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TESTIMONIAL DINNER

TO

WILLIAM T. TILDEN

FORMER PRESIDENT OF
THE UNION LEAGUE OF PHILADELPHIA



JANUARY 25, 1915

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PRESIDENT JOHN GRIBBEL
TOASTMASTER

PHILADELPHIA, PA.
JANUARY 25, 1915

To the Members:

As shown by the enclosed report of the proceedings, a testimonial dinner to former President William T. Tilden was given shortly after the end of his presidential term, by those with whom he had been associated in the management of The Union League.

Mr. Tilden was much gratified by this evidence of the appreciation of his friends and therefore, without the knowledge of those present, he stationed a stenographer behind a screen in order that record might be made of what was said and done.

Mr. Tilden had the shorthand notes put into typewritten form, as it was his intention to present a printed copy to each participant. His death, however, occurred before the printer was able to submit a corrected proof.

Desiring that Mr. Tilden's last wish should be gratified, a few of his friends have arranged for the printing and distribution of this pamphlet, and, by request, the Secretary of The Union League attaches this explanation.



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PRESIDENT GRIBBEL: Gentlemen, we are gathered tonight not to so much honor the guest of the evening as to honor ourselves, although we appreciate such a guest. We are gathered here in the capacity of a family, and I have been very much impressed through the evening to notice the family atmosphere. Everyone is at home. A very wise man sitting not so far from my left, looked over the table with his discerning, hypercritical eye, and turned to me and said, "There is not a single man here tonight that did not want to be here." [Applause.] You and I both know in family gatherings what that means, and I suspect that that is the reason why we have the family atmosphere here with us.

We honor ourselves by gathering here tonight to do honor to our friend. I said it was a family gathering. It is true, but the simile goes further, for we are gathered here tonight

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to honor the big brother who went out into the world and did us honor, discharged every task that was laid upon him with credit to himself and to the family, and has done credit to the bringing up of this Union League household. [Applause.] He is sitting here tonight at the family table, and where he should generally be, at the head of the table. [Applause.] I said he had gone out into the world of affairs and responsibility and had done his task. I want to go a step further, gentlemen, and say that this, our big brother, rang true every time he was tested. He was never known to fail in the slightest iota, in discharging his duty to the family and his duty to a friend. [Applause.] I suspect that that is a reason why we are proud of him. We look at him tonight and see a further and deeper truth in that statement by Burns:

“The rank is but the guinea’s stamp,
The man’s the gowd for a’ that.”

I am not going to take up your time when we have such a list of orators waiting for your

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entertainment, but I do want to say this one thing and just take a moment to say it. We all have our peculiarities and our characteristics. There is such a thing as personality, and one of the greatest of our philosophers has said that personality is power. And personality has its angles, markedly distinct at times. I have often looked over this beloved guest (and I say beloved advisedly) of the evening, to analyze his personality and determine his power, and I think I have located it. Some years ago up in New England an early winter set in, and the mill pond froze over. Two venturesome boys as soon as the ice would bear their weight around the edges of the pond, went skating, and one of them went nearer to the unfrozen center than he should have done; the ice broke and he went in. The other boy screamed for help; the miller heard the call and came out of the mill, looked at the pond and saw this boy's head above the water and his hands holding on to the broken edge of the ice. He rushed to the side of the pond where some

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bean poles were lying, caught one of them and went out on the pond as far as he was warranted in going with his extra weight. He lay down on his face, wise man that he was, pushed the pole ahead of him and went out as far as his distributed weight was warranted in being projected. He pushed the end of the pole to this drowning boy in the water, the boy caught it, and then the wise miller pulled the pole in. The boy would get about waist high out of the water on to the broken edge of the ice, and then slip back. Again the miller would push the pole to him, and the boy would get the end and the performance would be repeated. The last time he lost his grip and the boy with rare presence of mind screamed, "Give me the other end of the pole." The miller pulled the pole in and found that the end that he had been exposing to the drowning boy was coated with ice; the boy couldn't get a grip on it and hold his grip. The miller pushed the other end of the pole to the boy and the boy caught hold of the warm end of the pole and was pulled out of the water. I have never known

