THERE are nearly half a million soldiers' graves in the cemeteries of the United States. From the Atlantic to the Pacific the nation's heroes are on each 30th of May honored by a loyal and loving people. On that date, from the time the sun rises over the hills of Maine until it sinks to rest beyond the mountains of California the vast extent of our land echoes with the bugle call and the booming of cannon. The youth of the nation get their best lesson in patriotism when they lay a wreath of flowers on the stone that marks a soldier's grave.

It is impossible to state the exact number of soldiers' graves, as no record has been made of them for several years. When the last record was made there were about 300,000 sleeping in the national cemeteries and probably 75,000 scattered in little graveyards all over the country. The accompanying map gives the figures of the last record made. Of course, the number of graves has increased since then. The veterans have become fewer and fewer. They have not fallen as rapidly as they were mowed down before the death-dealing fire of Gettysburg, nor as they fell in the awful charges of Bull Run, but their ranks have been thinned by the grim reaper, and for each one that passed away there has arisen another mound to be decorated.

National cemeteries, as is, perhaps, well known, are burying places maintained at the expense of the United States Government, and wherein only soldiers are buried. Many of these are near some military post, but by far the larger ones are located in the vicinity of the big battlefields. Some of the heroes were buried near the spot where they gave up their lives for their country, and numbers were taken to as near their homes as possible. In the national cemeteries near the battlefields most of the graves are unnamed. Only a number and a tiny stone tell where a hero lies sleeping. When shells and shot mowed men down by the thousand it frequently happened that there were none left to identify the bodies. In most cases it was known to what company certain men had belonged, although each could not be identified individually, and in such cases all are buried in groups and the names of all the men who were missing after the battle are inscribed on a single shaft.

There are in all about ninety national cemeteries in the United States and so scattered that each presents an entirely different appearance. Could pictures of them be viewed one after another they would present a panorama of our country. There would be cemeteries far out on sandy wastes where the sun beats down mercilessly and the dry desert wind carries the hot sand in blinding clouds over the shiny stones that mark the graves. There would be cemeteries in mountain wilds and on boundless western prairies. There would be peaceful little spots sheltered 'neath church towers, and vast stretches of beautiful park where thousands lie buried. Millions of people visit these cemeteries on Memorial Day and when night comes each is a perfect bank of flowers.

The most easterly of the national cemeteries is the one known as Cypress Hills. It is located not far out of the city of Brooklyn, and is a typical Eastern burying place that contains some of the finest monuments that are placed over soldiers' graves in the country. The natural aspect of the country at Cypress Hills is somewhat flat, but the cemetery has received so much attention and art has done so much for it that the flatness is not noticeable. It is a most beautiful spot, where 5,000 heroes are buried. Woodlawn is the name of the national cemetery of New York State. It is a magnificent burying place on slightly rolling ground, well kept and planted to all sorts of flowers and evergreens. Over 3,000 are buried here. A little further to the south the national cemeteries are very close together. At Philadelphia there is a beautiful burying place, where about 2,500 sleep, and just to the northeast of town is pretty Beverly. Only 164 are buried here, but it is one of the most beautiful cemeteries in the country—certainly the most beautiful of its size. In the immediate vicinity there is the Gettysburg cemetery, Antietam, Balls Bluff, Grafton and Winchester. All these are much alike in general appearance. About 14,000 are buried in all of them.

The shores of the Chesapeake in Virginia are fairly lined with national cemeteries. About 50,000 are buried in this vicinity, and the graveyards are almost exactly alike in appearance. They are not as well kept as some further north, but nature has done so much in the way of luxuriant vegetation that this is hardly noticeable. The most important of these cemeteries are Fredericksburg, Arlington, Culpepper, Richmond, Cold Harbor, Petersburg, Yorktown and Annapolis. Most of them have streams of water running through them that greatly add to their natural beauty. In North Carolina the most important national cemetery is Salisbury. Nearly 13,000 are buried here. This cemetery is located in a spur of a mountain range and is a most beautiful spot. In general appearance it is entirely different from any other national cemetery in the country. From almost any part of it a view extending over miles and miles of country that in war time was the scene of many important battles can be obtained. It is a most impressive place to visit at any time of the year. The other cemeteries in North Carolina are Raleigh, New Berne and Wilmington. About 7,000 are buried in these three.

