



ASLEEP AT HIS POST.

BY GILBERT PATTEN.

With muffled drums and measured tread the little band of battle marked and time scarred veterans—heroic heroes of the noble army that fought to preserve the Union—marched through the cemetery that lay sleeping on the southward sloping hillside.

At length they halted by a white shaft that bore the name of "John Loring," followed by this strange inscription: Pardon us, gentle, because of his faithful service and splendid record as a brave and loyal soldier.

With a single exception every head was uncovered and bowed as the flowers and flags were placed on the grave. One there was among them, however, who stood up stiffly, with his cold forehead unremoved from his white head, his aged line face grave and emotionless, as if carved from adamant.

Never in all the years since they began decorating that grave had Uncle Dan Brinton been known to remove his hat there or in any manner show he mourned for and honored the sleeping comrade with whom he had fought almost shoulder to shoulder in the same company.

There were those, however, who hinted that there had once been a feud between the two men, and that even death had not softened the heart of stubborn old Uncle Dan; but, if this was true, the facts were not public property.

At all the other graves where the veterans passed and uncovered he removed his hat and bowed his head with the rest, his grim features softening and something like a tender look creeping into his eyes, once so clear and bright, but now growing dim with advancing age.

Among those gathered at the cemetery to watch the solemn memorial ceremonies was a plainly dressed but pretty girl of 18. She was attired in common print, and the shoes on her feet were made for wear instead of beauty, but nothing could conceal the grace of her budding figure, the ladylike shapeliness of her almost delicate hands, the pearl whiteness of her small and even teeth and the limpid sparkle of her clear blue eyes.

ing them. Their lives passed peacefully and rather monotonously, but they seemed content with their humble lot, apparently caring little for things beyond the bounds of their tiny world.

On the night of this Memorial day Uncle Dan sat by the open cottage door and smoked his pipe, the light of the setting sun showing a troubled look on his face, while Jennie moved briskly about the room, attending to her household duties and humming a tune of a song.

All at once the old man removed his pipe, struck it against the edge of the chair to knock out the ashes, straightened up and cleared his throat, speaking with an effort: "Come here, little one."

She approached, a wondering look on her face, for she saw by his manner he had something serious to say. He took her hand and pulled her down beside him. She sat on the floor, resting her arm on his knee and her head on his arm, while his once sinewy fingers sought her curls, which the last slanting bars of sunlight made bright with a golden tinge.

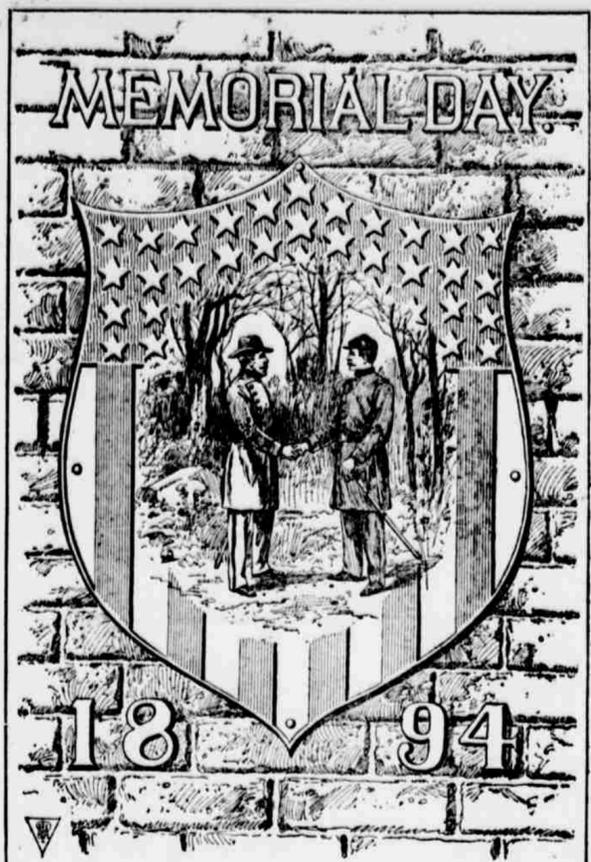
The man hesitated about beginning, but suddenly plunged into his subject in an abrupt and awkward manner. "You're getting to be a pretty nice woman now, Jennie, and I know it ain't long before you'll be thinkin' of gettin' married. It's natural—it's natural. I hope to see ye tied to some good man ere I go to join my comrades who have been mustered out before me, which time can't be far away."