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an occasion, gentlemen, and I have known this blessed man for some years, where he did not give the warm end of the pole to his friends. [Applause.] And it is because of that fact, Mr. Tilden, that we are honoring ourselves in sitting at the table expressing our admiration, our regard, and our love for you. We desire to make some abiding memorial of it. The wise men sitting about this board have a great deal more faith in a little taffy while a man is living, rather than a lot of epitaffy when he is gone. We are not willing to wait until fifty or sixty years from now before we decide what sort of a memorial stone to erect to you. [Laughter.] We feel as though we should like to erect a memorial stone while you are living, so these, your friends have selected this, and selfishly have chosen the shape of the gift so that they might have the pleasure of seeing it, and they have commissioned me to present to you as a memorial of their loving regard, this *pearl*. Let me say, sir, that it is peculiarly fitting that this pearl should be worn by you, for it is the only

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gem in all nature that has not been subject to attempted improvement by man. [Applause.] That pearl, sir, is in the condition in which nature left it, and I think that is the reason why we love you, because you have preserved the warm, cheery nature of the boy through all the years that have come upon you, and in the name of these, your friends, I present this to you, and I say God bless you. [Loud applause.]

MR. WILLIAM T. TILDEN: Mr. President, and you men with whom I have worked, each and every one of you, in the interests of The Union League, and as we believe and I believe, to the honor of our country, I accept this and I accept it with a heart so full that I am unable to say anything to thank you for it. [Applause.]

PRESIDENT GRIBBEL: Gentlemen, if there is one man who deserves a vote of thanks from the former President, Mr. Tilden, it is the man upon my left, a man who has supported

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him in season and out of season, a man who has done for him the things that you and I would have done if we had been as industrious as Mr. Jeffries, and some day or other we are going to ask Mr. Tilden, from his free giving hand and heart to tell us some of the things that Mr. Jeffries has done for him.

I am going to ask Mr. Jeffries to read some regrets from some friends who could not be here tonight, and then as far as he will to open his heart and say what he will.

MR. THOMAS J. JEFFRIES: Gentlemen, I have a few regrets here from men who are unable to be present tonight. The first is from Mr. Burpee, saying he is traveling and it is impossible for him to be here. The next is from Mr. McCall, who was expected here tonight, but who caught cold while in Harrisburg last week, and is confined to the house. He regrets very much not being able to be here. Another is from Mr. George S. Graham, who is traveling in the South, and will be unable to be present at the dinner

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to Mr. Tilden. Governor Miller, of Delaware, regrets that he is confined to bed and will be unable to attend the dinner to Mr. Tilden tonight.

Gentlemen, I feel very highly complimented tonight in being called upon to say a few words to and about our guest of honor tonight. There is a certain sentiment that enters into this to me, when I say I have known Mr. Tilden for forty years, going back to the time when we were little boys together, and during that time I have seen this man take many responsible positions in life, of many and varied characters, his directorship of banks, his work along all commercial lines, also his great educational work, with which you are all familiar, which has brought honor not only to him but to us, and last but not least, his great service and untiring efforts to The Union League. I have had the great honor of serving with Mr. Tilden on the Board of The Union League for the last eight years, three years of which time I served under him as chairman of the House Committee.

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I not only want to speak for myself, but I want to speak for the entire House Committee when I say that there was never a time when we did not enjoy his work, his help and his advice. Mr. Tilden was willing at any time to help us, and I am not slow to realize that at times we did impose upon him. Gentlemen, all these various positions that he has occupied, he has not only filled them with credit to himself, but also to the various institutions with which he has been connected. And any man who conducts himself as this man has always done, open and above board, always reliable, absolutely truthful, and above everything else, never failing to realize responsibility, and when his duties have carried him so far that he has often had to sacrifice his own convenience, he has never failed, gentlemen, I say to you that this will be an example to us. [Applause.] In every one of these cases he has not only been a credit but a great deal of help to the growth of these various institutions. I tell you there is only one way to serve in this

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world, and that is for a man to do the best he can in the best way he knows how, and, gentlemen, that is what our guest of honor tonight has done. I ask you now to join me in drinking to the long life, good health and happiness of our guest of tonight, William T. Tilden. [Cries of hear, hear.]

