was—of restless energy! It was he whose constructive genius furnished the electric current which reanimated and revived a prostrate section—who organized chautauquas, planned expositions, built homes for indigent Confederate soldiers, wrote platforms for political conventions, promoted railway enterprises, developed quarries, invited foreign capital to Georgia for investment, and who, like a young Pelham, in the charge of battle, led us from tribulation into triumph, until we won at last an industrial Appomattox, without the firing of a single musket or a solitary stain upon our banners. It was he who wrought the miracle of a rehabilitated Dixie, so that, when he died, men thought of the architect of old St. Paul's, upon whose tomb in the cathedral this epitaph is written: "Si requiris monumentum, circumspice"—"if you seek his monument, look around you."

But, above everything else, he stood for brotherhood; and first, with his radiant pen, a magician's rod, but later, with his unrivaled eloquence, a prophet's tongue of fire, he sued for peace, for unity, for love—till, at his dying couch, like the sisters of Bethany, knelt North and South, and, in the anguish of an hour was forgotten the estrangement of a century. O, sweet bugler of the New England banquet! In your home beyond the stars, with all the celestial harps awaks, methinks that you have heard no sweeter music, among the heavenly hills, than just the answering echoes of your own!

Born on the hills of Athens, it was here that his boyhood days were spent; here that the home in which he lived still stands; here that the plain white shaft of marble can still be seen on which his father's name is carved; here that he wooed and won his bride; here that he often came to visit her whose hands were "worn and wrinkled but fairer yet than the hands of mortal woman and stronger still to lead him than the hands of mortal man"—where the old black mammy crooned him into sleep—where the pigeons fluttered down through the golden air—where the sword of a Confederate sire first consecrated him to duty and to patriotism; here that, at the truest altar he had ever known, a mother's love, he caught the golden spirit of the New Commandment; and here that, in Phi Kappa's ancient hall, he nursed that budding eloquence which, in the years to come, was destined to sanctify anew the associations of old Plymouth Rock and to sweeten the atmosphere of the republic with the memory of an immortal Cavalier.

Indulge me for a moment here. For tender memories come trooping back; and, touched by the music of the Long Ago, my heart must speak. I am tonight in Athens—the Mecca of my college days and still the home of my kindred. Some are gone, "the old familiar faces;" but some are left, and on them linger the bonnie smiles of "auld lang syne." Here's to the classic town, whose towers I first beheld, in the fall of eighty-five:

"Athens, bay-crowned, beauteous Athens,  
Green forever be thy groves,  
Where, as in the years now sleeping,  
Still a youth of twenty roves—  
Fresh, within this heart, unfading  
Will thy recollections cling,  
Like a vine around the cedar,  
In the splendor of the spring."

It was in the home of his mother that I spent my undergraduate days—not in the pillared mansion of an earlier date, but in a cottage, wreathed with honey-suckles and with roses. It was painted a deep red; and, even on wintry days, its memory throws around me the fragrant charm of an Indian summer. Other homes there be more splendid;

but that little red cottage on the hills of Athens is to me more regal than the peerless bloom of the Lancastrian rose. I can almost fancy that it hides the fount for which the Spaniard sought in vain; for, when I am worn and weary, I have only to wander back along the old paths, mount the steps and lift the latch of that Athenian home, and instantly the air brightens, the shadows lift, the heart grows young, and the siren sings again.

There stands, in the heart of Georgia's capital, a monument erected by a nation's gratitude to an illustrious son of old Phi Kappa. Around its base, like ocean billows, the surging waves of commerce break, while silently upon its head, the golden sunlight of old Dixie falls. On the pedestal, which supports a massive figure in bronze, is chiseled this inscription: "And when he died he was literally loving a nation into peace." At the base of that monument, we read a name whose very mention thrills a continent. Tonight, let us open wide our arms to greet him back again—that gentle healer of the wounds of war—that glorious evangel of the New South's resurrection—that beloved disciple—that peerless editor—that matchless orator—that "noblest Roman of them all"—Henry Woodfin Grady.

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Time fails me to sum the list. But, among the glorious spirits which this hour has assembled, there is one whose trumpet call, from the Blue Ridge to the sea, still rings through Georgia, in a thousand silvery echoes: "Speak no uncertain words, but let your united voice go forth, to be resounded from every mountain top and echoed from every gapping valley; let it be written in the rainbow that spans your falls and read in the crest of every wave upon your ocean shores until it shall put a tongue in every wound of Georgia's mangled honor that shall cry to Heaven for Liberty or Death." It is our Peter the Hermit—our Patrick Henry of Secession—our glorified soldier of the legion who, from Fredericksburg was lifted into immortality—Thomas R. R. Cobb.

There, too, is the bay-crowned martyr of Manassas. He resigns his seat in the Confederate Congress, hastens to Savannah, and seizing the guns of the State, says to the Gov-



ernor: "I go to illustrate Georgia!" and tonight "where the war-drums throb no longer" he is illustrating Georgia still, a peer among princes of the sky—Francis S. Bartow.

In this same group of immortals, I see the just, the brilliant, the upright, the intrepid—Linton Stephens.