"Oh, Uncle Dan!" she cried in genuine distress. "Please don't talk of that." "I've got to talk of it," was his stubborn retort. "Something I saw today makes me feel it's needful and right. My old eyes ain't so sharp as they used to be, but they say that young Nat Loring looking at ye, little one, in a way that meant a pile—and them same eyes saw ye blush. That's why I feel it's needful to talk now, for I want to warn ye ag'in any one with the Loring blood in his or her body. Keep clear of that young man, Jennie."

"What have you against Nat Loring, uncle?" "He's the son of a man who slept at his post and was condemned to be shot." "But was pardoned by the president 'cause of his faithful service and splendid record as a brave and loyal soldier?" "The old man's face darkened and became still harsher. His voice was not steady as he cried: "That sounds very well, but let me tell ye there was a wonderful influence brought to bear on the president to obtain that pardon, or John Loring would have died the death he deserved. His son is a chip of the old block! Don't let him fool ye, little girl! He has money, but there is treacherous blood in his veins, and why should he—as he can have the pick of the young ladies

"I think you are prejudiced against him, uncle, as you must be against his father. Nancy Jones told me you and John Loring had trouble over a woman, and"— "Uncle Dan!" arose quickly to his feet, his face working with the anger he could not suppress. Clenching his hands, he literally grated: "Nancy Jones is a busybody—a gossip—a meddlin' woman! She had better mind her business and keep her nose out of other folks' affairs! Mind what I tell ye, Jennie, and steer clear of Nat Loring. If you don't, ye'll regret it as long as ye live." And then he walked out of the cottage, leaving a dismayed and downcast girl behind.

Spring slipped into summer, and the long warm days of July and August passed away. September came to turn the forest leaves from green to brown and crimson. The smaller song birds had already departed, and in stubble fields the robins were gathering in flocks preparatory to the flight they would soon take to a milder clime. In the long dead grass crickets chirped mournfully, and there was a brooding sadness in the croak of blue air.



That's enough for Dan'l Brinton. Jennie, come here!" "Pale and trembling, the girl left Nat Loring and advanced to her uncle's side. He took her hand and drew her close, his eyes fastened on the young man all the while, as he continued: "I hev tried to protee' this little lamb from ye. I warned her, but ye found a way to sneak around and lead her inter deceivin' the best friend she had in the world. That's like a Loring—they're deceptions."

"There was no deception intended, Mr. Brinton," protested Nat stanchly. "I was urging her to let me go to you and ask for her hand when you appeared. I was in earnest, for I love her." "Love her! Bah, bah, bah! I know the kind of blood there is in yer veins. It's treacherous. If ye think ye love her to-day, tomorrow ye may think ye lovesome other girl."

"My love is true. It will never change. I will marry her today." "Marry her!" almost shouted Uncle Dan, his face now dark as a stormcloud. "You marry my little lamb! I'd rather see her dead and buried." Then he almost dragged the girl from the spot, urging her away with passionate words and earnest entreaties.

"You may change your mind some day, Mr. Brinton," called Nat. The old man turned to fling back, "Never, sir—never, never!" and the unfortunate lover was left alone by the trysting tree and the murmuring brook.

Winter came, and the little cottage in the hollow was nearly buried beneath the drifts of snow that blew down from the hills. At times the back road was quite abandoned, leaving the old man and the girl shut off from the rest of the world. To make matters worse, Uncle Dan was not very well, for the time was past when he could welcome cold weather and enjoy it. Still he was brave, and he tried to be cheerful for the sake of Jennie, whom he often saw sitting by the window where she could look out across the hollow to

ward the spot where the winding brook—now icebound and buried in snow—disappeared into the grove, a plaintive sadness in her eyes. At last the great storm of the winter came on. For four days snow fell steadily, and the wind howled down from the hills. Three days after the storm had ceased Nat Loring came down the back road on snowshoes. He paused where he could see the roof of the cottage in the hollow peeping from a great bank of white. There was no sign of life about the place, not even a trace of smoke rising from the chimney.

"You look hungry, Jennie. I believe you are nearly starved," declared Nat. "I haven't eaten anything for two days," was her confession. "The only food in the house I kept for uncle. We are out of provisions, and there was no way of getting more."

Nat was horrified. On the bed the sick man was muttering deliriously of his army days. He saw the visitor, but did not recognize him. "It was late that afternoon when Uncle Dan became himself once more, to find the village doctor by his bed, with Jennie and Nat close at hand. The old soldier looked long and steadily at the young man, and then he faintly said: "I thought it was a dream, but I see ye have really come in time to save my poor lamb. There's been an old fool, but"— "I've been," broke in the doctor soothingly; "you must not talk now. It will weaken you."