PRESIDENT GRIBBEL: We very much regret, gentlemen, that Mr. McCall is not able to be with us tonight, as he had a speech that would have delighted your hearts as much as Mr. Jeffries' has. I am sorry that he caught that cold at Harrisburg, but there is one gentleman with us who never caught cold at Harrisburg, or anywhere else, and I am going to ask Senator Sproul to say a few words to us of what he thinks of this blessed guest of the evening.

HONORABLE WILLIAM C. SPROUL: Mr. President, honored Guest, and Friends, I really like the expression of the toastmaster, our President, that this is a great big family.

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As Tom Jeffries has said tonight, we have all been around here a good many years, and there is no relation in life that I have enjoyed more, except the one at home, than the family relation here in The Union League, and the joy that I have had and the pleasure I have had in the innermost associations with all who are about the table here tonight. It is something of a privilege to live down here in this southeastern corner of Pennsylvania, where New Jersey and Delaware properly regarded are annexes of Philadelphia, where the best bred, the best fed, and the best red blood in the world live [applause], and to be connected for all these years with a great old institution that is the heart and center of things in this grand, genuine American community. It is a great thing to have been in this institution at a time like this. I have been fond of calling it, to the satisfaction of the former President and also to appease my own vanity, the Augustan Age. The Augustan Age is going to continue, I am sure. We are running along truly in an Augustan Age,

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and it has been a great time in The Union League. As Jeffries says, he has been connected with it eight years, and I have been around here seven years, in association with you, our guest; and seven years, even if we never have any more experience in The Union League, is a long time. It is a big percentage in the active life that we are allowed to spend here on earth. And it has been a great association, as I have said before. It has been a great association to be able to call the fellows—the men who run an institution like this—by their first names, to call them John, and Bill, and Tom, and Harry, and John again, and a great many other names, and some with nicknames which we have here around this institution; and that family idea which the President has spoken of tonight is to me a very sweet thing, and one of the truly happy things it seems to me about you, Mr. former President, and your administration, has been that the warm-blooded things in life have appealed to you. Your friendship, your relations with the men who stood up with you

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and stood by you, your duty to the great old institution which has done you such a great honor, all those things which are the real warm-blooded things, and which count so much more than a lot of the relations and ideas that some folks seem to be chasing through the world these days. It seems to be so much greater and so much better, so much nobler, to follow that idea—to follow the warm-blooded, red-blooded ideas than to follow the cold-blooded so-called philanthropic fantasies and philosophies of a man who has accumulated a great deal of money and who is able to spend a lot in giving cold-blooded things to other people who need things to eat. Well, you are not that kind. If you are giving much to philanthropy, it would be to a place where it would do the fellow a great deal of good, I know, like a helping, sustaining nature from a better world. The trouble is when a man has received a great honor, a great distinction like being president of The Union League, people are inclined to preach about it, and afterwards they go and break the news gently

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to him—they do all such things as that; and that is the kind of thing like a man not long ago who had been the governor of his state, elected at a very youthful age for such a great honor, told me after he had got out that everybody thought of him, “that old fellow has been governor of his state; it is time for him to die;” and he said he had to jump around, and kick and raise the devil generally to let people know he was still alive. That is one of the things you don’t want to give the impression of here tonight. A man who has been the president of The Union League has held the greatest honor possible, I think, to give in Philadelphia [applause], and I don’t know but what I would rather be president of The Union League than anything else almost in the world. I say an ex-president, because he is through with the cares and responsibilities and has all the honor and all the distinction that can come to him. I have a number of reasons, and that is one of the reasons, why I say I would rather be an ex-president. Why, he has just fairly entered upon a useful,

