

THE STORY OF THE DAY



Memorial Day

SIR WALTER BESANT once pointed out the superior significance, interest and character of our national holidays. An Englishwoman last year discovered the beauty of our Memorial day. She was a guest in an old New England town, and missed nothing, either of preparation or observance.

She helped gather flowers for the children, who came begging them all day, and listened to their confidences: "My grandfather, he was a soldier. There's flowers and a flag on his grave, anyway, but we bring flowers, too." "This basketful's going to the ladies of the town; they're making up bouquets at the hall." "No, no, these ain't for the soldiers; they're for our baby. I've got enough to most cover the mound, it's so little." "My, them laylocks'll look fine on teacher's desk! Yes'm, we decorate for the exercises, and take 'em up to the cemetery afterward."

On Memorial day she attended the exercises; saw the rows of young faces turned attentively toward the fine old man in faded uniform, who spoke well and simply of the duties of a citizen in war and peace; heard the children sing; saw them salute the flag.

Then came the procession—the old soldiers, most in carriages, a sturdy few on foot; the town officials; the militiamen; the boys' brigade; the fire company. With the crowd she followed to the ancient burying-ground.

She saw blossoms and little waving flags placed where lay men who had served in the Spanish war, the civil war, the Mexican war, the revolution, and under a quaint stone, lichened and quaint, a soldier of King Philip's war; not one forgotten, not one neglected. She observed how everywhere, in every burial-plot, there were more flowers; how, naturally and simply, the day was coming to be one of remembrance, not of soldiers, only, but of all the honored and beloved dead; how friends, meeting among the fragrant paths, talked quietly of those gone, or of the great historic days; or noted with appreciation the grace of memorial garlands or the beauty of clustered flowers.

It happened that she was a woman who had seen parades and pageants and state solemnities in many lands. She had kept very silent, and her friend, fearing that, to her too-experienced eye, the dignity of the occasion might have been impaired by occasional crudities and rusticities, and a decoration here and there in obtrusive ill taste, expressed her doubts.

"No," said the Englishwoman, "where all take part, there must be flaws like that. They are nothing. When I think that every year, every where in your great country, there are scenes like this, in a spirit like this—I believe I have never in my life seen anything so beautiful."—Youth's Companion.



**Veterans Were Remembered.**  
When the great union army disbanded great numbers of men found awaiting them places which had been kept open. Sir Samuel Peto, an Englishman, records that soon after the close of the war he was in Chicago, and there visited a printing establishment. The proprietor pointed out 47 compositors who had been soldiers. "This man was a major," he told Sir Samuel. The man next to him a captain, the third a lieutenant, another a sergeant. . . . They were only too happy to return to situations which I had given them an understanding, when they left me, that I would retain open for them."—McClure's Magazine.

The Meaning of the Day

FOR forty-one years the north and the south—though on different days—have decorated the graves of their soldier dead of the mightiest war of modern times and the greatest war of all time in the cause for which it was fought. In the beginning the south, honestly and sincerely believing that it had a right to withdraw from the union, proposed to exercise this right peacefully if it could, forcibly if it must. Its complaint was that the north would not in good faith keep the national laws made to protect the domestic institution of the southern states—slavery—and was continually encroaching on it with new laws, and the south wished a separate government in which such laws would be supreme. The north insisted that the union was indissoluble; that once having entered it, states could not withdraw. As a question of law, this could never be decided.

It is pitiful to see how our fathers for years argued and demonstrated and quibbled over an interpretation while in the background loomed the real question, dimly discerned, never wholly confessed, and ignored, as much as possible; while as if to drown consciousness the talk about "interpretation of the constitution" grew ever louder, until the south struck. It ordained the dissolution of this union and fired on its flag. Then rose the curtain on the red drama that cost a million lives before the curtain fell.

Confused in the beginning, the theme gradually unfolded, the background became clear and the protagonists were disclosed in deadly strife, not over a petty text, but over the question of human freedom versus human slavery. The fathers had not on the sour grapes and the children's teeth were set on edge. There could be no compromise. As long as this country was to be the heritage of those that made it, the one idea or the other must prevail. Freedom won—in a blaze of glory, with a trail of reflected light, seen clearer this day every year, as the diminishing ranks of the boys in blue march to lay flowers—the rue of sacrifice and rosemary for remembrance—on the graves of "Those that have died already."