Hither come two together—for they were never separated—a noble pair of brothers! Hand in hand, they roamed the fields of science and, hand in hand, they climbed the heights of fame, to be transfixed, where stars forever shine, "The Gemini of the Scientific Heavens." Founders of the great University of California. They sleep on the far side of the continent, in the guardian shade of the great sequoias; but tonight, at Phi Kappa's call, they have crossed the Sierras and the Rockies, to camp on the hills of the Oconee—John and Joseph LeConte.

Next I see one who bears a radiant torch—and lettered in gold around it is a single word: "Education." Born in Georgia, he went from Alabama to Congress, and he sleeps in Virginia upon the banks of the James. Member of Congress, Ambassador to Spain, trustee of two great educational funds, historian and scholar—he dispelled the gloom of ignorance! His statue is in the nation's Hall of Fame; and there he stands, the Moses of an intellectual Exodus for all our Southland—Jabez L. M. Curry.

Next, I catch the glorified features of an old man eloquent who, with the corded thews of a Hercules, strangled the hydra of the Louisiana lottery, drove the gamblers to cover, cleansed the state's Augean stables, and from the escutcheon of a proud old commonwealth erased its only stigma. It is our ascended Benjamin M. Palmer.

Behold another transfigured face—a Nathaniel in whom there is no guile, a Georgian "to the manner born"—a Chesterfield—a Sir Philip Sidney—a Chevalier Bayard—in whose charm of accent, in whose courtliness of bearing, there lingers still the flower of the French nobility, a Democrat of Democrats, who, by Republican appointment, is lifted to the Supreme Bench of the United States—Joseph R. Lamar.

And, last but not least, there, too, is our great Senator,

long a trustee of this university, a Georgian who relinquished all too soon the toga which he held aloft without a stain—an old Roman of the type of Cato, who never uttered one syllable in the Senate to comfort the foes of his country—an old patriot who, for all the treasures of Gath, would not have bent his knee to the god of the Phillistines. Augustus O. Bacon! It was a happy hour for thee, but a tragic one for Georgia, when the God of battles called thee home!

But let us not despair of the future, nor hang our harps upon the willows. That shining host is with us still. Those crowned immortals are not dead.

“Where is the victory of the grave?  
What dust upon the spirit lies?  
God keeps the noble life He gave—  
The prophet never dies.”

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But what is the lesson of the hour? Do these voices from the past speak to us in an unknown tongue? Are they concerned only with the events of yesterday? Or, in familiar accents, attuned to the music of another shore, do they address themselves, here and now, to the living issues of today? Ye glorious envoys from the spirit land! At this supreme moment, when, in the balances of God, the destinies of a world are trembling, have ye no word of wisdom or of warning for a bewildered America? Methinks that, from the lips of our great Chief Justice—the ever honored founder and father of Phi Kappa—from those lips now touched with the honey of the skies, I catch a message, in which all the glorified spirits of the air unite; and this is what I hear, in accents of melodious thunder:

“Phi Kappas, revere the Constitution. Exemplify the motto on Georgia’s coat-of-arms—‘Wisdom, Justice, Moderation.’ Illustrate the legend upon her old colonial seal—‘Non sibi, sed aliis,’ ‘Not for ourselves but for others.’ Preserve inviolate the Ark of Liberty. Vindicate the time-honored principles of Jefferson. But, lest there be written upon the shield of America what was written upon the walls of Babylon: ‘mene, mene, tekel upharsin—lest

'Ichabod' be lettered above the door of the Temple of Freedom—be true Philo-kosmians. Think in terms of a world—leave not an unfinished task—keep faith with your dead in France—and uphold the arms of your great President, Woodrow Wilson!"

Aye, there's a name! In all the tides of time, no taller figure has arisen. Call him an idealist, if you will—a visionary—but the God of battles, at a crisis in human history, has lifted him to the leadership of the nations. No grander seer ever dreamed of a world's betterment; and, with only one divine exception, no broader or sweeter spirit has ever hovered in benediction above this planet—aye, not since the cosmic dawn, when the spirit of God brooded upon the waters, and the evening and the morning were the first day!

Et tu, Brute! All, save life itself, has this great Democrat sacrificed upon humanity's altar, only to be reviled and maligned, persecuted and pilloried by those who call themselves Democrats—but a more un-American bunch, with a more Teutonic accent, never sang "The Watch on the Rhine." What shall we call them? O, Webster, for a word! Pigmies—hiding in the pockets and dancing around the shoes of a recumbent Gulliver! Insects—belting their wings and buzzing in the blaze of a great light, which they can neither comprehend nor extinguish. Villified even upon his sick bed! O, shame, where is thy blush! He may have made his mistakes. Be it so—but when his traducers have all perished with the ephemera of an hour—every name among them relegated to oblivion—this great Democrat whom they have wronged, will flourish above their graves, like a cedar of Lebanon, and, in the eternal substance of his fame, will tower, like a Matterhorn among the Alps!

O, God, in this troubled hour, help us to hear aright the voices of the past!