Almost at the southern tip of South Carolina is the most beautiful national cemetery in the country. It is known as Beaufort and about 10,000 are buried there. Although it is in South Carolina, Beaufort might be said to belong to Savannah, Ga. The perfect city of the South is just a few miles away, across the river that divides the two States, and it is from there that the crowds of people come who decorate its graves. Hundreds of the sons of Savannah are buried in Beaufort. For picturesqueness the national cemetery at St. Augustine, Fla., takes first rank. It is on the site of an old Spanish burying place, and many are the quaint graves and tombstones to be seen there. Surrounded by a very old stone wall, within sound of the breakers and filled with tropical plants and dreamy lagoons, it is at once beautiful and interesting. About 1,500 are buried here, and the Decoration Day ceremonies are always of a most impressive nature. The national cemetery of Chalmette, near New Orleans, is one of the best-known burying places in the country. Thirteen thousand are buried here. Chalmette is located on the shore of a bayou and presents somewhat the appearance of a swamp with driveways through it. There are several lakes in it, and in many instances the graves are very close to the water. Decoration Day is always extensively observed here, but for one reason or another the graves are decorated with flowers and evergreens the greater part of the year.

The largest national cemetery in the country is at Vicksburg, Miss. About 17,000 are interred here, but the place has rather a depressing effect on one who visits it for the first time, it is so vast and so suggestive of the horrors of death. There is a melancholy aspect to it that it is impossible to shake off. Near by is the cemetery at Natchez, where 3,200 are buried. In the immediate vicinity are the cemeteries of Port Hudson, Baton Rouge and Alexandria. All through this part of the country Decoration Day is most extensively observed. In nearly every graveyard there are several soldiers buried, and the sentimental nature of the people causes much attention to be given to the ceremonies. From Andersonville, Ga., and following a sort of curve to Little Rock, Ark., there is a line of cemeteries where nearly 100,000 soldiers are buried. These are all very much alike in appearance and are not as well cared for as those in other parts of the country. The principal ones of this group are Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga and Marietta.

There is a little group of cemeteries in Kentucky where about 8,000 are buried, but the observances of the day here are always very sad. More old people are seen at these ceremonies than in any other cemetery in the country. They still remember their lost ones, and even at this late day old, white-haired negroes are frequently seen weeping and crying for "young marsa."

A national cemetery that is very little known is Jefferson Barracks, located about eighteen miles below St. Louis, Mo. Over 11,800 are buried here, and the cemetery is one of the grandest sites in the world. It is about 300 feet above the Mississippi, on the west bank, and commands a view in all directions over the bottom lands. This cemetery is remarkably well kept, although it does not contain as many trees as one feels ought to be there.

The national cemeteries of the West are sad places. Most of them are absolutely barren and are distressing in the extreme. The one at San Antonio, Tex., is of this character, although of late years an attempt has been made to improve it. Nearly all the Western cemeteries are small. The national cemetery on the Custer battlefield in Dakota is perhaps the strangest burying place in all the world. It is a most barren spot, containing an enormous marble shaft, with 414 graves grouped around it. The strange thing about this cemetery is that all those sleeping there were killed on the same day. The national cemetery of San Francisco is located at the Presidio. About 350 are interred here. It is not generally known, but the United States maintains a national cemetery at the City of Mexico. Of course the 6,184 buried there are the victims of the Mexican war.

The First Celebrations.

The date of the first celebration of Memorial Day in the various States is as follows: Alabama, April 26, 1866; Arkansas, May 30, 1865; California, May 30, 1880; Colorado, May 30, 1877; Connecticut, May 30, 1876; Delaware, May 30, 1867; Florida, April 26, 1870; Georgia, April 26, 1866; Illinois, May 30, 1873; Indiana, May 30, 1867; Iowa, May 30, 1868; Kansas, May 30, 1866; Kentucky (Confederate), May 10, 1867; Kentucky (Union), May 30, 1868; Louisiana (Confederate), April 6, 1875; Louisiana (Union), April 8, 1878; Maine, May 30, 1867; Maryland (Confederate), June 7, 1866; Maryland (Union), June 5, 1866; Massachusetts, May 30, 1881; Minnesota (at Minneapolis), May 30, 1869; Minnesota (regular), May 30, 1870; Mississippi, May 1, 1867; Missouri, May 30, 1868; Nebraska, May 30, 1868; Nevada, May 30, 1869; New Hampshire, May 30, 1868; New Jersey, May 30, 1868; New York, May 30, 1868; North Carolina (Greensboro), May 5, 1866; North Carolina (Raleigh), May 10, 1866; Ohio, May 30, 1868; Oregon, May 30, 1875; Pennsylvania, May 30, 1868; Rhode Island, May 30, 1868; South Carolina, July 3, 1866; Tennessee, May 30, 1868; Texas, May 30, 1871; Vermont, May 30, 1869; Virginia (Union), May 31, 1866; Virginia (Confederate), June 11, 1866; West Virginia, May 30, 1878; Wisconsin, May 30, 1873.

