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ADDRESSES

ON THE

PRESENTATION OF THE SWORD

OF

GEN. ANDREW JACKSON.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

ADDRESSES

ON THE

PRESENTATION OF THE SWORD

OF

GEN. ANDREW JACKSON

TO THE

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,

DELIVERED

IN THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 26, 1855.

U.S. 33d Cong., 2d sess. 1854-1855

WASHINGTON:
PRINTED BY BEVERLEY TUCKER.
1855.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

TUESDAY, *February* 27, 1855.

Resolved, That there be printed, for the use of the Senate, twenty thousand copies of the proceedings and remarks upon the presentation of the sword of General JACKSON; and that the same be bound in such style as the Committee on Printing shall direct.

Attest: ASBURY DICKINS, *Secretary*.

PRESENTATION

OF THE

SWORD OF GENERAL JACKSON.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MONDAY, *February* 26, 1855.

Mr. SHIELDS, of Illinois, rose and said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: The hour has arrived which has been designated for a very interesting ceremony. It is one in which ladies take as deep an interest as gentlemen, but the crowded state of the galleries excludes many of them from the Chamber. A motion to suspend the rule which limits admissions to the floor, so that those who are now excluded may be permitted to be present, I think will meet with general acceptance; and, therefore, I submit that motion.

The motion was agreed to; and many ladies were admitted to seats without the bar.

Mr. CASS, of Michigan, then addressed the Senate as follows:

Mr. PRESIDENT: I must ask the indulgence of the Senate for requesting that its usual business may be suspended, in order to give me an opportunity to discharge a trust which has been committed to me—a

trust I had not the heart to decline, but which I knew I had not the power to fulfil, as such a mission should be fulfilled. I hold in my hand the sword of General Jackson, which he wore in all his expeditions while in the military service of the country, and which was his faithful companion in his last and crowning victory, when New Orleans was saved from the grasp of a rapacious and powerful enemy, and our nation from the disgrace and disaster which defeat would have brought in its train. When the hand of death was upon him, General Jackson presented this sword to his friend, the late General Armstrong, as a testimonial of his high appreciation of the services, worth, and courage of that most estimable citizen and distinguished soldier, whose desperate valor on one occasion stayed the tide of Indian success and saved the army from destruction. The family of the lamented depositary, now that death has released him from the guardianship of this treasure of patriotism, are desirous it should be surrendered to the custody of the national legislature, believing that to be the proper disposition of a memorial which, in all time to come, will be a cherished one for the American people. To carry that purpose into effect I now offer it in their name to Congress.

Mr. President, this is no doubtful relic, whose identity depends upon uncertain tradition, and which owes its interest to an impulsive imagination. Its authenticity is established beyond controversy by the papers

which accompany it; and it derives its value as well from our knowledge of its history, as from its association with the great captain, whose days of toil and nights of trouble it shared and witnessed, and who never drew it from its scabbard but to defend the honor and the interests of his country.

This is neither the time nor the place to portray those great traits of character which gave to General Jackson the ascendency that no man ever denied, who approached him, and that wonderful influence with his countrymen which marked almost his whole course, from his entrance upon a public career till the grave closed upon his life and his labors, and left him to that equality which the mighty and the lowly must find at last. Still, from my personal and official relations with him—and I trust I may add from his friendship towards me, of which I had many proofs—I cannot withhold the acknowledgment of the impression which his high qualities made upon me, and which becomes more lasting and profound, as time is doing its work of separation from the days of my intercourse with him.

I have been no careless observer of the men of my time, who, controlled by events, or controlling them, have stood prominent among them, and will occupy distinguished positions in the annals of the age; and circumstances have extended my opportunities of examination to the Old World, as well as to the New. But I say, and with a deep conviction of its truth, that I

have never been brought into contact with a man who possessed more native sagacity, more profundity of intellect, higher powers of observation or greater probity of purpose, more ardor of patriotism, nor more firmness of resolution, after he had surveyed his position and occupied it, than the lamented subject of this feeble tribute, not to him, but to truth. And I will add, that, during the process of determination upon important subjects, he was sometimes slow, and generally cautious and inquiring, and, he has more than once told me, anxious and uneasy, not seldom passing the night without sleep; but he was calm in his mind, and inflexible in his will, when reflection had given place to decision. The prevailing opinion that he was rash and hasty in his conclusions is founded upon an erroneous impression of his habits of thought and action; upon a want of discrimination between his conduct before and after his judgment had pronounced upon his course.

This is not the first offering of a similar nature, which has been laid upon the altar of our country with the sanction of the legislative department of the government. Some years since, another precious relic was deposited here—the sword of him, who, in life, was first in the affections of his countrymen, and in death is now the first in their memory. I need not name his name. It is written in characters of living light on every heart, and springs instinctively to every tongue. His fame is committed to time, his example to mankind, and him-

self, we may humbly hope, to the reward of the righteous. When centuries shall have passed over us, bringing with them the mutations that belong to the lapse of ages, and our country shall yet be fulfilling, or shall have fulfilled, her magnificent destiny—for good, I devoutly hope, and not for evil—pilgrims from our ocean coasts and our inland seas, and from the vast regions which now separate, but before long by our wonderful progress must unite them, will come up to the high places of our land, consecrated by days and deeds of world-wide renown; and, turning aside to the humble tomb, dearer than this proud Capitol, they will meditate upon the eventful history of their country, and will recall the example while they bless the name of WASHINGTON.

