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SPEECH OF HON. JOSEPH J. DAVIS.

Delivered at the Recent Celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the County of Franklin and town of Louisburg.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

On any ordinary occasion it would afford me a very natural and a very great pleasure to talk to the people of the county of Franklin in eulogy of the character and worth of their ancestors, but I propose to detain you only a few minutes this morning, for, as you are already informed by the programme for the day, I am to be followed by one whose wisdom and counsel were a guide to the people of North Carolina in times of severe trial and whose wit, and genius, and eloquence have delighted, and instructed, and thrilled the people of the State from the mountains to the sea. When it is announced that I am to be followed by Zebulon B. Vance, I am sure that this vast audience will wish that I had already concluded. I shall therefore be very brief in discharging the duty allotted to me. That duty, as I am informed by the chairman of the committee, is to speak of the character of the people of the county of Franklin and of their loyalty to the Constitution and to the Federal Union. Language is often perverted and words are often made to convey meanings very different from their legitimate use. Few words in the English language have been more perverted than the word "loyalty." Many of some people, who do not know me as well as you do and to whom you are not as well known as you are to me, it might seem a delicate subject to engage our attention; but I assert, and if time permitted I could demonstrate, that in the highest, truest and purest sense of the word, the people of the county of Franklin have always been loyal and true to all their obligations, whether to the state or to the Union. From the days of the Revolution, one hundred years ago, when it was said that "there are no Tories in Bute," down to this day, they have always been loyal and true to Civil Liberty. Civil Liberty, whose high priest and ministers are the Constitution and the laws, has been the Goddess of their political worship and this worship has been of the true spirit and not of the name merely. If all those who now sometimes utter the charge of "disloyalty" against her sons, had themselves been always as true to the spirit as well as to the letter of the Constitution, had always been as true to the Constitutional rights of the people and to liberty, regulated by law, as our people have been, there never would have been any cause for lawless disorder and bloody strife between sections. To law and order the people of Franklin have always been obedient. There may be persons in state, as well as religion, who have more regard for the temple than for the spirit which dwells therein—there may be persons who worship the shadow and not the substance, and forgetting that the temple may be made a den of thieves, from which the spirit, which is the life, has been expelled, adhere to it and denounce those who worship the spirit of civil liberty enthroned in the constitution—the temple which our fathers built—as *disloyal*. To such people loyalty is but a fashion which may vary with every changing phase of power and such loyalty as this is ready to "own the tyrants power," or to "set the mob above the throne," as the prevailing "fashion" may suggest. To such we may well sing, in the language of the Scottish

Bard, whose sweet poetry breathes the spirit of freedom and has made him a favorite with English speaking and liberty-loving people the world over:—

"But loyalty trace! We're on dangerous ground,
Who knows how the fashions may alter?
The doctrine, to-day, that is loyalty sound,
To-morrow may bring us a halter."

Such has not been the loyalty of the people of the county of Franklin. With them loyalty has not been a mere "fashion," but it has been a real, living, breathing, permanent devotion, not to mere form, or fashion, or name, but to the rights of man, to civil liberty, to law and order, to that sovereign power which has its throne in the hearts and in the will of brave people and which speaks through the majesty of the Constitution and laws, which the people themselves, by their own will, have created for the rule and guidance of their own conduct. To this sovereign power—the truly sovereign earthly power which a free people can recognize—our people have ever been as true as the needle to the pole. Against this they have never fought—against this they have never "thought any treason." It was to preserve and perpetuate this that the Union was created under the Constitution and our brave men who fell in the late unhappy war between the sections, never had any cause for quarrel with the Union or the Constitution, for they had been true to both, but only with those who, they conscientiously believed, had perverted both and were endangering the very liberties and blessings which they were designed to perpetuate. All, both North and South, professed devotion to the great principles of the constitution, and it has been legend by the court of the highest resort—the Court of Arms, from which there is no appeal—that these principles are to be maintained and preserved in one Union and not in two. No stronger devotion and truer courage were ever displayed in the maintenance of these principles than were exhibited by the men of the short-lived Confederacy, and now that they are to be maintained in one Union, there is no section of that Union that can be more surely relied upon for their defense than the South—this is the pledge of those who survived—as for those who fell; accused by the hand that would write "traitor" above the earth that covers their bones—Let those who knew them not think of them as they may, to us their memories will ever be blessed and their graves sacred.