This is the personal possession of the union soldier—that he fought for the cause of human freedom. And Memorial day has this wider and unique significance, that it is not merely in memory of brave men who "gave the last full measure of devotion" for a cause they believed was right, but that that cause was human freedom! It abides. We that come after them have a like battle to fight, and the same old foe with a new face. All slaves are not black. All slavery has not the outward and visible signs of dungeon and the lash. We are still, as Lincoln said on the field of Gettysburg, "engaged in a great civil war testing whether a nation—conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal—can long endure." And in this war north and south class hands and stand shoulder to shoulder.

**Grow Too Old for Parades.**  
As a day celebrated only by veterans of the union army, Memorial day is rapidly slipping into the past. The veterans are growing too old for the parades which, until within a few years, were its most conspicuous feature. In the south, where Decoration day was formerly observed on different dates in different states, the custom has grown of celebrating May 30, which until recently was an exclusive anniversary of the Grand Army of the Republic.

**New England Society.**  
There is a National Society of New England Women that has branches in many of the states, co-operating often with the men's New England societies, but making pleasant opportunities for women to take up the thread of remembrance with one another. Miss Lizzie Woodbury Law is the president, residing in New York.

A MEMORIAL DAY ROMANCE

BY J. F. HENDERSON

COL. LEVISON BRANT was a little startled by the news that his daughter was engaged to be married, subject to his father's approval. Still, he felt that there was no need for worry. Dorothy was 20, and since her mother's death had been left almost entirely to the care of her Aunt Mary at Poplarville, while her father was occupied with his business affairs in the city. It was natural, therefore, in her lack of adequate parental protection, that she should turn to matrimony as the most convenient and comfortable refuge.

Col. Brant had come down to Poplarville in response to an invitation to deliver the Memorial day address at the public exercises to be given under the auspices of his old Grand Army post. He had formerly been a resident of the town. That was before the growth of his business necessitated its removal to a larger field, and made it advisable for him to take up his abode in the city. Dorothy spent the greater part of her time in Poplarville. She was not partial to city life, especially as it separated her from Aunt Mary, who was a second mother to her, and from the old homestead, to which she was greatly attached.

It was Dorothy who met Col. Brant at the railway station when he arrived on the evening preceding the 30th of May, 1885, and it was Dorothy who blushingly confided to him, on their way to the house, that a very handsome and a very worthy young man had been paying court to her for two months past.

"He will call on you this evening, papa, to ask your consent," she said, softly.

"The deuce!" growled her father. "You have already given yours, I suppose."

"Why, papa—of course."

And so it came about that Richard Challoner, the fortunate suitor for Dorothy's hand, called at the homestead that evening and was formally introduced to Col. Brant. He was indeed a handsome and dignified young man, whose frank geniality and courtly manners had already made a staunch ally of Aunt Mary and at once made an agreeable impression on the colonel. He was a budding young lawyer.

He supposed this was a case of forgetfulness on her part. He paused, but Challoner did not speak or move. In a sorrowful voice, the colonel continued: "The picture is calculated to perpetuate the memory of a most regrettable affair. As you probably know, one of the nastiest skirmishes of the war took place only five miles from this spot. Poplarville was in a panic. But we managed to beat off the enemy, and they were soon in full retreat, with our boys in hot pursuit. At the very beginning of the chase the horse ridden by the young colonel of a rebel regiment stumbled and fell. I happened to be close behind this man when the accident occurred, and believing him to be badly hurt, I quickly dismounted to render him such assistance as I might. But apparently he was not hurt at all. With a yell he sprang to his feet and rushed upon me with drawn sword. Of course, I had to defend myself. Three times during the fierce fencing that ensued I begged him to desist and avoid unnecessary bloodshed. Twice I was in a hair's breadth of being killed by his skillful onslaught; but in the end I was victorious, and he fell. I intended only to disable him, but, unfortunately, my blade passed clear through his body. Six weeks he was in the military hospital here before he finally succumbed, and his body now lies in the Poplarville cemetery. By the way," suddenly exclaimed the colonel, "his name was Challoner—Col. Challoner—the same name as yours, I believe. My God, sir, I hope he was not a relative—"

The words died on his lips, for at that moment the younger man turned slowly around and faced him. Richard Challoner was pale as death; his breath came in quick, excited gasps; his eyes shone with a fierce, vindictive glare.