And, on the same occasion, was presented the cane of FRANKLIN, which was deposited in our national archives with the sword of his friend and co-laborer in the great cause of human rights. Truly and beautifully has it been said, that peace hath its victories as well as war. And never was nobler conquest won than that achieved by the American apprentice, printer, author, statesman, ambassador, philosopher, and, better than all, model of common sense, over one of the most powerful elements in the economy of nature, subduing its might to his own, and thus enabling man to answer the sublime interrogatory addressed to Job, "Cans't thou send lightnings that they may go and say unto

thee, Here we are?" Yes; they now come at our command, and say, Here we are, ready to do your work. And it was our illustrious countryman who first opened the way for this subjugation of the fire of heaven to the human will. The staff that guided the steps of FRANKLIN, and the sword that guarded the person of WASHINGTON, may well occupy the same repository, under the care of the nation they served and loved and honored.

And now another legacy of departed greatness, another weapon from the armory of patriotism, comes to claim its place in the sanctuary assigned to its predecessor, and to share with it the veneration of the country, in whose defence it was wielded.

The memorial of the first and greatest of our Chief Magistrates, and this memorial of his successor in the administration of the government, and second only to him in the gratitude and affections of the American people, will lie side by side, united tokens of patriotic self-devotion and of successful military prowess, though they who bore them and gave them value by their services are now tenants of distant and lowly graves, separated by mountains, and rivers, and valleys. And in ages shut out from our vision by the far away future, when remote generations, heirs of our heritage of freedom, but succeeding to it without the labor and the privations of acquisition, shall gaze (as they will gaze) upon these testimonials of victories, time-worn but time-honored,

they will be carried back by association to those heroes of early story, and will find their love of country strengthened, and their pride in her institutions and their confidence in her fate and fortunes increased, by this powerful faculty of the mind—a faculty which enables us to triumph over the distant and the future, as well as over the stern realities of the present, gathering around us the mighty dead and the mighty deeds that excite the admiration of mankind, and will ever command their respect and gratitude. And thus will communion be held with the great leaders of our country, in war and in peace, who wore these swords in their service, and hallowed them by their patriotism, their valor, and success.

I will now read to the Senate two letters connected with the circumstance of this presentation—one from Mr. Nicholson, and the other from Mr. Vaulx, the son-in-law of the late General Armstrong:

Letter from Joseph Vaulx.

NASHVILLE, *February* 7, 1855.

DEAR SIR: Doctor W. S. McNairy left here a few days ago for Washington, having in charge the sword that General Jackson before his death gave to General Armstrong. The Doctor was requested by William M. Armstrong (in whose keeping it had been left by his father) to hand it over to you on his arrival in Washington. You, I believe, were present at the time General Armstrong had the honor of

having it presented to him by his distinguished friend. It is the sword worn by General Jackson in his various campaigns and during the whole time he remained in the military service of his country. It is, therefore, justly regarded as a relic of great value. It was General Armstrong's wish that it should be placed at the disposal of Congress, or the government, with a view to its being deposited in a suitable place, where, doubtless, millions of General Jackson's admiring countrymen will in time to come gladly look on it as the war-sword of one whose brilliant services in the cause of his country place his name in bold relief on the historic page of our beloved country.

No person, I believe, would have been preferred to yourself by General Armstrong as the medium for presenting the sword to Congress, or the government; which, at the request of his son, you will please do in such terms as you may deem proper.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOSEPH VAULX.

Hon. A. O. P. NICHOLSON.

Letter from A. O. P. Nicholson.

WASHINGTON, *February* 13, 1855.

DEAR SIR: A short time before the death of General Jackson, I received a note from him inviting me to visit him for a special purpose. I did so, and found that, amongst other things, he desired to put into my hands the sword which he had used at the battle of New Orleans, for the purpose of delivering it to the late General Robert Armstrong, as a

testimonial of warm personal friendship, and as an evidence of his high appreciation of his military services and his patriotic devotion to the honor of his country. I delivered the sword as requested, and it was kept by General Armstrong during his life. Since his death, his family have concluded that the most proper disposition they could make of it would be to present it to Congress, to be kept as a perpetual memento of the brilliant achievement with which it is connected. For this purpose the sword has been forwarded to me with the request that I would present it to Congress in the name of General Armstrong's family. It has occurred to me that I could not more appropriately discharge this trust than to place the sword in your hands, and to ask that you will present it in such way as you may deem most proper. The known relations, in public and private, between General Jackson and yourself, as well as your constant friendship for General Armstrong, seem to me to render it eminently fit that the presentation should be made by you. I therefore place the sword at your disposal, and respectfully request that you would undertake to carry out the wishes of the donors.

I am, very respectfully, your friend,

A. O. P. NICHOLSON.

Gen. LEWIS CASS.

