

The Confederate Soldier in the Civil War.



THE STORY of the Confederate soldier in the Civil War, viewed through the vista made by the changes wrought by thirty years of peace, has lost none of its romance, and the men who essayed to protect their homes and firesides from an invading army, have as deep a halo of glory around their memory as they had in the eyes of wives, mothers, sisters and sweethearts, when, thirty-four years ago, they marched out from these homes, living examples of true chivalry and heroism. It is to keep green the record of their bravery and manhood and to make mention of their glorious deeds that these "war scenes" are revived and the story of their prowess told over again. With time, and the study of the motives of leaders and of men, there has come no clouds to darken the memory or bring the blush of shame to the cheek of any descendant of the "Confederate soldier." Although his cause was lost, yet his motive in defending it has never been successfully impugned. He fought not for reward or bounty, but shouldered his musket and took his place in the ranks with the same proud consciousness of performing a duty as he had when he buckled on the sword of the officer. He had no ambition except to serve his State and section in its struggle for its rights.

The memory of the God-speed of the mothers, wives and sisters, and their labors and sacrifices to keep the home in order, while they were away demanding from the foe that these loved ones be not disturbed by the wild conflict of arms, was the inspiration of their heroism. It was for these homes that they did battle, and could they but drive the invading army from the dear South-land, no thought of conquest or invasion would find lodgment in their breasts. Their valor called for no retaliation. Their chivalry dictated fair and open fight, and their ambition was to return to peaceful homes and there proudly stand and bid no intruder come. Their education had taught them to love home first, State second, and a nation only when that nation did not imperil the safety and honor of either State or home. Their hope was not realized, and in the battle numbers outweighed valor. Those spared by the sword came back to impoverished and desolated homes, to learn from the results of the war that their duty now led them to unlearn the lessons of their youth, and in poverty, but not disgrace, in sorrow, but not despair, they again became part of a great nation, as well as a sovereign people of a sovereign State, consenting to a federal union.

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