"He was my father!" The words fairly hissed through his clenched teeth. "I am Col. Challoner's son. And you were the man who killed him—you—you! By God, sir, you shall answer to me for that act!"

Col. Brant was struck dumb with horror.

"My reason for coming to Poplarville to begin my business career," continued the young man, hoarsely, "was because my father—in your cemetery here. I wanted to be near him—to care for his grave. I never dreamed—"

He broke off suddenly and seemed to restrain himself by a strong effort. Then, with a quick, nervous gesture, he turned on his heel, and without trusting himself to utter another word, he strode from the room. At the foot of the stairs he met Dorothy, who was waiting for him. The sight of his white face and blazing eyes startled her.

"Richard! Richard!" she cried.

He brushed past her without an answering sign, took his hat from the rack, and an instant later the hall door closed behind him.

The day which custom has set aside for the annual decoration of soldiers' graves dawned bright and beautiful. Poplarville was in holiday attire. The air was freighted with the perfume of flowers, the buildings were gay with bunting, flags floated at half-mast, and the Poplarville band discoursed patriotic music in the public square. Col. Lewiston Brant mingled with the veterans of his post, and not a few remarkable signs of age and the usual sadness that seemed to have settled down upon him. Apparently he had aged ten years in as many hours. Col. Brant delivered his Memorial day oration with an eloquence born of deep feeling and sincerity. He moved all hearts by his simple, touching tribute to the heroes who had laid down their lives in their country's defense, and closed with this appeal: "But while we are honoring our dead, let us not forget the graves of

those other brave fellows whose resting place is in our cemetery—the men who were pitted against us in that awful struggle—who fell as devoted martyrs to a cause which they believed to be right. Remember them, also, with your flowers, your tears and your prayers."

In a secluded part of the cemetery that afternoon Richard Challoner stood alone beside a grave which was marked by a granite headstone bearing the name of his father. So occupied was he with his own gloomy thoughts that he did not notice the timid, hesitating approach of Dorothy Brant until she was within a few feet of him. He straightened up then, and greeted her with a solemn, courtly bow, while his cheek flushed. The girl was very pale, and her eyes were red with weeping. She carried an armful of roses, which she silently and reverently deposited on the dead confederate's grave. Then, facing the man opposite with a look of pitying appeal, she took from her bosom a letter and handed it across to him.

"Read this, Richard," she said, in a frightened, quivering voice. "It was written by your father to my mother many years ago, before I was born. It has been preserved among mamma's other treasures, left at her death. Aunt Mary found it last night, and I—we wanted you to see it, and—please don't refuse, Richard."

"Written by my father to your mother?" he said, slowly, with a deeply puzzled look.

"Yes, yes. Oh, please read it. It will help you to understand. This is my last request, Richard."

He said no more, but took the letter from its time-worn envelope and read:

Mrs. Levison Brant—Dear Madam: It pains me to learn that your husband's supposed responsibility for my condition has almost prostrated you. Pray do not worry about that score. I assure you from my inmost soul that I not only forgive your husband, but I have already begged his forgiveness for forcing him to commit an act which he so deeply deplores. The fault was entirely my own, and I alone am the one who should suffer. Believe me, I am profoundly sorry for what happened, and it is not a sorrow that is influenced by selfish considerations, or the fear of death. Since I have been in this hospital Col. Brant has become my most valued and best-beloved friend. What he has done for me can never be told, but he has made me realize that there are true gentlemen at the north as well as in the south, and that he is one of the noblest men in the world. I thank you dear madam, for giving me this opportunity to say that, so far from feeling resentment, I entertain only sentiments of warmest friendship and gratitude toward your husband. Sincerely yours, WILLIAM CHALLONER.