"I've got to talk now, doctor, or never. I've made my last campaign, and I'm goin' to be mustered out right away. The commander in chief will soon give me an honorable discharge." Then he turned to Nat and Jennie, motioning them to approach. When they were close by the bed, he went on, his voice growing weaker with each moment: "I always thought the one thing I held against John Loring was that he slept at his post. I thought I had forgot he won the woman who once promised to marry me. But as I lay here I had a vision that told me what a selfish, revengeful old wretch I have been."

The girl's fingers touched his lips, and she whispered entreatingly, "Hush, uncle." "I can't hush—I won't hush," he gasped, a shadow settling on his weary old face. "My strength is goin'. Nat, will ye marry my little one? Will ye love and protee' her as if she was yer own life?" "Heaven knows I will," was the reply. "Then take her. She'll soon need another to guard her. I've been faithful to—the end—faithful to my duty. I've stood by my post to the last, but now—I'm tired—and I—must—sleep."

With the weeping girl's loving kiss on his lips, Uncle Dan closed his eyes in that dreamless slumber that comes when the campaign of life is ended. When another Memorial day came around, the fading band of veterans found a new grave on which to place a tiny flag and fragrant flowers. Uncle Dan slept not far from where John Loring was buried, and little Jennie, with her husband at her side, dropped a tear for both. But through the shadows of her sorrow shone the sunshine of perfect love.

Generals of the Civil War. The general's commissions held and received during the war or issued at the close were as follows: Generals, 1; lieutenant generals, 2; by brevet, 1. Major generals U. S. A., 11; by brevet, 153. Major generals U. S. V., 128; by brevet, 288. Brigadier generals U. S. A., 36; by brevet, 187. Brigadier generals U. S. V., 661; by brevet, 1,170. There were also 8 generals of state troops in service of the United States in 1861. There were 38 generals killed and 39 mortally wounded in action, and 23 died of disease.

MAY 30.

Hang out the flag, the dear old flag, upon the outer wall. I hear again the life's shrill notes, the bugle's mellow call. Once more the veterans fill the ranks, in files not serried, though, As when they marched into the south some thirty years ago.

I hear the sound of marching men, the tramp of myriad feet, The steady footfalls echo all along the paved street. They follow where "Old Glory" leads, with solemn step and slow, Not light and spry as they marched some thirty years ago.

Year after year they fewer grow, their ranks are thinning fast, And more graves dot the hillside slopes as every May goes past, And grave heads nod along the line where dark hair used to grow.

When marching down in Dixie's land some thirty years ago, I seem to view again the scenes when men went marching forth; I seem to see again the grand uprising of the north; I hear again the echoing cheer, the plaudits of the crowd, And see the boys march to the front with valiant mien and proud.

I see the father's brief farewell, the mother's fond embrace; I note the lover's sad goodbye, the lorn wife's tear-stained face; The children's half bewildered look so suited to their years.

When tinseled and display so ill seem cause for mother's tears, I hear the ringing cheers for those who're marching forth to meet Honor and fame and victory, perchance death or defeat. Some went to meet a shattered life, with valiant hearts and brave, And some, like those who march today, were marching toward the grave.

I seem to see again arise the clouds of sulphurous smoke; I hear again the clanging hoofs, the saber's vigorous stroke; I hear the peal of minie balls, the cannon's loud mottled roar.

The clash of steel, the human yells, the fiery hate of war. I see the bloody pictures made upon a landscape green; I see the comrades' parched lips wet from the same canteen; I see men die for other men; I see the true and brave Form comradeship and brotherhood that lasts beyond the grave.

OUR NATIONAL CEMETERIES.

Fame's Eternal Camping Grounds, Where Sleep Our Soldier Dead. Eighty-three national cemeteries, wherein 290,700 soldiers (are sleeping their last for sleep, have been established within the boundaries of the United States. The laying out of these great gardens of graves and maintaining them in such a way as to deserve this latter appellation have cost the nation a sum of money large enough to disprove, at least in a measure, the old time saying that "republics are ungrateful."

But the money that has been expended to properly mark and adorn the resting places of the brave men who died that the nation might live is not and has not been expended grudgingly. It has been paid out freely as the last and only possible tribute to the memory of men as brave as ever lived, and who fought for home and liberty. In thus commemorating the deeds of her common soldiers the United States is quite unrivaled by any other nation, ancient or modern.

