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ADDRESS OF

Hon. Josiah T. Settle,

DELIVERED AT THE RECEPTION GIVEN

Admiral and Mrs Dewey,

AT THE

AUDITORIUM,

AT

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE,

MAY 7TH, 1900.





HON. JOSIAH T. SETTLE.

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Author.
(Person).

ADDRESS OF HON. JOSIAH T. SETTLE.

DELIVERED AT THE RECEPTION GIVEN ADMIRAL AND
MRS. DEWEY, AT THE AUDITORIUM, AT MEMPHIS,
TENNESSEE, MAY 7TH, 1900.

On a bright May morning two years ago there came from out the ocean mist an untried naval squadron, mirroring in the rippling waves the flag of the mistress of the Western world, the lustre of whose shining stars has never been dimmed by dishonor or defeat, seeking in Manila Bay the naval pride and power of Spain. Loyal hearts at home beat high and fast with alternating fear and hope, as with bated breath they awaited the news from across the sea. When every ship in perfect order, under a command which seemed almost inspired, had executed its

orders, and every ship of the Spanish fleet was disabled at the bottom or in flames, from out the din and smoke of battle there arose a colossal figure, calm and majestic, cool and self-reliant, the highest and grandest embodiment of duty done in the history of this country; a naval hero, the splendor and brilliancy of whose achievement have written on the eternal tablet of fame, far above the names of Von Tromp and Nelson, Farragut and Porter, the immortal name of Admiral George Dewey, the hero of Manila, and the pride of his grateful country. From that May morning until now his name and fame have been on every tongue in every land, and as he journeyed home from more than half-way round the world, in every clime and land through which he came he was welcomed and honored as was never naval hero before. And when, home at last, his gallant flagship lay anchored in the bay of the second city of the world, her teeming millions were mad with joy and impatience to do such honor to the hero of Manila as was never shown mortal man before; and it can be truly said that such unlimited display of loyal affection and costly magnificence as New York gave the home-returning hero was greater than was ever shown before to any other man. And so, at the capital of his country, were his honors increased and magnified, and every city or little hamlet through which he

goes makes his coming and his going an epoch in the history of the place. And when he comes at last to the metropolis of the South, whose fame for chivalric hospitality extends beyond its limits, when her greatest and most distinguished sons and daughters have opened their hearts and homes to him and his peerless bride; when they would jewel every moment of his stay with a joy, and almost shed tears of regret that those precious moments are so few; when in the midst of this anxiety for each moment of his time, and with the memory of the great honors bestowed upon him by the great people and cities of the world, we feel more grateful than words of mine can tell that the greatest and most honored naval hero who ever lived should have the desire and take the time to be, for one brief hour, our guest. We will treasure this hour as a bright and pleasant epoch in the history of our race: and we desire to assure you that nowhere in this patriotic land of ours, and among no element of our composite nationality, will you find a more loyal devotion to the flag, a broader, deeper or more genuine patriotism, than among the colored Americans here in our sweet, flower-scented South.

Though we constitute the minority in most things, in loyalty and patriotism we feel that we are in the majority; for from the beginning of our country's history until now we have given more to that country.

in proportion to what we have received (excepting our emancipation), than any other element of Americanism. In the war of the revolution we had our heroes who have written their names high upon the scroll of fame with their blood; and when the fate of our country hung trembling in the balance we showed our patriotism at Wagner, Sumpter, Petersburg and on many other bloody fields. And in the war with Spain the gallantry of our black troops at Santiago is a part of the history of that war; and I am told that on almost every fighting craft that floats our flag there are members of our race; that even in the battle of Manila Bay there were black men fighting on your ships. We feel a pleasure and a pride in the fact that they have always been found loyal, brave and true.