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honest and honorable distinguished career. Mr. Tilden has had a great many years of distinction, not only in this organization but in many others which have honored him, and of which he is so proud, and I am sure that tonight we are not singing a swan song: we are just welcoming him into a newer, a greater and better field than he has ever had before. [Applause.] But it would not be fitting tonight to pass without saying a word about his right bower. Straight as a string, true as steel, with a heart as big as an ox, that fellow who has stood right square up for those who have always known him coming and going, and who have made the living part of this house better than it has ever been before, I am sure; who has brought a spirit about the institution and about everybody who is in it, from the humblest fellow in the basement to the president, who has not been excelled, certainly in The Union League in the years I have known it. It has been a great privilege, Mr. President and Mr. Ex-President, to have been associated

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with that old fellow, and also with the other old veterans. This family idea is a good one. I like the idea of all these old pops, and ought-to-be pops, and wish-to-be pops, and everything of that kind, sitting around here tonight, whom I say I can call by their first names—it has been a great privilege to have been associated with them all, and it is a great privilege to have been associated with them in an institution that has had as its central figure, as good and true and loyal and warm-blooded a leader as you have been. [Applause.]

PRESIDENT GRIBBEL: One of the reasons I suspect for the success of Mr. Tilden's administration of the presidential office was the fact that he had faithful support. I know it is true, because he has told me himself of those who have been in his administration. You have all noticed the marvelous exhibition of Addisonian English that has marked the reports that have been made, year by year, by the administration. I sent one of those reports to a friend of mine connected with an im-

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portant club in New York City, and he wrote me commenting upon the scholarly quality of the report, and attributed it to Mr. Tilden. I did not deny it. [Laughter.] I knew I was safe in not denying it, because I knew the personality and the character and the characteristics of the next speaker. I well knew that if the next speaker was not in the place to bring forth that strain of superb English, and the President had shut the door and sat down, you would have had just as strong and graceful sentences as were ever issued by any organization, here or elsewhere. I think we are greatly favored here in this family in having one member of the family who has gone into the university of the world and who has taken the prize in English. My family wanted me to take that prize, but I came far short of it; but we have here tonight in this family a member of it who has taken a prize in English. He made a superb correction of me the other day. I used the same phrase that the Senator used a moment ago when he

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spoke of the "Ex-President," and our Secretary came to me with a serious look on his face and said, "Beg pardon, you mean the former President." [Laughter.] He then took me into a corner and explained to me that the "Ex" in League nomenclature meant "former," and "Former president of the League" meant that he had been advanced just a little closer in the family affection. [Laughter and applause.] Gentlemen, I am going to ask Mr. Hamer to say a few words to us. [Applause.]

MR. JOHN W. HAMER: Mr. President, and Gentlemen, I do not know how I can remain the modest man who ought to fill the Secretary's chair if the President continues to lavish praise upon me so far beyond my just deserts. It is both a pleasure and a privilege to be here; to be permitted to address this gathering of friends of the guest of honor. Some weeks ago those of us who were active in the management enjoyed his princely hospitality at the memorable final

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function of a splendid administration. It was then my pleasing duty to say all that good taste would permit about the administration drawing to its close. When I reached the point of quoting Senator Sproul's expression citing that administration as the "Augustan Era of The Union League," I suddenly realized I was floundering about in deep water, for there sat the ex-presidents. [Laughter.] The ex-presidents—a body of distinguished gentlemen, who have achieved the highest honor:—who bear that honor with a dignity which can only come from certain knowledge, that they are firmly entrenched in the esteem, the regard, the confidence of their fellow men. Now, gentlemen, just between ourselves and not to go any further, these ex-presidents, ex-governors, ex-judges, these experienced men of affairs, can, upon occasion, be very cold indeed. Perhaps *you* may not have noticed it. I am sorry they are not all here tonight, because after this tribute to them I entertained a fervent hope that they

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might warm up again, to me. [Laughter.] That memorable final function of a closing administration, was seized upon by the guests as a time to celebrate the achievements of an able man, then retiring from office. This assemblage is for a different purpose. It is to testify the friendship we bear toward *him*. Someone has truly said this is not a social club, and yet from another point of view—the patriotic sentiment which underlies its formation—it is the best of all. True friendship springs from gradually acquired mutual trust, regard and esteem. Where else can you find a firmer foundation upon which to base true friendship, than is furnished by your Membership Committee, which relieves you from the responsibility of turning back the unworthy? Where may you seek a more enduring friendship thus based on mutual fitness than is to be found between these four walls? Where may there be seen a more convincing token of rightly founded friendship than is evidenced tonight by this goodly company of friends of William Tilden?