The Committee.

"We're a Decoration Day committee," began Lilly.

"And we want some of your flowers," said Milly.

"To trim the school house," said Tilly.

Miss Eunice laughed heartily. Then she looked sober.

"See here, my dears," she said, kindly, "I think it isn't a nice way for little girls to beg, if it is on a for flowers.

"Beside, when you get the flowers so easily, you hardly care for them. A little girl asked me once for a sweet red rose, and what do you think? She ate it before she got to the gate!"

"Oh, but we wouldn't do that, Miss Eunice!" said Milly.

"You wouldn't love them as if you had grown them yourselves," persisted Miss Eunice. "Now I'll tell you what I'll do for you; I will give each of you some plants, so that you can raise your own flowers for next Decoration Day."

"Oh, that will be nice! Lovely! Splendid!" said Lilly, Tilly and Milly all at once.

"But what shall we do for to-morrow?" asked the little girls.

"I have promised all my flowers for to-morrow," said Miss Eunice, "but I will show you a garden that does not belong to anybody, where you can get for the picking all the flowers you want."

So the three little sunbonnets bobbed merrily along behind Miss Eunice, as she led the way to the woods and fields.

"This is the garden I meant," she said, looking around.

And sure enough, there were whole flocks of milk-white daisies, and troops of bloodroot and trilliums. Lilly, Tilly and Milly ran to gather them with a shout.

"Take care, my dears!" said Miss Eunice, as the children tore up the violets by the roots. "Pick the flowers and leave the plants."

"I thought you said these were nobody's flowers?" said little Tilly.

"To be sure," said Miss Eunice, "but they are too pretty to be spoiled. Leave them to grow, and other little girls will find them here waiting to surprise them. So the lovely wild flowers will keep a great many Decoration Days."

HEAR THE DRUMS MARCH BY.

SARAH, Sarah, Sarah, hear the drums march by!
This is Decoration Day;—hurry and be spry!
Wheel me to the window, girl; fling it open high!
Crippled of the body now, and blinded of the eye,
Sarah, let me listen while the drums march by.

Hear 'em; how they roll! I can feel 'em in my soul.
Hear the beat—beat—o' the boots on the street;
Hear the sweet fife cut the air like a knife;
Hear the tones grand of the words of command;
Hear the walls nigh shout back their reply!
Sarah, Sarah, Sarah, hear the drums dance by!

Blind as a bat, I can see 'em, for all that;
Old Colonel J., stately an' gray,
Riding slow and soleman at the head of the column;
There's Major L., sober now and well;
Old Lengthy Bragg, still a-bearing of the flag;
There's old Strong, that I tented with so long;
There's the whole crowd, hearty and proud.
Hey! boys, say! can't you glance up this way?
Here's an old comrade, crippled now, an' gray!
This is too much. Girl, throw me my crutch!
I can see—I can walk—I can march—I could fly!
No, I won't sit still an' see the boys march by!

Oh!—I fall and I flinch; I can't go an inch!
No use to flutter, no use to try,
Where's my strength? Hunt down at the front;
There's where I left it. No need to sigh;
All the milk's spilt; there's no use to cry.
Plague o' these tears, and the moans in my ears!
Part of a war is to suffer and to die,
I must sit still, and let the drums march by.

Part of a war is to suffer and to die—
Suffer and to die—suffer and to—Why,
Of all the crowd I just yelled at so loud,
There's hardly a one but is killed, dead and gone!
All the old regiment, excepting only I,
March out of sight in the country of the night.
That was a specter band marched past so grand.
All the boys are a-tenting in the sky.
Sarah, Sarah, Sarah, hear the drums moan by!

—Will Carleton.

"His Face to the Foe."

"Slain in Battle." "He fell with his face to the foe." These were the messages that were flashed over the wires and sent to the waiting ones at home by brave and thoughtful comrades. Those who lived through those trying times need not be reminded how sacred is the trust committed to our charge. They know what the day means in all its comprehensive and broad significance, and it needs no burst of martial music, no flourish of trumpets or beating of drums to tell the story. They know the history of those trying days, and the most eloquent efforts of oratory cannot make it more clear or more dear to them.