Mr. BELL, of Tennessee:

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am fully aware that, in undertaking to accompany the offer of the resolution which I propose to send to the Chair with any remarks upon the

public services and character of the illustrious man whose name and whose memory have been so eloquently and appropriately brought to our notice by the distinguished Senator from Michigan, I assume an office of great delicacy, and one which I, especially, may well have some distrust of my ability to perform in a proper and satisfactory manner; yet, as the senior representative of the State of Tennessee in the Senate, I do not feel at liberty to decline it.

In what I propose to say, I must tread with caution and reserve, or not at all, upon grounds on which the fires of political controversy raged with such fierceness at a period so recent that the embers yet smoulder, and may not prudently be disturbed.

In the great drama of affairs now being enacted on this continent, the opening act of which was the Revolution—the closing scenes, I trust, will be in the far, far future—Andrew Jackson was, in his day, a great and successful actor. Whatever difference of opinion may have existed among his contemporaries of the merit of some parts of his performance, yet, as a whole, it received the plaudits of his countrymen, and a large proportion of them pronounced it masterly throughout.

General Jackson possessed rare endowments, and was, indeed, one of the most, if not *the* most remarkable man of the age in which he lived. With but slight and indifferent mental or professional training and discipline in early life, so generally regarded as important,

if not essential, to eminent success in either of the two great departments of human effort—the civil and the military—yet, at the very outset of his military career, he exhibited talents for command of a high order, and in less than three years, by his brilliant achievements, established his reputation as the first military chief of the country. But this is not all. Retiring from the army when there appeared to be no further demand for active service, he was in a few years thereafter elevated to the highest civil station under the national government; and for eight successive years he wielded the power and influence of his position, as Executive Chief, with such vigor and address, that he was sustained in, and succeeded in carrying out, all the great measures of his administration—some of them presenting questions of the gravest nature, and giving rise to the most intense excitement—and this, too, in the face of an opposition combining an amount of ability, eloquence, skill, and experience in affairs, in both houses of Congress, but more especially in the Senate, greater than was ever witnessed before or since. The jars and contentions between those great moral elements were, sometimes, such as shook the whole country.

A man who, having addicted his early manhood mainly to the pursuits of private life, without any appreciable culture or experience in public affairs, could thus, when there arose a public exigency of sufficient urgency to induce him to enter the public service, *per*

saltum, as it were, raise himself to the first rank as a military leader, and then, for so long a period, as Chief Magistrate of a great and free country, thus direct and control its civil administration, must be allowed to have possessed great capacity.

His was no negative or unmarked career—no meteor-like appearance upon the great theatre of affairs, to blaze and dazzle for a moment, and then pass away forever; but, both as a military commander and a civil chief, he left his impress upon his country and its institutions deep, striking, and indelible.

It would be idle to assume, as some have done, that General Jackson was indebted alone, or chiefly, to fortune and adventitious circumstances for his extraordinary success. He was such a man, Mr. President, as when he had once attained position, had the faculty of creating the circumstances, if he needed them, necessary to further and continued successes. Posterity will inquire, with eager curiosity, the secret of his amazing success—the distinctive traits of mind and of personal character by which he achieved it; some of which they will probably seek in vain in the pages of contemporary history.

General Jackson had what may be called an intuitive perception of the passions and interests by which the mass of mankind are controlled. He was a shrewd observer of individual character, and he was seldom mistaken in his estimate of the men with whom he

associated as friends or came in contact with as opponents. He was devoted to his friends; and the more others opposed or denounced them, the more determined he became to sustain them, and never cast them off until they arrayed themselves in open opposition to his plans and wishes. Nor was he deficient in courtesy to opponents—not personal enemies—and could even court them when he desired or needed their support, but never by fawning or unmanly appeals.

His self-reliance was wonderful. He never despaired of his fortune. As the obstacles to the success of any favorite scheme of policy multiplied, and the storm of opposition was wildest, it was then that one of his most striking traits was exhibited. He became the soul, the animating principle, of his followers; revived their fainting courage, re-inspired their confidence in his infallibility, and cheered them on to renewed and more vigorous efforts.

When the emergency required it, no man was more prompt in coming to a decision. When the question presented difficulties, and admitted of deliberation, he counselled with his friends. When his own conviction was clear, he seldom deferred to the views of others; and when he once decided upon his course, he was inflexible and immovable. He was, emphatically and truly, a man of stern resolve and iron will; and, when opposition to the accomplishment of his purposes appeared formidable and discouraging, he was apt to

become impatient of the restraints and trammels of official and customary routine. He had the courage, both moral and physical, to dare and to do whatever he thought proper and necessary to the successful issue of whatever he had resolved upon. He was withal a patriot, devoted to the honor, dignity, and glory of his country; and he had the faculty of persuading himself that whatever measure or course of policy, either in peace or in war, he resolved upon, and strongly desired to accomplish, was proper and necessary to the public welfare.

No man since the days of Washington was more devoted to the union of these States, or would have more cheerfully laid down his life to defend and uphold it, than Andrew Jackson.

Many have supposed that General Jackson was often controlled by passion and resentment, and that he sometimes embraced measures and engaged in enterprises without any calculation of the chances of success or defeat, and reckless of both. There never was a greater mistake. This was the error into which the great opponents of his measures and policy in the Senate fell; and the event showed that he had estimated the elements of his power and the true sources of his strength with greater sagacity than themselves.