Reverently Deposited on the Dead Confederate's Grave.

The color came and went in the young man's face as he read, and the light in his eyes softened to a tender glow. Finishing, he crumpled the letter convulsively in his hand, and came round the headstone of the grave at a half-dozen quick strides.

"Dorothy," he cried, seizing her hand, "this is a glorious revelation to me. Let us hunt up your father at once. I will go down on my knees to him if you like. With you for a wife and Col. Brant for a father-in-law I shall be the happiest man in Poplarville."

**The Veteran's Dream.**  
We met last night in the old post hall. And some of the boys were sadly missed: Twenty present, ah, that was all—The rest had answered the great roll call Out of sixty-nine on the charter list. Then up spoke Bates of the Twenty-third, Who had served all through till the war was done. "It's a long time, boys, since their names I've heard. And I move we call them one by one." So they read each name and to my ear Came words borne forth on the evening breeze— It sounded to me like a faint: "Here, here." And I knew they answered that roll call clear From their resting place beneath the trees. I seemed to see them all in line Just touching elbows and standing straight: Yes, such was there of the sixty-nine, And I spoke to one old pal of mine Who had left us alone in ninety-eight. And cried: "Old comrade, what means all this?" Then he said as he tapped on his muffled drum: "We are calling the names of the ones we miss— The twenty boys who have not yet come home. Then he gave the order: "Right by twos." And they smiled on me as they marched away: But their "tramp, tramp, tramp" I did not lose— Till old Bates shook me: "Having a moon, old pard, I go home your way."

**BELONGS TO ALL AMERICANS**  
Memorial Day Pre-eminently a Day of Patriotism and the Heritage of All.

What the United States is, and is to be, rests upon something equally shared by the most venerable soldier and the smallest child with its tiny flag and handful of blossoms. Memorial day is pre-eminently the day of patriotism. As long as the self-sacrificing love of country abides the nation will be safe and its course onward. No emergency can master a people who are ready to offer all and to die, if need be, at their country's call. There is a complete unity about what is done on Memorial day. All Americans are a part of it. The thoughts that dominate it are the heritage of all. Other crises must come and will not fully define themselves in advance. They can be overcome by patriotism, and that alone. Though it be an invisible spark in the human heart, a nation dies when it fails, and civilization would be lost without it. It is not peculiar to any race or country, but Americans, governing themselves, are glad to know that they have always been among the foremost in its illustration. They do not expect to escape trials, but have a calm faith that they will be ready for them and able to do their duty, though its performance should call for their lives, a self-surrender that outweighs the gift of existence on any terms less noble.

**Common to All Americans.**  
In many parts of the south Memorial day is now jointly celebrated by survivors of the blue and the gray, and the custom is growing. As the country comes more and more to cherish as a common inheritance the valor, fortitude and self-sacrifice of that conflict, it will become universal.



When We Honor the Heroes of Two Wars

MEMORIAL day, as it was christened by its sponsors, the Grand Army, Decoration day, as the people at large persist in calling it, although chosen by the survivors of the war for the union as a season in which to honor the memory of our country's defenders, comes to us from the southland. It was the women of the south who instituted the custom of placing flowers upon the graves of not only their own defenders—none the less heroes because they died for a mistaken idea and a lost cause—but also upon the mounds that marked the resting places of union soldiers. Realizing the beauty and significance of this conception, the northern people did not long delay in following the example set by the south. In the month of May, 1868, Gen. John A. Logan, then commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, issued an order for the observance by that organization of May 30 as Memorial day—a day to be set apart to the memory of the soldiers and sailors who fell in the war of the rebellion. This particular day was chosen because it was the date of the discharge of the last soldier of the civil war. It is now a legal holiday in all the states except New York. Until ten years ago it was difficult for those born since the civil war to realize the full significance that attaches to the day that we observe so generally. It is true they can gather from history all the events of that great struggle in which brother fought against brother and son against father, but they can form no adequate conception of the consternation that pervaded the north when the capital itself was threatened. They cannot grasp the import of the victory of Antietam; of the second Bull Run; of the battle of Fair Oaks; of the Wilderness; of the fiercely contested battle—and the decisive one of the war of Gettysburg, in which 150,000 men were engaged; and scores of other battles in which the blood of heroes stained the soil of the south in that titanic struggle between the states when more than once the fate of the nation trembled in the balance.

