

ADDRESS ON BEHALF OF THE EIGHTH REGIMENT.

The party then proceeded to the monument of the Eighth Infantry Regiment, at the south end of the Wheat-field. The Commissioners unveiled the monument, and Colonel Duffy then said:

"SURVIVORS OF THE EIGHTH REGIMENT - I have the pleasure of introducing General John Ramsay, who will make a short address,"

General Ramsay said:

*"COMRADES OF THE EIGHTH REGIMENT- How quiet and still the scenes are here to-day! We are surrounded by the quiet scenery that Nature provides for the enjoyment of man. The sun shines bright, and the atmosphere is clear, the fields are covered with a bed of green, and in the air is heard the music of the birds.*

*What a contrast between the quiet scenes of to-day and those that occurred here twenty-five years ago. Then we were engaged in a struggle for life, and the air filled with the messengers of death.*

*The neighing of war steeds-the tramping of thousands of armed men, eager and anxious for the coming struggle; the heavy, rumbling sound of artillery going into position, the galloping across the field of mounted officers making rapid arrangements to meet the advancing foe.*

*Presently we hear the sharp sound of the rifles of the skirmishers, followed by the rattling noise of musketry by the infantry in line, then the roar of artillery and the agonies of the dying and the groans of the wounded-thus, comrades, commences the battle of Gettysburg, the greatest of the war.*

*Such was the scene then, and the varying fortunes of the battle made those of us who were actors in this tragedy of life a part of the shifting scenery. A something that cannot be described and difficult to imagine. A scene that is grand and magnificent, yet horrible.*

*There is a little agitation and commotion here to-day, but it is such as emanates from the hearts and not from the passions of men. It is to commemorate the deeds of valor performed by the men that died here in the strife engendered in an hour of passion.*

*We are here to dedicate these beautiful monuments to the memory of the brave men who died here that the nation might live.*

*These men died for the safety and perpetuity of the Republic; died that four millions of human beings with their unborn generations should be free; died that a 'government of the people, by the people and for the people should not perish from the earth.'*

*The struggle was grand and terrific. The issues involved were of the greatest magnitude ever submitted to arbitrament of arms.*

*The result of the battle decided that the Republic was to be saved. That this was to be a land of freemen. That the shackles of the slaves should be sold for old iron. That the auction block should be burned. That all men should breathe the fresh air of heaven direct, and not by inhalation from a master. That the people were strong and virtuous enough to govern themselves.*

*We are here to-day to do honor to the memory of the heroes who fell for these great principles; to the men whose death gave these great blessings to the American people.*

*Could men die, have men ever died, for a better, purer or holier cause?*

*Our form of government is a simple one, and the best on the face of the earth; one that permits of the full exercise of a man's energy and abilities; one that permits of the full development of the grandeur and dignity of man. The American people are great and generous. The action of our great Commander at Appomattox, when Lee surrendered, saying to those men: 'Go home; obey the laws and this parole will protect you,' was magnanimous and was approved by the loyal sentiment of the people.*

*We are making history rapidly, some of it curious and singular, of which there is no record, and such that is not possible under any form of government except ours.*

*Imagine, if you can, an armed rebellion against the government of England, Germany or Russia, and after the suppression of such rebellion, that the Queen, the Emperor or the Czar should give to the men engaged in the attempt to destroy the government the positions of honor and emoluments under it, should commit to their care the honor and safety of the nation at home and abroad. Imagine such a condition of affairs, if you can; when you have done so it will not be difficult to picture the stormy results of such action.*

*Yet that is the condition of affairs which surrounds us at this time.*

*While we are here performing the beautiful ceremonies of the occasion in honor of our dead, dedicating these monuments to our fallen heroes, to the men that died that the nation might live, who gave their lives for the perpetuity of the Republic, and that unborn generations might enjoy the blessings of life in a land of real liberty, the men who fought against us upon this field are to-day in practical possession of the government. They shape our foreign and domestic policy; they represent us at home and abroad; they have the care and custody and the honor and safety of our flag in their keeping.*

*This is one of the recent and singular events in our history. If the American people were all lawyers they would protest because there are no authorities or precedents for such a thing. But as they are not, they make no protest but that allowed by law-go to the box and drop the ballot which executes a freeman's will. It shows the indifference of the American people to everything except the real or apparent danger. It also shows the strength and elasticity of the institutions under which we live.*

*I had the honor to command the Eighth Regiment, New Jersey Volunteers, upon this field, and was fortunate--or unfortunate--enough to stop one of the enemy's bullets. It is certainly a source of gratification to all comrades of the regiment who survived this battle and the twenty-five years of intervening time, to take part in the dedication of these monuments, which are to stand for all time, and in commemoration of the gallant services you rendered your country here in the hour of its greatest adversity.*

*Comrades, time has made sad havoc in our ranks. It is painful to think of the number that in the past quarter of a century have become tired and weary of the trial and tribulations of this life and have fallen by the wayside, entering the land of everlasting sleep. It cannot be long before we join those who have gone before. When we hear the last morning's reveille admonishing us that 'tattoo' is to follow, and to be prepared for the 'taps' which extinguish the candle of our existence; when we leave this field of strife to join the silent majority 'in the land from which no traveler returns,' should the spirits of men there become restless, and it is necessary to beat the long roll, I want all those who belong to the gallant Eighth Regiment to respond as they did upon the field at their country's call, twenty-five years ago."*