It is, however, in the walks of civil life that we would have you know us best. In the third of a century we have grown from four millions to almost ten; from being taxed ourselves as chattel property to a race paying taxes on nearly a billion dollars' worth of property; from a schoolless race to owners of many thousands of schools with more than a million scholars, with hundreds of industrial schools and colleges where every faculty of mind and heart and hand is developed into usefulness; from a homeless race we have grown to be a race with homes;

from a race of unskilled laborers we today have men in every trade and calling who, here in the South at least, find employment for their talents. In all the learned professions we have our representatives, who are successfully measuring intellectual arms with competitors in every other race. We are fixtures in this land of ours, watered with our blood and hallowed by our graves; and we feel that in the beautiful arch of humanity that spans American freedom, composed as it is of as many nationalities as there are colors in the rainbow, God in His wisdom has given us a place; and that in that arch on no element can the future of our country rest with greater reliance and security than that which represents the colored American. It is he, through his representatives, who would this evening vie with all others in showing his love and admiration for the great Admiral who is our city's guest. He is not only the greatest sailor who ever lived, but it can truly be said of him what can be said of no other—he is a sailor-statesman. In Jackson and Grant we had soldier-statesmen, but never before has this country had embodied in the person of her greatest Admiral the highest and best qualities of the statesman. His splendid management of the most intricate and delicate questions of diplomacy after the battle of Manila gave him the highest place among diplomats and statesmen.

During the time he commanded Manila Bay, awaiting the coming of land forces, the very highest type of the statesman was required to keep the country free from international entanglements ; and be it said to his everlasting honor that he never made a mistake, but showed himself as capable of commanding the ship of state and piloting her around the rocks and shoals of intrigue and diplomacy as he carried his fighting fleet over the torpedoes and around the forts of Manila Bay.

Through his intrepid bravery and far-seeing statesmanship our flag has been planted in the Orient, and the inhabitants of the Philippine archipelago awakened from a semi-civilized lethargy— the curse of centuries of Spanish rule. These islands will soon become a market for our fleecy staples; and with our isthmian canal completed, they will become the store-house of the East; and when the spirit of American progress has supplanted Spanish ignorance and oppression in those islands, and their resources are developed, may they not rise to a place in the family of nations rivaling their neighbor, the Japanese empire, in the glory of their arms and the ubiquity of their commerce?

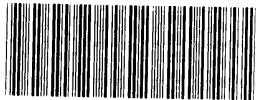
The great man who is our guest this evening taught the world that the American sailor is the greatest fighter that sails the seas, and has given the American

navy a place among the greatest of earth; and in the years to come his name will live forever in the hearts of his countrymen, and, side by side with Washington, Lincoln and Grant, adorn the brightest page in his country's history. When he leaves us we assure him that he and his peerless bride will carry with them the best wishes and most patriotic devotion of our loyal hearts. For your future we have no fears, for the craft on which you sail is love, and the hand at the helm is hers into which you placed your heart, and the seas you sail are those of popular love and admiration, filled with isles of flowers, and every laughing wavelet of that stormless sea will bring to the ears of your pilot and yourself the songs of love and admiration, until at last, with this world's ambition more than gratified, you will anchor in the harbor of eternal love.

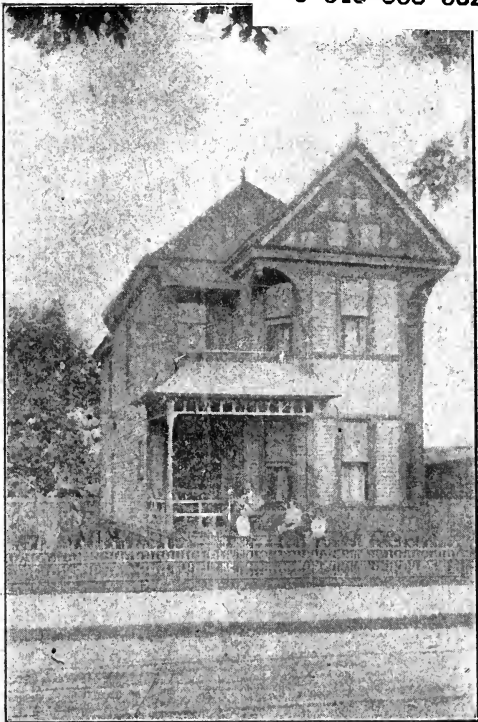
And now, as you leave us, words seem too cold and lifeless to properly express the feeling of our hearts toward you and yours; but, if words were flowery things of life, and grow in rich profusion all around, and I a floral artist, I'd pluck the rarest ones that grew and weave them into sweet bouquets and tender one to each, and ask you to keep them with your souvenirs in fond remembrance of the hour you've spent with us today.



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