When General Jackson made his first essay in the art of war, and led the Tennessee volunteers against a wily foe, formidable from their numbers and mode of war-

fare, many careless observers of his early career had their misgivings that a rash valor and his eager desire to distinguish himself in arms might result in disaster and the unnecessary sacrifice of his men; but they were soon undeceived. Those who knew him best, and knew him well, never had any distrust of his discretion as a military commander.

But his qualities as a general, and his powers of combination in conducting the operations of an army, were best illustrated and put to the severest test in the campaign of 1814–'15 in the South. It was then that ample scope was given him for the exercise of his genius and capacity for military command.

In 1814 Great Britain, by the overthrow of the French Emperor, found herself in a condition to employ the whole of her great naval and military resources in an effort to humble or to crush the United States. The first blow fell upon the shores of the Chesapeake. The seat of the national government fell into the hands of the enemy, and the blackened walls of the Capitol gave warning of the ruthless spirit with which the war was thenceforth to be conducted. This wound to the national pride was inflicted at a time when the public finances and the public credit were at the lowest ebb. The recruiting service went on sluggishly, and gave no promise of an adequate increase of the regular army; and the whole of our extended and almost defenceless seacoast was exposed to the attacks of the enemy.

Rumors soon after reached the country that a still more formidable armament was to make a descent upon our shores; but where the storm would burst, there was no clue to determine. Afterwards a general gloom, not without some admixture of despondency, then hung over the country.

At a later date it became manifest that the Gulf coast was to be the scene of operations. Every day the gathering clouds of war in that quarter became darker and more portentous. Still, it was uncertain upon what particular point the bolt would fall; but wherever it might fall on that coast, it was certain that it would be in the military department, the protection and defence of which was assigned to General Jackson. All eyes and hopes were now turned upon him. He had already exhibited such uncommon energy, skill, and intrepidity, in his conduct of the war against the Creek Indians, as to inspire some confidence, when there seemed to be scarcely ground for hope. It was known that he had no army in the field, save two or three regiments of regulars, and a single regiment of mounted Tennessee volunteers, and that there were no adequate supplies, either of provisions or munitions of war, at any point in his command for conducting military operations upon a large scale; but never was confidence so well repaid. His energy and discretion, and the confidence he inspired, supplied every deficiency.

When it became evident that New Orleans was to be

the point of attack, and that the hostile armament had made its appearance off the Gulf coast, he called upon the authorities of Kentucky and Tennessee to send forward their contingents of militia and volunteers with all despatch, as the enemy was approaching. Upon the States threatened with invasion he urged the employment of all their energies and resources to be in readiness to meet the foe. He called, in strains of inspiring eloquence, upon the free colored inhabitants of Louisiana to protect their native soil from invasion and pollution by a foreign foe. He offered pardon and invoked the very pirates who infested the neighboring coast to the rescue.

By these energetic steps, General Jackson found assembled around him a force of five thousand men, of all arms—all, save two regiments of the regular army, being volunteers and militia-men—and with this hastily-assembled army, on the 8th of January, he met, and, in a sanguinary battle, overcame more than double their number of veteran troops, led by experienced generals, flushed with recent victory on the battle-fields of Europe, and closed the war in a blaze of glory.

Mr. President, the sword worn by the victor on that day, the man of stern resolve and iron will, when gazed upon in unborn ages, will send a thrill through the heart of every true American.

I ask the unanimous consent of the Senate to introduce "a joint resolution accepting the sword of General

Andrew Jackson, and returning the thanks of Congress to the family of the late General Robert Armstrong."

Unanimous consent was given, and the joint resolution was read twice, and considered as in Committee of the Whole. It is as follows:

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the thanks of this Congress be presented to the family of the late General Robert Armstrong for the present of the sword worn by General Andrew Jackson while in the military service of his country; and that this precious relic be hereby accepted in the name of the nation, and be deposited, for safe-keeping, in the Department of State; and that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the family of the late General Robert Armstrong.

The joint resolution was reported to the Senate without amendment, and ordered to be engrossed for a third reading. It was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. Gwin submitted the following; which was considered by unanimous consent, and agreed to:

Ordered, That the addresses of Mr. Cass and Mr. Bell be entered on the journal; that the resolution and the sword be taken to the House of Representatives by the Secretary, with a request that the House will concur in the said resolution.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MONDAY, *February* 26, 1855.

A message was received from the Senate, by ASBURY DICKINS, esq., their Secretary, notifying the House that that body had passed a resolution accepting the sword of General ANDREW JACKSON, and returning the thanks of Congress to the family of General Robert Armstrong therefor.

Mr. SMITH, of Tennessee:

I ask that the House do now proceed to the consideration of the resolution just brought to us from the Senate.

Mr. STANTON, of Kentucky:

As the ceremony of presentation is to be an interesting one, and there are a great many ladies who desire to be present, and are unable to get in the galleries, I move that the rules be suspended, and that the ladies be admitted upon the floor on the occasion.

The motion was agreed to; the doors were thrown open, and a large number of ladies were admitted.