Although so many years have passed since the war of the rebellion the American people are not oblivious of the debt which they owe to the men who fought, suffered and died that the nation might live. The recurrence of Memorial day, with its beautiful and pathetic ceremonies, conjures up visions of those dark days of the past when our soldiers in the south were receiving their baptism of blood and fire and their friends at home were waiting in dread expectancy for "news from the front." And when it is recalled that there were four long years of this warfare those who have appeared upon the stage of life since then may be able to form an idea of the magnitude of what is conceded to be the greatest war in history.

While Memorial day has been scrupulously observed in the north for the last 40 years, within the last ten years it has been invested with a new and solemn significance. It will be a reminder that since the close of the rebellion the country has again been shaken with the throes of war—a conflict in which some of its best blood was sprinkled upon the altar of patriotism. As the veterans of '61 assemble to pay homage to their dead comrades, and the muffled drum and wailing fife sound a requiem over the heroes who met death on southern battlefields and in southern prisons, there will be mourning also for the patriots of '98—the young men who, with courage and valor equal to that

of their sires, fell by Spanish shot and shell that an oppressed people might be free. When the chaplets are twined and the garlands are woven for those who have listened to the last tattoo they will also be laid upon another generation of American soldiers.

As the rites of the day are being observed in city, town and hamlet, the solemnity of the occasion will be brightened by the knowledge that the country is thoroughly reunited. No sectional feeling nor bitter memories will now or evermore arise to mar the harmony of the occasion. The enmity that was felt by a great portion of the south against its conquerors has been entirely dissipated. And yet it was not the conquering guns of the northern hosts that swept away sectionalism and removed the animosities engendered by that fratricidal strife, but rather the cannon that thundered from the fleets of Spain and the volleys that rattled from Spanish Mars'ers that welded together in one harmonious nation the north and south. When the call to arms resounded through the land in 1898 the states south of the Potomac vied with the north and the west in responding to the summons to maintain the honor of the flag against a foreign foe, and the first victim of that war was a son of North Carolina. The south, with the rest of the country, can claim the victor's laurel even while her tears bedew the cypress that marks her bereavement.

Memorial day will never lose its significance and interest. The ranks of the Grand Army are becoming depleted with each succeeding year. There will soon be but a corporal's guard of the members left, for they are being "mustered out" at a rapid rate through age, disability and death. But the graves of those who died fighting for the flag will not be neglected. Memorial day will continue to be a day of remembrance. The Sons of Veterans will keep alive the patriotic flame when their sires are no longer able to march to the post-room and the cemetery. Then, too, the Spanish war veterans will see to it that the memories of their fallen comrades are kept green.

**Realistic.**  
"Twas in the communal room at a hotel, and, as usual, the gentlemen of the road" were boasting one against the other. Presently they got round to the subject of singing.

"Ah, now!" said one, "talking of singing, reminds me of my early triumphs on the concert stage. I had a voice then, and could always move an audience. I mind the time when I sang 'Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep' in so realistic a manner that several of my audience were attacked with mal-de-mer."

"Bah!" said Boaster No. 2, "that's nothing. Why, I once sang 'The Last Post' with such fervor that several of my absent-minded friends seated in front started licking their programs, and then rushed out to catch it."

And then silence reigned.—Chicago American.

**The German of It.**  
"The expression, 'According to Hoyle,' which is so often used by people to verify a statement, even if it does not refer to cards, has a companion among the people of Germany," writes an American from Munich. "Here they say, 'Nach Adam Riese' (according to Adam Riese) when the statement is to be considered mathematically correct. The name is that of a 'great man at figures,' who laid down study rules hundreds of years ago which are still followed. His four hundredth birthday was unnoticed on March 30 even at Ansbach, where he died in 1559."