The Field Flowers.

Yes, bring the fairest roses,
Carnations white and red,
And pansies, royal blossoms,
To deck each soldier's bed;
But bring the dainty field flowers, too—
Daisies, and violets white and blue.

The largest bridge ever built is the famous one crossing the Firth of Forth

GOOD ROADS

Improving Highways.

Road-making is one of the themes now quite frequently discussed in the farmers' institutes. It is a hopeful sign for better highways that there appears to be a determination to give this subject more practical attention. In a recent Kossuth County meeting Senator Chubb submitted his views on this topic. He had found in a farm journal a description of a good road that he indorsed, viz.: "Smooth, hard rolling, the macadamizing being greater in the center. Good roads are roads that are good when the weather is bad, good under any and all circumstances." The views he submitted were in line with the more effective of the cheap methods of road building. He thought the most essential thing in the construction of a highway was to keep it as dry as possible. For this reason special attention should be given to ditching on each side of the road, and tiling should be used where practicable. However, he considered the first essential in the improvement of highways was to have a good boss, and it seemed to him that some sort of civil service ought to apply to road supervisors, and that a certain amount of information in road building should be necessary to qualify a man for the office. "It is reasonably sure," he said, "that in the construction of grades a heavy roller might be used to pack the dirt as it is being put on in layers by the grader; it would have a tendency to make the roadbed more firm and impervious to water. Great pains should be taken when the grade is completed to have the sides of the road from the roadbed to the ditches on each side smooth, with the slope gradual, and no place left to hold water, and it seems to me when this is done, and you have a good roadbed prepared, it would be of great advantage to seed it to some kind of tame grass, to take the place of the obnoxious weeds that are almost sure to spring up if left vacant. The roots of the grass would have a tendency to hold the dirt in place and prevent washing in heavy showers." This would prove a good foundation for roads, which might be improved later on by a layer of gravel or burnt clay.—Marshalltown Times-Republican.

Country Highways.

The greatest benefits to be derived from good roads are the increased value of the farming lands and the more expeditious facilities provided for sending the farmer's products to the market. Statistics place the total length of the common roads in the United States at from 1,300,000 to 1,800,000 miles. There has been no system in the building of these roads. They have been constructed in a haphazard way, and in the majority of cases all principles of civil engineering have been disregarded.—Exchange.

Using Convict Labor.

Baltimore is macadamizing her suburban roads by labor of the inmates of the house of correction. Last year she paid $9,000 per mile for macadamizing suburban roads. With convict labor she does it as well at a cost of $1,000 per mile. This is of interest to other localities. There are hundreds of criminals in jails and houses of correction who would be better off if worked every day of their several terms.

Shows the Difference.

The road commissioners of New Jersey points out that it costs three cents a bushel to haul wheat five miles on a well-made road, and at least nine cents to haul it the same distance on a rough or sandy road. The farmers may justly conclude that some luxuries of life are more economical than the bare necessities.

Music to Order.

Sir Arthur Sullivan has always had a capacity, not only for clever, but for exceedingly rapid work. When a very young man, he desired some training in the composition of operatic music, and with characteristic energy, determined to learn something of the technique of the stage. He thereupon obtained a position as organist for the opera in Covent Garden, where his musical facility at once came into general request.

On one occasion he was admiring the "borders" which had been painted for a woodland scene.

"Yes," said the painter, "they are very well, and if you could support them by something suggestive in the orchestra, we could get a pretty effect."

Mr. Sullivan at once wrote into the score some delicate arpeggio work for flutes and clarinets, and every one was quite happy.

Next day, perhaps, the machinist would say:

"Mr. Sullivan, the iron doesn't run as easily in the slot as I should like. We must have a little more music to cover it. I should like something for the 'cellos. Could you do it?"

"Certainly, Mr. Sloman," the composer would reply, gravely, "you have opened a new path of beauty in orchestration." He at once added sixteen bars for the 'cello alone. No sooner was this done, than a solo dance was required, at the last moment, for a denseuse who had just arrived.

"What on earth am I to do?" asked the poor musician, of the manager. "I haven't seen her dance. I know nothing of her style."

"I'll see," he said, and took the young lady aside. In less that five minutes he returned.