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Mr. President and gentlemen, permit me to close by saying to him in the words of the Chinese philosopher, on your behalf and mine, on behalf of these his friends, "May you live as long as you like, and have what you like, as long as you live."

PRESIDENT GRIBBEL: Gentlemen, one of the charms of The Union League to me is while we have the aristocracy of the ideal in it, and the aristocracy of descent, and also the aristocracy of character, we have in it a photographic representation of the aristocracy of the common people, and we have sitting at our board here tonight a man who the instant that you look at him you will recognize as the prototype of the common people; a man who in his heart is as true as is our guest of the evening, a man who never failed the guest of the evening in sustaining him, and I am going to ask Mr. John Riley to stand up. [Applause.]

MR. JOHN T. RILEY: Mr. Toastmaster and our Guest, Mr. Tilden, and Gentlemen, I

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should like to have you as a jury to decide between me and John Hamer. John Hamer came to me one day and he said, "John, if you only had side-whiskers on, you would look like the common people pictured in the *North American*." I said, "Do you know, John, I was thinking the same about you." [Laughter.] Honestly, I had asked many, many people, and everybody I asked decided against John, and everybody he asked decided against me, so I suppose, under the conditions, I will have to be the goat, as our toastmaster has so introduced me. It reminds me, gentlemen, of a little story. [Cries of Oh! oh! oh!] Now I want to tell you something. I have a family of a wife and boy—my boy of course has just gotten married, so I have got a daughter and she is a little more appreciative. Before the boy was married, Mrs. Riley and he could never see the joke. You know I enjoyed it so much that I told it to the Membership Committee and told it to lots of people and all the people who heard it laughed, heartily. Then I go home and say, "Every-

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body laughs down at the League when I tell that." Well, this is the story in church. The minister took his text as usual, which was, "Here are the sheep; where are the goats?" As a minister frequently repeats his text during a sermon, he said it so often that an old sailor in the back of the church got up and said, "I say, Mister, if you want this show to go on any further, I will be the goat." So you see I am the goat. [Laughter.] Maybe I came near being the goat out at Billy Sunday's last night. [Laughter.] He said, "Do you want to go to hell?" and he looked right at me, you know. I said, "No, but I got a friend, John Gribbel, who is fond of 'Burns.'" What do you think of that? [Loud laughter and applause.] John Gribbel said to me the other day when I was complaining about business being dull, he said, "Nobody is dull but you, John. You are lazy," he said. "Why don't you stir things up and get a little business?" I said, "John, you remind me of the story Dexter (?) tells on his father, who had the rheumatism in his

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knee. He went to the doctor and he said, 'Doctor, what am I going to do for rheumatism?' The doctor said, 'Go down to the ocean and get a bucket of salt water and bathe your knee in that.' He went down there and maybe it was in the late October, and the cottages were all closed and the hotels were closed, and there was nobody down there but the life-saving man walking up and down the beach. His father said to him, 'Good morning, sir; do you own the whole ocean?' The fellow kept on looking out at the ocean and the tide was coming in and the whitecaps and the breakers rolling up on the beach and he said, 'Yes, the whole ocean.' 'How do you sell it by the bucket?' He said, 'Fifty cents.' 'Give me a bucket.' He took that water and bathed his knee. He came back again a week later and the same man was standing there. The tide was out, and he looked at the man and he said, 'You have been doing a hell of a business since I have been gone.' " [Laughter.] Gentlemen, I want to say personally, and I think for my