The joint resolution was read as follows:

A RESOLUTION to accept the sword of General Andrew Jackson, and returning the thanks of Congress to the family of the late General Robert Armstrong.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Congress be presented to the family of the late General Robert Armstrong for the present of the sword worn by General Andrew Jackson while in the service of his country, and that this precious

relic be hereby accepted in the name of the nation, and be deposited for safe-keeping in the Department of State, and that a copy of this resolution be presented to the family of the late General Robert Armstrong.

Mr. Smith, of Tennessee, rose and addressed the House as follows:

Mr. Speaker: In asking the consideration of the resolution just read, justice to the occasion requires a few remarks from me, and I only regret that this responsibility had not devolved upon some one more capable than myself of performing so important a duty.

In all ages and in all countries it has been customary to commemorate the deeds of illustrious men. Painting, poetry, and sculpture have been brought into requisition to perpetuate the memory of their achievements, and to keep alive in the hearts of the young, veneration for their ancestors and pride of country.

Every Capitol in Christendom is adorned with monuments erected to the brave and wise who have, by counsel or deeds, given direction to the policy or illustrated the pages of their country's history. Their museums are filled with relics, which, from their intimate personal association with the gallant dead, ever keep vividly before the mind their public acts and private virtues. These teach lessons as impressive as towering monuments or glowing canvas.

Brief as our existence has been, the history of no nation on earth has been so fruitful of stirring incidents—

incidents which have had an influence not only upon our own land, but upon the civilized world. The painter's art has adorned the walls of our Capitol with representations of some of the most important of these events. Here we have the first grand scene of our Revolution, *the Declaration of Independence*, upon which no American can look without experiencing feelings of the most ennobling character. The very features are preserved of the statesmen who proclaimed doctrines which startled the world from its long lethargic sleep, revived again the spirit of Sydney and of Hampden, and gave the first just conception of the true dignity and capacity of man. Their voices are all hushed in death; but the echo of the appeal of 1776 still lives, and is reverberating throughout the earth, making strong the arms and hearts of those who for their rights and liberties would proudly welcome death and the grave.

With what glowing pride do we look upon the battle-scenes here portrayed!—battles fought, not to further the schemes of ambition, but in defence of freedom and universal humanity. No enslaved people have bewailed the triumphs of *our* warriors, but the whole earth has arisen and pronounced them blessed.

The battles and victories which the artist has here celebrated were still fresh and green in the memory of the people, when the nation was again called to arms to vindicate its honor and the rights of man. Many of the leading spirits of the Revolution still lived. Upon

some the palsying hand of time had been heavily laid; but in their hearts the love of country and the fires of patriotism still brightly burned. They urged the young to the conflict. The voice of Jefferson rang through the land, cheering the brave, nerving the arms of the timid, and giving hope and courage to the hearts of all. The warriors of the Revolution who still retained their vigor buckled on their armor for the conflict. Conspicuous among these were Van Rensselaer of New York, Smith of Maryland, and Jackson of Tennessee. Our countrymen, under the lead of their gallant commanders, triumphed upon the land and upon the sea, and established forever our rank among the nations of the earth. The actors in these scenes are fast passing away. But few of the gallant leaders in this glorious war still survive; and they are verging upon their three score and ten, and must soon be gathered to their fathers. Duty, gratitude, and patriotism should prompt us to collect trophies of their victories, and garner up memorials which will speak to future generations of their greatness and patriotism, and which will keep the memory of their deeds of noble daring alive forever in the heart of the nation.

Not long before the death of that distinguished chieftain, Andrew Jackson, he placed the sword he had worn in all of his battles in the war of 1812 in the hands of a friend to be delivered to his compatriot in arms, the late General Robert Armstrong, who had in

an eminent degree commanded his respect and enjoyed his confidence. These two lamented patriots had shared together the hardships of the camp and the dangers of the battle-field; and the bestowal of this relic by the illustrious hero was a fit testimonial of his appreciation of one whose courage he had seen tested on many a bloody field, and whose patriotism had often elicited the warmest gratitude and highest applause of his countrymen.

It was at the battle of Enotochopco where the little army commanded by Jackson was almost surrounded by the enemy, and in the heat of the conflict General Armstrong was severely wounded. But he did not desert his post, and when unable longer to wield a sword or stand upon his feet, he clung to a small tree which stood near him, and cried: "My brave fellows, some may fall, but save the cannon." Such bravery elicited the thanks and gratitude of his commander, and made him the worthy recipient of the favorite weapon worn by him on that trying occasion.

The family of General Armstrong, actuated by the patriotic impulses which ever characterized their sire, have placed this sword at the disposal of Congress. It seems to me eminently fit that it should become the property of the government, and be placed among the trophies of our victories and the mementoes of our heroes; for it is associated with the names of two of the "bravest of the brave," and with battles the history

of which will fill the brightest pages in our country's annals.

In moving the adoption of the resolution on your table accepting the sword, I do not feel called upon to pronounce a eulogy upon General Jackson. He needs it not. "God blessed him with length of days, and he filled them with deeds of glory," which have entered into the history of the nation, and become the heritage of his countrymen.