One hundred years ago, on the rocky isle of St. Helena, amid the surges of an angry ocean, the conqueror of Europe lay endungeoned. The power of Napoleon was at an end. Today, in the little kingdom of the Dutch, an outcast emperor, once lord of all the proud German States, is a fugi-

tive—his empire gone, like Othello's occupation; and all in vain does he now call to the manes of Von Moltke and to the shades of Bismarck. At either end of the great cycle of the century, we find a devastated Europe, we behold the wreckage of a world at war! Two great holocausts!—one the work of a Bonaparte, the other of a Hohenzollern. The balance of power has failed! There is seemingly but one alternative—a League of Nations. We proposed it—if we do not join it, a world is leagued against us, and a certain path to war is cut. Outside the league, we have everything to lose—leadership, commerce, character, opportunity, honor. In it, we have everything to gain; but if we gained nothing and jeopardized all, let us not be “quitters”—let us remember this, that no man who looks back, having put his hand to the plow, is fit to enter the Kingdom of God.

We hear much of entangling alliances. The spirit of Washington is invoked. But we have moved a century and a quarter forward—in effect, a millenium—since the Father of his Country slept at Mount Vernon. Forces have been liberated of which he never dreamed. In the beginning, when an infant liberty needed safeguards of protection, she was given a continent for her cradle and surrounded by the inviolate seas. Aye, for humanity's sake, she was divinely kept, like the ark in the rushes of the Nile. But the trumpets of God have summoned her to power. Today steam and electricity have annihilated distance; iron cables now bind the continents and, in a thousand reciprocities of trade, the interests of the world are interlocked, until they “glitter like a swarm of fire-flies, tangled in a silver braid.” All climates meet in our markets. What barrier today is an ocean?—when New York and London are within a moment's call, when East is West and West is East, and even the sea itself is a highway, white with the caravans of the mingled hemispheres? This planet, which is but a speck among the stars, is, in the eyes of God, a neighborhood, and even the Samaritan is neighbor to the Jew. Out of one flesh hath He made all nations—and, in the sacred memories of the past, in the hallowed hopes of the future, in the divine blood of creation's covenant, and in the ancient ties of Old Mor-

tality, we are linked together in a kinship older than the mountains, and we are indissolubly one forever!

It is not to **prolong** but to **end** the reign of bloodshed that a league is demanded—not to send our boys to Europe but to keep them at home. If wars are ever to cease—if the Golden Age of Isaiah is ever to come—if the peace for which Timrod prayed is ever to be realized—if an unending truce to battle is ever sounded—America must do her part to the finish. I can find no other star of hope on the world's horizon. I can see no other bow of promise on the cloud. We must end this nightmare of suspense.

We must wipe out the crime of the Senate! We must regain for our beloved country the prestige which she has lost, through her Lodges, her Borahs, and her Hiram Johnsons. We want no stain upon our starry flag. Without nullifying reservations, we must ratify the Treaty of Versailles; and that, I believe, will be the platform of the great convention which is soon to meet in San Francisco. Then—for those who have butchered the League, there will be no city of refuge from the avenger of blood and no shelter on earth except in a Republican fold!

Away with the fetish of "America for Americans!" It belongs to a dead past. Be this our slogan: "America for humanity! The fatherhood of God implies the brotherhood of man. He who made us our brother's keeper, did not limit us to our own vine and figtree, nor fix our boundaries at the water's edge. He made us the wardens of a world. Philo-kosmians—

"Go, brand him with disgrace,  
Whose thought is for himself alone,  
And not for all his race."

Was it not to meet an hour like this that the Ark of Freedom was committed to our fathers? Who can sound the purposes of God? It may be for this that we have come to the kingdom. It may be for this that Washington resisted a tyrant and that Columbus discovered a continent. We are not the misers of liberty, but its trustees and its stewards—not its proprietors, but its propogandists! Religion was given to the Hebrews, not to be squandered alone upon the

seed of Abraham, but, in Pentecostal power, to be held in trust for all—for Jew and for Gentile, for bond and for free. The Nazarine did not die for one country alone—that country, a remote, a diminutive, a despised province of the Mediterranean—He died to emancipate a world from bondage. Nor did he die alone for His friends but for His enemies.

Be we true to our trust? That is the question which I leave with you tonight. Who knows but what America is on trial? Let us not keep back the leaven of liberty. It was “something withheld” that brought destruction to Ananias and to Achan. Let us beware how we substitute a part for a whole—a segment for a circle. It is a misconception of our role, in the great drama of time, to localize what belongs to humanity or to bury the king’s treasure in a corner of the field. Liberty is the twin-sister of Religion. She, too, has her Calvary and her Cana, her Judas and her John; and she, too, even from her cross cries out: “And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me!” At the entrance to New York harbor, with an uplifted torch, stands Liberty enlightening the world. It is America’s conscience on guard. There’s a stewardship which we cannot deny, a responsibility which we cannot shirk. Israel lost the Ark of God; and America may lose the Ark of Freedom, if she fails to recognize her larger duty and to perform her mightier mission—“to make the world safe for Democracy.”









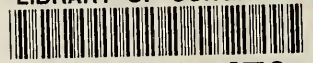








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