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associates on the Membership Committee, we are only too glad to be participants in the gift that we have presented to our friend and associate, William Tilden, tonight as a souvenir. Our association with Mr. Tilden has carried us back about three years during his presidency, when he was very close to the Membership Committee, and I think I can say conscientiously that he never shirked his duty. He was there with us, and when he thought differently from what we did, he didn't hesitate to tell us. And when we thought differently from what he did, we didn't hesitate to tell him. [Laughter.] And I will say this to you members who have been on that committee, that I have never been on a committee that has been as conscientious and as independent and as true to the principles of The Union League as the Membership Committee of this institution. [Applause.] We try to work for it. We have been drilled and we have had it drilled into us by such people as Colonel Benson and the elders who have laid down the laws of

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government, that this is an institution that we should be proud of, an institution that we should not forget the ivy that clings around it, remember each leaf, and see that it was cared for; prune it, dig up the ground, see that it does not wilt or die, hold on to it, just as our toastmaster has said, a member of your family. We are all members of one family, and Mr. Tilden, I am glad for my sake to state to you that it has been a great pleasure for me to be associated with you in the connection that we have had together. I thank you very kindly. [Applause.]

PRESIDENT GRIBBEL: Gentlemen, there is one department of the life of our honored guest that very few of us are inclined to speak upon, and I am very much afraid from what I know of the next speaker that he won't tell you anything about that period that should not be told; although in fact I doubt if there is anything about it that should not be told here. One of the members of our family here tonight had the great privilege

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of going to the High School with the guest of the evening, and he has been true to him all the years since, and I am going to ask Mr. Horace Ridings to say a few words to us.

MR. HORACE S. RIDINGS: Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, I wish to thank you for the great honor of being called upon to say a few words for the Membership Committee in regard to Mr. Tilden, but upon this occasion I prefer to call him "Billy."

I have been intimately associated with Billy—and here is where I have one on Tom Jeffries—little longer than forty years. That is the only time I ever got the better of you, Tom. We were schoolmates together, were married about the same time, and then came a lapse of ten years, and we finally met in The Union League together. I have had the honor of serving three years with Mr. Tilden on this board. In fact, I think a great majority of this board have served the full three years, and you, Mr. President, I am sure fully appreciate what it is to be a mem-

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ber of that Membership Committee, you having served on at least one or two terms, I think. You spoke of this being a great, big, happy family. Senator Sproul echoes the same sentiment, but the fact remains that we are absolutely dependent upon the satisfactory relations existing on the Membership Committee for such conditions. The Membership Committee, to be a success, must be honest with each other, must be true to each other, they must be fond of each other, and after the meeting is over things should be forgotten. We have had our little run-ins with Mr. Tilden—we have had our differences, as Mr. Riley has said, but if Mr. Tilden ever made a mistake on that committee, it is a mistake of the head and not of the heart. He has been absolutely honest and sincere with that committee, and we have all learned to love him. [Applause.] And what is better, we have learned to respect him, and I am sure there has not been a man on this committee that does not feel the same as I do. While we will miss you greatly, since you

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are going, there is one mitigating circumstance, and that is the man whom you have for your successor, I am sure. A man who has placed just as reliable men on that committee, who will be honest to each other and just to each other. His ideals for the membership are just as strong as yours, I am sure, and in addition to that, I am sure he has the same idea for which this League was formed, when it was conceived for the purpose of upholding the hands of Abraham Lincoln. It is fortunate to have another man of this kind, and I am sure the Chairman of the Membership Committee will be just as happy to say as many complimentary things about Mr. John Gribbel as he can say about Mr. Tilden. Again I thank you, Mr. Chairman. [Applause.]

PRESIDENT GRIBBEL: That certainly was a remarkable class of the High School to turn out two such graduates. [Laughter and applause.]

MR. HORACE S. RIDINGS: Some of them are in jail, I think. [Laughter.]

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PRESIDENT GRIBBEL: I am glad you have forgotten their names, anyway.

The Union League family, particularly this part represented here tonight, can congratulate itself on having had admitted into its family circle a man of the quality of the next speaker I am going to call upon. When The Union League can draw upon such men in the community, you and I need have no fear for the future of the League. I do not see how it was that he did not go to the High School and graduate in that same class that sent out those other two. I think that is the only regret I have about the next speaker. I am now going to ask Mr. Lyman if he will say a few words.