Mr. Zollicoffer, of Tennessee:

Mr. Speaker: It being my fortune to represent the Hermitage district—where that great man lived, and where his remains are entombed—the House will pardon me for briefly giving utterance to emotions which fill me on this peculiar occasion. The martial renown of Andrew Jackson has become national property. But it must be allowed to Tennesseans to feel more than an ordinary interest in that renown, and in this occasion. The brave-hearted, the world over, I apprehend, pay to his heroic spirit their true homage; and I can well imagine that even the boldest, when treading the paths of danger, walk more erect and confident under the broad sun-light of his chivalrous history; yet to those who were his neighbors when he tenanted the Hermitage, and who inhabit the mountains and the valleys which sent forth the gallant men who followed and upheld his standard in all his victories—men who saw this very sword unsheathed on all his brilliant and

perilous battle-fields—I say, sir, to such a people, something more than this feeling is but a common impulse of that human nature which we all readily comprehend. The sons of those gallant men are the present young men of Tennessee. As these young men catch a glimpse of this shining blade, passing into the depository of the nation's precious relics, how can it be otherwise than that their hearts will throb with quickened pulsations of patriotic State and national pride? Rest assured, sir, that they feel, and must ever feel, a lofty and commendable State pride in the military renown and unquestioned personal heroism of Andrew Jackson. I hesitate not to say, sir, that this feeling has contributed in no small degree to the full development of that chivalric sentiment which has ever characterized the volunteer troops of Tennessee when their country has demanded their services in the field.

Allow me to say, sir, that I, for near twenty years, have held a position of antagonism, more or less, to those who have claimed to be the especial political friends of General Jackson, and in that State our contests have been sharp, animated, and continuous, through that long period. I mention this merely by way of suggesting that the sentiments to which I have given utterance are expressed with the more freedom from all undue partiality or bias. They are sentiments such as I feel that no native Tennessean, and I trust no citizen of any other State in our glorious confederacy,

can fail cordially and heartily to respond to. They should be held in common by the whole American people; for this very sword, sir, gleamed over that memorable battle-field of which every citizen of the Union is so justly proud, and which has unquestionably given a more world-wide fame to American prowess than any other single battle-field which has ever emblazoned the bright annals of American warfare. Let the sword, sir, be preserved, and transmitted carefully to posterity. Let it be deposited along with the sword and camp-chest of Washington, and the staff and printing-press of Franklin, among the most precious relics of a grateful country, preserved and cared for as high incentives to the honorable ambition of American youth, as long as liberty shall have a home, or the Union of these States an existence among the nations of the earth.

But, sir, I will here pause. I will not dwell upon a theme which has already been enlarged upon by others with so much more ability than I possess. I will trespass upon the valuable time of the House only for a moment longer. I cannot, in justice to my own feelings, withhold a brief allusion to General Robert Armstrong, from whose family this present is received. He was my neighbor and personal friend. The confidence which General Jackson, who knew him so long and so well, reposed in the sterling qualities of his heart and head, is itself a sufficient eulogy, requiring no aid from

anything I can offer. I must, however, say that I held him to be one of the bravest, most magnanimous, and most truly kind-hearted men it was ever my good fortune personally to know.

In conclusion, I need hardly add that I take it for granted the resolution will be sanctioned, not only unanimously, but with the most cheerful alacrity, by every American representative.

Mr. Benton, of Missouri:

Mr. Speaker: The manner in which this sword has been used for the honor and benefit of the country is known to the world; the manner in which the privilege was obtained of so using it is but little known, even to the living age, and must be lost to posterity unless preserved by contemporaneous history. At the same time it is well worth knowing, in order to show what difficulties talent may have to contend with, what mistakes governments may commit, and upon what chances and accidents it may depend that the greatest talent and the purest patriotism may be able to get into the service of its country. There is a moral in such history which it may be instructive to governments and to people to learn. When a warrior or a statesman is seen, in the midst of his career and the fullness of his glory, showing himself to be in his natural place, people overlook his previous steps and suppose he had been called by a general voice, by wise councils, to the fulfilment of a natural destiny. In a few instances it

is so; in the greater part, not. In the greater part there is a toilsome, uncertain, discouraging, and mortifying progress to be gone through before the future resplendent man is able to get on the theatre which is to give him the use of his talent. So it was with Jackson. He had his difficulties to surmount, and surmounted them. He conquered savage tribes and the conquerors of the conquerors of Europe; but he had to conquer his own government first, and did it, and that was for him the most difficult of the two; for, while his military victories were the regular result of a genius for war and brave troops to execute his plans, enabling him to command success, his civil victory over his own government was the result of chances and accidents, and the contrivances of others, in which he could have but little hand and no control. I proceed to give some view of this inside and preliminary history, and have some qualifications for the task, having taken some part, though not great, in all that I relate.