"I've settled it all," he announced. "This is exactly what she wants. Tiddle-iddle-um, tiddle-iddle-um, rum-tum-tirum. Sixteen bars of that. Then rum-tum, rum-tum, heavy, you know, sixteen bars. Then finish up with the overture to 'William Tell,' last movement, sixteen bars and coda."

The composer sat down to his hurried task, and in less than a quarter of an hour, the work was ready.

These were base uses, perhaps, for genius; but they constituted an apprenticeship.

Author and Critic.

A kind-hearted man, when he is obliged to find fault, tries to do it with gentle indirectness—as in the following instance, reported by the Chicago Post:

"At your request," said the critic to the young author, "I have read your book from beginning to end."

"So good of you," returned the young author. "And now I want you to feel that you can speak frankly and tell me just what you think about it. I suppose you saw a great deal in it that you would change if it were left to you."

"No-o," replied the critic, thoughtfully. "On the whole, I think I may say there was very little."

"Really!" exclaimed the young author, delighted. "Do you know I had an idea you'd tear the whole book to pieces. I can't tell you how pleased I am; but of course there are some changes that you would advise relative to the publication of a second edition. What are they?"

"There's only one that's of much importance," explained the critic.

"And that?" said the young author.

"Why, that's where the hero jumps from the yacht into the ocean to save the heroine."

"Is it too thrilling? Wouldn't you have him jump after her?" inquired the young author, anxiously.

"No, it's not too thrilling," was the reply; "and of course I would have him go in after her; but, you see, they're both rescued. I wouldn't have that."

"You—you wouldn't have them rescued?"

"Certainly not. Let them both drown."

"But this happens in the first chapter—almost the first thing in the book."

"Precisely. That's just when it ought to happen."

His First Deer.

Buck fever is a hunter's disease, the symptoms of which are pretty well known, but they have seldom been more feelingly described than by a "Marquette citizen," whose first experience in deer-shooting is related in the Mining Journal.

After spending a few hours tramping through the woods, feeling tired, he sat down on a log to rest. Like most hunters, he had taken his pipe and tobacco along. Filling the pipe, he smoked for a time without interruption, when, happening to turn his head a little to one side, he saw a large buck coming straight toward him. As luck would have it, he had sat down to smoke near a deer trail.

The deer came nearer and nearer, until he was nearly opposite the place where the hunter sat concealed. While the hunter was watching the approach of the deer he forgot that he had a gun, and that the deer was "his meat." He began to tremble and shake in every limb and joint, and it was difficult for him to restrain a yell of fright.

He watched and trembled until the deer passed his hiding-place and went into the thicket beyond. Then feeling for his rifle, he discovered that it lay on the ground near his feet. By the time he had picked it up the deer was out of range, and then he discovered that in his excitement he had bitten the mouthpiece of his pipe in two.

He was greatly relieved to see the deer move on, as it seemed to him that he was the game and the deer was the hunter.

The Palace at Potsdam.

The walls and ceiling of the vestibule of Emperor William's palace at Potsdam have been lined with shells, pieces of quartz, agates, crystals and other mineralogical specimens. It is an enormous apartment, sixty-eight feet square, and broken by six huge pillars. The floor is of tessellated marble and mosaic. The windows are of stained glass, but every inch of surface on the walls and ceiling is covered with geological and mineralogical specimens, which have been collected from all corners of the globe by the imperial mineralogists and arranged under the direction of a famous artist. The effect is unique, but ugly. Few museums contain a greater variety of rare specimens than are found in this room. The members of the diplomatic and consular service, the naval officers, the scientists and the travelers of Germany, who are familiar with this fad of the Emperor, have sought his favor by bringing beautiful examples of shells, minerals and rare stones from the arctic and antarctic regions, from the islands of the Indian ocean, from the shores of Siberia, from Patagonia and Lapland, from Burmah and the Transvaal, from the Andes, the Urals, the Himalayas and the Mountains of the Moon. There is a considerable collection from the Rocky Mountains in one corner, which was presented to the German government some years ago by the geological survey of the United States. Most of it is from Colorado.—Chicago Record.

Value of Brown Diamonds.

A New York jeweler was exhibiting in Wall street a day or two ago a brown diamond, whose brilliancy seemed to be more adamantine than that of any white or canary stone in the market. Brown diamonds of so fine quality are extremely scarce, but the color has never been appreciated by any except experts.

In time, money making becomes a disease.

A fortune teller always tells a man that he is f... of women.