MR. WILLIAM R. LYMAN: Mr. President and Toastmaster, our Guest, and Fellow Members of The Union League, I am somewhat at sea about who is being honored here tonight after the remark from our worthy toastmaster, but as I look at it, we are all honored. We are honored to have Mr. Tilden as our guest.

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He is honored to have us seated with him. And I rather approve of this thought of "Ex-Presidents." It sounds rather good to me. And he has joined that small and select number of ex-presidents of The Union League. Some of us become "ex" from choice. Others have "ex" thrust upon them. However, we will let that pass. [Laughter.] I believe that the ex-presidents of The Union League in a certain sense can feel relieved after becoming such, for I do not believe anybody can hold an office, especially so important an office as the President of The Union League, and not feel the responsibility, if he renders conscientious and faithful service, and to be relieved of that responsibility must in a measure be a pleasure but coupled with that pleasure there is a tinge of sadness, for when the time comes to sever official life with those with whom you have served, there must be a cause of regret.

I do not know that I can add anything to the many good things that have been said about our guest tonight. All those who have

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ever served with him know of what value he has been to this organization and how genuine have been his efforts for its welfare; but if there is one characteristic that stands out more prominently in his life than any other, it perhaps is his loyalty to his friends, both in his official capacity and in his private life; and, gentlemen, no man can disregard friendship [applause], for it is one of the most beautiful things in all the world. What will we not do for true friends? Woe be to him who treats it lightly and who for any cause whatsoever casts aside friends. I tell you, gentlemen, his position is lonely indeed. He who has no friends is of no use in the community. Much has been said during the last two years about observing the traditions of The Union League, and we must always bear in mind that this organization has been for the love of our country. That is a very important thing; but we cannot expect the present membership of The Union League, the majority of whom know nothing about its early life, except historically, can have

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the same degree of sentiment as those who passed through that trying ordeal, or those who were familiar with the life of The Union League at that time; but we deplore anything which tends to destroy that sentiment, and we could not have had in the presidential chair a man who stood stronger for the traditions of The Union League than did Mr. Tilden. [Applause.] On an occasion like this, we think of The Union League above anything else, and when we think of that, we think of the membership of which this League is composed; and if the traditions are to be kept up, we must see to it that the right men are elected to membership. The Membership Committee has a very difficult task to perform. We are dependent on the personnel of that committee. I am reminded of an extract from a diary of John Kendrick Bangs, which has been recently published and which you may have read, and in which he relates an incident which happened while he was traveling in the West. He was thrown into conversation with a seedy, down-and-out

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looking individual, who proved afterward to be a man of unusual knowledge, and in speaking of that interview, he says, "The old fellow was a marvel. I simply could not forget the idea that here was a vagabond—an apparent vagabond—with all the evidences of adversity, and still with a rich and beautiful mind, and when we arrived at our destination, I said to this man, 'I am indebted to you for a most delightful hour, but you have the advantage of me. You know who I am, but I haven't the pleasure of knowing you. Won't you tell me who you are, that I may add your name to my list of friends?' The old man with tears streaming down his cheeks placed his hand upon the shoulder of Mr. Bangs and said, 'Young man, it doesn't matter who I am, but rather what I am.' And with that thought" he said, "he passed out of my life and I never saw him again." That, gentlemen, is the keynote of the membership of The Union League. If we are to preserve the traditions, it doesn't matter who I am, but rather what I am. Character must stand

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above everything else, and the character of an organization is made up of the character of its individual members. You nor I cannot govern the future of The Union League. Your officers and your Board of Directors can do little in that direction. It comes back to the individual member, and if he is right, The Union League is right. I trust we will all realize that when we enter this door that we should feel proud of our membership, and that we should become better men and better citizens and more patriotic citizens, by becoming members of The Union League. I have great faith in the membership of The Union League. For I believe if we were to face the conditions that the founders of this League faced, that you would find it just as loyal today as it was at that time. [Applause.]