Retired from the United States Senate, of which he had been a member, and from the supreme judicial bench of his State, on which he had sat as judge, this future warrior and President—and alike illustrious in both characters—was living upon his farm on the banks of the Cumberland, when the war of 1812 broke out. He was a major general in the Tennessee militia—the only place he would continue to hold, and to which he had been elected by the contingency of one vote, so

close was the chance for a miss in this first step. His friends believed that he had military genius, and proposed him for the brigadier's appointment which was allotted to the West. That appointment was given to another, and Jackson remained unnoticed on his farm. Soon another appointment of general was allotted to the West. Jackson was proposed again; and was again left to attend to his farm. Then a batch of generals, as they were called, was authorized by law—six at a time, and from all parts of the Union; and then his friends believed that surely his time had come. Not so the fact. The six appointments went elsewhere, and the hero patriot, who was born to lead armies to victory, was still left to the care of his fields, while incompetent men were leading our troops to defeat, to captivity, to slaughter; for that is the way the war opened. The door to military service seemed to be closed and barred against him; and was so, so far as the government was concerned.

It may be wondered why this repugnance to the appointment of Jackson, who, though not yet greatly distinguished, was still a man of mark—had been a Senator and a Supreme judge, and was still a major general, and a man of tried and heroic courage. I can tell the reason. He had a great many home enemies, for he was a man of decided temper; had a great many contests, no compromises; always went for a clean victory or a clean defeat, though placable after the

contest was over. That was one reason, but not the main one. The administration had a prejudice against him on account of Colonel Burr, with whom he had been associated in the American Senate, and to whom he gave a hospitable reception in his house at the time of his Western expedition, relying upon his assurance that his designs were against the Spanish dominion in Mexico, and not against the integrity of this Union. These were some of the causes, not all, of Jackson's rejection from Federal military employment.

I was young then, and one of his aids, and believed in his military talent and patriotism; was greatly attached to him, and was grieved and vexed to see him passed by when so much incompetence was preferred. Besides, I was to go with him, and his appointment would be partly my own. I was vexed, as were all his friends; but I did not despair, as most of them did. I turned from the government to ourselves, to our own resources, and looked to the chapter of accidents to turn up a chance for incidental employment, confident that he would do the rest for himself if he could only get a start. I was in this mood in my office, a young lawyer, with more books than briefs, when the tardy mail of that time, one "raw and gusty day" in February, 1812, brought an act of Congress authorizing the President to accept organized bodies of volunteers to the extent of fifty thousand, to serve for one year, and to be called into service when some emergency should require it.

Here was a chance. I knew that Jackson could raise a general's command, and I trusted to events for him to be called out, and felt that one year was more than enough for him to prove himself. I drew up a plan, rode thirty miles to his house that same raw day in February—rain, hail, sleet, wind—and such roads as we then had there in winter, deep in rich mud and mixed with ice. I arrived at the Hermitage—a name then but little known—at nightfall, and found him solitary, and almost alone, but not quite; for it was the evening, mentioned in the "Thirty Years' View," when I found him with the lamb and the child between his knees. I laid the plan before him. He was struck with it—adopted it—acted upon it. We began to raise volunteer companies. Whilst this was going on, an order arrived from the War Department to the Governor (Willie Blount) to detach fifteen hundred militia to the Lower Mississippi; the object to meet the British, then expected to make an attempt on New Orleans. The Governor was a friend to Jackson and to his country. He agreed to accept his three thousand volunteers instead of the fifteen hundred draughted militia. The General issued an address to his division. I galloped to the muster-grounds and harangued the young men. The success was ample. Three regiments were completed—Coffee, William Hall, Benton, the colonels—and in December, 1812, we descended the Cumberland and the Mississippi in a fleet of flat-bottomed boats, and landed at Natchez.

There we got the news that the British would not come that winter—a great disappointment, and a fine chance lost.

We remained in camp, six miles from Natchez, waiting ulterior orders. In March they came—not orders for further service, or even to return home, but to disband the volunteers where they were. The command was positive, in the name of the President, and by the then Secretary at War, General Armstrong. I well remember the day—Sunday morning, the 25th day of March, 1813. The first I knew of it was a message from the General to come to him at his tent; for though, as colonel of a regiment, I had ceased to be aid, yet my place had not been filled, and I was sent for as much as ever. He showed me the order, and also his character, in his instant determination not to obey it, but to lead his volunteers home. He had sketched a severe answer to the Secretary, and gave it to me to copy and arrange the matter of it. It was very severe. I tried hard to get some parts softened, but impossible. I have never seen that letter since, but would know it if I should meet it in any form, anywhere, without names. I concurred with the General in the determination to take home our young troops. He then called a "*council*" of the field-officers, as he called it; though there was but little of the council in it, the only object being to hear his determination and take measures for executing it. The

officers were unanimous in their determination to support him; but it was one of those cases in which he would have acted not only without, but against a "*council.*"