It has been well said, my friends, that the highest and truest patriotism has its foundation in the love of home and of the fireside. The household gods of the ancient Italians constituted their strongest pledges of devotion to their country in its purest days. This love of home—of wife, children, family, kindred, neighbors, friends—has always strongly marked the character of the people of the county of Franklin, and has been one of the chief causes of that unity of feeling which has always prevailed within her borders. In the days of the Revolution, before Bute was divided and the old name lost in the brighter and more lasting names of Warren and Franklin, this unity was characteristic of our ancestors. We are informed by Wheeler, the patriotic son and historian of North Carolina, that when, in 1875, committees of safety were recommended by the Provincial Congress to be chosen for each county, Bute was a unit, and, on motion of Benjamin Ward, one of each *kin* was selected to act as one of the committee. This spirit of unity has preserved good feeling,

prevented feuds and factions and has been the source of much happiness to our people. My late friend Judge Gilham, who was much attached to the people of this county, and who was greatly beloved by them, once said to me that he never knew a people with so little pretension and so much worth as the people of Franklin. In a conversation with my friend, Senator Ransom, some days ago, he said that if called on to give the leading traits in the character of the people of Warren and Franklin, he would say that they were a generous, free-hearted, hospitable, love of home, respect for law and order, a high sense of honor and of justice, hatred of, and resistance to, all tyranny, oppression and wrong, and the bravery of their men and the purity of their women.

It would be a pleasure to me to enlarge upon this subject, but I have promised to be brief and now in conclusion, my friends, let me appeal to you by the memories of the past—by the sacrifices and the virtues of the ancestors who have transmitted to us this heritage of freedom and of character—by that spirit of unity, that love of home, of family, of kindred, of neighbors, of friends which have been sources of happiness to our fathers—by all that the Christian and the patriot can hold dear, let me appeal to you to preserve this goodly heritage of freedom and these goodly traits of character of an honest ancestry, and transmit them bright and pure to your posterity. May they descend to our children and to our children's children to the remotest generation, and may peace, prosperity and happiness be theirs for all time to come.

WHAT TO READ.

To gain a fund of varied information, one must not confine himself to "solid" books, or to one branch of literature. A great deal of positive harm is done by the general opinion concerning "superficial reading." One person determines never to read newspapers any more; another gravely makes up his mind to eschew all books save histories and "standard works," they argue that they should know at least one thing well, rather than have a smattering of many things. What is worth reading once, they say very truly, is worth reading again. Their next-door neighbor reads Shakespeare through once a year; some friend can repeat the entire book of Isaiah; and rebukes, of one sort or another, shame them at every turn. At last, in sheer desperation, too many abandon all hope, and conclude that they will not attempt to know anything, since, at best, they can know so little. The general answer to all such persons is this, that much reading, nay, most reading, must and ought to be superficial. Every intelligent person ought to know something about a larger number of books than he can read thoroughly; hence he must read superficially, and must also rely on other people's judgments, and on general opinion. Again, newspapers and other periodicals cannot be ignored. A man who never reads a paper is not fit to do his work in the world, in the present state of society; and the time spent in newspaper reading is to be counted in with the hours devoted to mental improvement.

ARSENIC.

It is pretty well known that arsenic enters largely into the coloring of wall paper. It is also used in tincture, paper curtains, covers of boxes, packages made for confectionery, and other papers. Arsenic, as well as other poisons, is likewise now used in the coloring of ladies' dresses, gentlemen's underclothing, socks, hat linings, lining of boots and shoes, and is found in woollens, silks, cottons, and leather. As many as eight grains of the substance have been found in each square foot of a dress, and as many as ten grains have been detected in a single artificial flower.