This noble work could not have been accomplished but for wise and patriotic foresight exercised almost at the beginning of the war. In September, 1861, the secretary of war issued an order to the effect that accurate and permanent records be kept as to all deceased Union soldiers, and this order was at once followed by the issuing of blank forms through the quartermaster's department to hospital surgeons and all others who could use them. On the battlefields when the Federal troops were victorious great care was taken to bury the dead in such a way that each grave could be marked, and headboards provided by the general quartermaster were set up. Only on fields where the Confederates won were the dead buried without marking the graves.

Soldiers who survived the southern prisons in many instances marked the graves of their comrades who died, and records were kept everywhere it was possible to do so, so that the mortuary records of the great civil contest exceed anything else of the same nature in the world. It was in the second year of the war that congress authorized the president to purchase grounds and have them prepared for soldiers' cemeteries. The next year such graveyards were dedicated at Chattanooga, Stone River and Gettysburg. It was at the dedication of the last named of these three that President Lincoln delivered that address which, spoken modestly as it was, did not then attract the attention of its hearers as anything greatly out of the ordinary, but which, when it was telegraphed over the land and read in the newspapers, speedily took high rank among notable spoken passages and has since been accorded a place among classic orations.

The national cemetery at Arlington was laid out in 1864, that at Antietam in 1865. In pursuance of the general plan of 1865, 17 cemeteries were established in Virginia, 7 in Tennessee, 6 in Kentucky, 4 in North Carolina, 4 in Louisiana, 3 in Mississippi, 3 in Maryland, 2 in South Carolina, 2 in Georgia and 2 in the District of Columbia. In the north and west 2 were established in Illinois, 3 in Missouri, 2 in Indiana, 1 in Iowa, 2 in Pennsylvania, 3 in New York and 2 in New Jersey. In many places besides these the government has purchased small plots of ground where a few soldiers lie, and several cemeteries contain government plots wherein the bodies of Confederates who died in Federal prisons are buried. Less than one-fifth of the entire number whose graves are now marked and tenderly cared for lie where they were first interred.

Five of the national cemeteries contain the bodies of United States soldiers who fell in other wars than the struggle for the Union. One of the most notable is near the City of Mexico. Another is in Montana, in the latter lie the bodies of 918 regulars, including the 300 brave men who were massacred with Custer by the redskins. It is a thing that every American may be proud of that all these cemeteries are kept in superb condition. The cemetery at Arlington heights, near Washington, is the most beautiful and contains the largest number of graves of identified dead. The total number of interments there is 16,535, of which but 4,840 are of unidentified soldiers. The first soldier buried there was a Confederate, on May 13, 1864.

The grave of Sheridan is a striking feature of the Arlington cemetery, where have also been gathered the bodies of most of those who fell at Bull Run, Chantilly and other battlefields in the vicinity. A massive monument of sarcophagus form, marking the bodies of 2,111 unknown soldiers, attracts much attention, as does also the Temple of Fame, a circular structure composed of eight columns surmounted by a dome. The columns are marked by the names of Washington, Lincoln, Grant, Farragut, Humphreys, Reynolds, Garfield, Thomas and Meade.

The cemetery at Gettysburg, with its numerous monuments and its 3,592 tablets; those at Shiloh, with 3,507; Vicksburg, with 16,633 (3,913 identified and 12,720 unidentified); Fredericksburg, with 15,274, of which 12,788 are unknown; Nashville, with 16,546; Salisbury, N. C., with 12,137, of which only 102 are known; Memphis, with 13,384; Andersonville, with 15,792, all identified but 925; Chattanooga, with 12,439—all the national cemeteries are, in fact, interesting, especially at this time, and all deserve alike the attention of the government. The number of Confederate soldiers' graves so cared for is of course much smaller than the number of Union soldiers' graves, but they are as carefully tended and watched as the others.

EVERY HEAD WAS UNCOVERED SAVE ONE, fellow in the riding suit, Jennie glanced back and saw him looking. The color of ripe berries came to her cheeks.

Uncle Dan's scowled, but spoke no word, only quickening his pace somewhat.

"Say you will marry me, Jennie. You have confessed you love me. Say you will marry me, and I will go to your uncle and ask for you."

She shook her head, crying out in a frightened voice: "No, no; you must not do that! You don't know Uncle Dan!" He has forbidden me ever speaking to you, and he would be very angry if he knew I came here to meet you. I feel guilty and wretched every time I have done so, but I can't help it. Nat—I can't help it."

"What have I ever done to make him feel thus toward me—what has he against me?" cried the young man.

"I'll answer that question!" broke in a hoarse voice as Uncle Dan suddenly appeared before them. "Ye're the son of a man as forgot his duty and slept at his post!"