The officers were unanimous and vehement in their determination, as much so as the General was himself; for the volunteers were composed of the best young men of the country—farmers' sons, themselves clever young men, since filling high offices in the State and the Federal Government—intrusted to these officers by their fathers, in full confidence that they would act a father's part by them; and the recreant thought of turning them loose on the Lower Mississippi, five hundred miles from home, without the means of getting home, and a wilderness and Indian tribes to traverse, did not find a moment's thought in any one's bosom. To carry them back was the instant and indignant determination; but great difficulties were in the way. The cost of getting back three thousand men under such circumstances must be great; and here Jackson's character showed itself again. We have all heard of his responsibilities—his readiness to assume political responsibility when the public service required it. He was now equally ready to take responsibility of another kind—moneyed responsibility, and that beyond the whole extent of his fortune! He had no military chest, not a dollar of public money; and three thousand men were not to be conducted five hundred miles

through a wilderness country and Indian tribes without a great outlay of money. Wagons were wanted, and many of them, for transport of provisions, baggage, and the sick—so numerous among new troops. He had no money to hire teams; he impressed; and at the end of the service gave drafts upon the quartermaster general of the Southern department (General Wilkinson's) for the amount. The wagons were ten dollars a day, coming and going. They were numerous. It was a service of two months; the amount to be incurred was great. He incurred it, and, as will be seen, at imminent risk of his own ruin. This assumption on the General's part met the first great difficulty; but there were lesser difficulties, still serious, to be surmounted. The troops had received no pay; clothes and shoes were worn out; the men were in no condition for a march so long, and so exposed. The officers had received no pay; did not expect to need money; had made no provision for the unexpected contingency of large demands upon their own pockets to enable them to do justice to their men. But there was patriotism outside of the camp as well as within. The merchants of Natchez put their stores at our disposition; take what we needed; pay when convenient, at Nashville. I will name one among these patriotic merchants—name him because he belongs to a class now struck at, and because I do not ignore a friend when he is struck. Washington Jackson was the one I mean—Irish by

birth; American by choice, by law, and feeling, and conduct. I took some hundred pairs of shoes from him for my regiment, and other articles; and I proclaim it here, that patriotic men of foreign birth may see that there are plenty of Americans to recognise their merit—to name them with honor in high places, and to give them the right hand of friendship when they are struck at.

We all returned, were discharged, dispersed among our homes, and the fine chance on which we had so much counted was all gone. And now came a blow upon Jackson himself, the fruit of the moneyed responsibility which he had assumed. His transportation drafts were all protested; returned upon him for payment, which was impossible, and with directions to bring suit. This was the month of May. I was coming on to Washington on my own account, and cordially took charge of Jackson's case. Suits were delayed until the result of his application for relief could be heard. I arrived in this city; Congress was in session—the extra session of the spring and summer of 1813. I applied to the members of Congress from Tennessee; they could do nothing. I applied to the Secretary at War; he did nothing. Weeks had passed away, and the time for delay was expiring at Nashville. Ruin seemed to be hovering over the head of Jackson, and I felt the necessity of some decisive movement. I was young then and had some material in me, perhaps some bold-

ness, and the occasion brought it out. I resolved to take a step, characterized in the letter which I wrote to the General as "an appeal from the justice to the fears of the Administration." I remember the words, though I have never seen the letter since. I drew up a memoir addressed to the Secretary at War, representing to him that these volunteers were drawn from the bosoms of almost every substantial family in Tennessee; that the whole State stood by Jackson in bringing them home, and that the State would be lost to the Administration if he was left to suffer. It was upon this last argument that I relied, all those founded in justice having failed. It was of a Saturday morning, 12th of June, that I carried this memoir to the War Office and delivered it. Monday morning I came back early to learn the result of my argument. The Secretary was not yet in. I spoke to the chief clerk, (then the afterwards Adjutant General Parker,) and inquired if the Secretary had left any answer for me before he left the office on Saturday. He said no; but that he had put the memoir in his side-pocket—the breast-pocket—and carried it home with him, saying he would take it for his Sunday's consideration. That encouraged me—gave a gleam of hope and a feeling of satisfaction. I thought it a good subject for his Sunday's meditation. Presently he arrived. I stepped in before anybody to his office. He told me quickly and kindly that there was much reason in what I had said, but that there was no way for him to do it;

that Congress would have to give the relief. I answered him that I thought there was a way for him to do it; it was to give an order to General Wilkinson's quartermaster general in the Southern department to pay for so much transportation as General Jackson's command would have been entitled to if it had returned under regular orders. Upon the instant he took up a pen, wrote down the very words I had spoken, directed a clerk to put them into form; and the work was done. The order went off immediately, and Jackson was relieved from imminent impending ruin, and Tennessee remained firm to the Administration.

Thus this case of responsibility was over, but the original cause of our concern was still in full force. Jackson was again on his farm, unemployed, and the fine chance gone which had flattered us so much. But the chapter of accidents soon presented another—not so brilliant as New Orleans had promised, and afterwards realized, but sufficient for the purpose. The massacre at Fort Mimms took place. The banks of the Mobile river smoked with fire and blood. Jackson called up his volunteers, reinforced by some militia—marched to the Creek nation—and there commenced that career of victories which soon extorted the commission which had been so long denied to his merit, and which ended in filling the "measure" of his own and "his country's glory." And that, Mr. Chairman, was the way in which this great man gained the privi-

lege of using *that* sword for his country, which, after triumphing in many fields which it immortalized, has come here to repose in the hands of the representatives of a grateful and admiring country.

The resolution was ordered to be read a third time; and being read a third time, it was unanimously passed.

APR 24 1869

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ADDRESSES
ON THE
PRESENTATION OF THE SWORD
OF
GEN. ANDREW JACKSON