I have taken too much of your time, gentlemen. [Cries of no, no.]

In closing, I should like to say to our guest, that I hope, sir, whatever your future may be, that the time you spent in the office of the presidency of The Union League, carrying

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with it as it does your association with us, will be numbered among the pleasantest hours of your life. I thank you very much. [Applause.]

PRESIDENT GRIBBEL: Gentlemen, I wish to take a minute of your time. The quality of the next speaker is such that I wish to call your attention to a remark that was made by an American philosopher—probably the wisest of our American philosophers—Emerson, when he said, “Every organization is but the lengthened shadow of a man.” Gentlemen, I wish to present to you one of the best illustrations I know, of that remark by one of the wisest of our poets, when he said that heaven’s choicest gift was a friend. [Applause.]

MR. WILLIAM T. TILDEN: Mr. President and fellow members of the Union League, with whom I have been associated for so many years, first let me thank you from the bottom of my heart. I don’t know how to do it, and I don’t know how to control myself

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while I try to do it. This beautiful pearl that you have given to me, you could not have given me anything that I would prize more, not because I have no pearls, but because the pearl just seems to mean more to me than anything else in the way of a gem. I will wear it and you will see me wear it, God willing. You all look like and are good men, and it is my privilege to have you as my friends, but we are here, after all, on account of The Union League. I have had the honor of serving on the board in one capacity or another for twelve years. I probably will repeat largely what I said at the dinner we had here a few weeks ago, and if so, I hope you will pardon me. [A Voice: You couldn't do better.] No, I couldn't do better. I do not feel as though I could do as well—but during that time and in looking back over it I flatter myself that I go out of office with more friends than I ever had while I was in office. [Applause.] I don't mean to flatter myself, because it is not myself. It is simply a living truth tied to the course you started

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out to steer by. I have met you men in season and out of season. I have met you in the morning early and I have met you in the night late. I have met you at baseball matches and I have met you at dinners at the Country Club. Now there may be something that means more to you than The Union League, but I doubt if there is a factor in the United States of America today that stands for more or is ready to stand for more for the welfare of the greatest number of people in this country—which I believe is represented by the principles of the Republican Party—than The Union League of Philadelphia. [Applause.] Had it not been—and as I said before when I spoke on this subject I do not want to say one word out of the way—there is not one discordant note, and God knows I cannot open my heart as full and overflowing as I wish—but had not The Union League stood firm in 1912, where would the principles of the Republican Party have been? [Applause.] Now, I do not care much about the name of the Republican Party. It is a valuable thing to have, just

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like a trade-mark, but the principles back of that have made this country great, and The Union League has stood by those principles, and, gentlemen, I stand by them out of office and in office. [Applause.]

I made a remark the other day that I thought it was harder to get out of office than I thought it was to get in it. I don't know. When it comes to a vote, you know it was close, and it lay between these two men that I am so fond of and who are so fond of each other, both good friends of mine. It was decided by a few votes in a total of two thousand, and you know how it feels; but when the recent election came I realized as soon as the nominations were made and the acceptances were filed, that there was no longer any need for Tilden, so I got out of the way, knowing—and I say it now as I said it then—that into whosever hands it fell, either those of Senator Sproul's or those of Mr. Gribbel's, that The Union League would be absolutely safe. [Applause.] And there my obligation, except as a member, ceased.

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I do not know how to thank you for this. I guess I am a sentimental sort of a cuss and it may appeal to me for some reasons, which you do not know, more than it would to some men; but I do thank you. I care little about the dinner. I love the flowers—and I don't like the word *love* between men—but I am pretty fond of you and this gem which you have given me, I hope I will never disgrace.

[A Voice: You never will.]

I certainly shall never mean to, and from now on The Union League is in good hands, but don't forget the motto of The Union League that love of country leads. [Loud applause.]

And now, gentlemen, I pass from this and ask the privilege of living in a house by the side of the road where the friends of man go by. [Applause.]

PRESIDENT GRIBBEL: Gentlemen, this is the end of the formal list, I move that we stand and clasp hands and sing, "Should auld acquaintance be forgot?"

