

Aunt Martha's Memorial Day

If you ain't never had no Aunt Martha in your family, ma says that you have missed one of the best things that ever happened in this world. She is ma's oldest maid sister. Well, now, you needn't turn up your nose! She ain't one of them sour, lean, cranky, weazened, vinegary dispositioned, spit out spittle, oilcloth fadling critters—not by a long shot! She's short, stout, white and carries a smile that warms at all lights a bull roarer, just as when father lays a fire in the fireplace.

Some folks say that the reason she ain't married is because she ain't never had no chance. Ma says 'aint' no. For five years Uncle Silas' hired man, Henry Peters, kept company with her, ma says, and come to see her every Wednesday and Saturday night right



"I'LL GO IN YOUR PLACE."

through corn plantin', layin', harvestin' and thrashin', no matter how busy. I have heard ma tell the story about Henry Peters a good many times. Henry lived alone in a little house on Uncle Silas' farm, which jibes ours—that is, Henry roomed there. Uncle's house was pretty small for the growin' family, so the hired man slept there. So did extra help durin' harvestin' and thrashin'.

It is a little two room affair. Aunt Martha lives there all alone now except when she is stayin' with some of the relatives, helpin' care for the sick, layin' out the dead or something like that. And it keeps her pretty busy, because both pa and ma have a grist of brothers and sisters livin' in these parts.

Well, durin' the war ma says pa was drafted. It didn't seem as if he could be spared. Ma had been sick all winter and had run up an awful doctor's bill. The crops had been mighty poor the season before, almost a failure. There wasn't enough sold from the farm to keep us going and pay the interest on the mortgage.

There was no money to pay for a substitute, and things did look blue. Through the orchard one mornin', scythe on shoulder, come Henry Peters, who had learned of the trouble. Pa was out by the pippen when Henry walked up to him, placed his hand on pa's shoulder and said: "Uncle Silas—he always called pa that, they say—'I'll go in your place. I am a single man, without any ties. No one cares for me, and there is none dependin' on me as there is on you."

Pa bursts into tears and says, "Henry, I have no money to pay you."

"Drat the money," says Henry, hangin' up his scythe in the apple tree by the pump.

Henry went to the county seat and listed and went to war. Ma says there was a fearful partin' between Aunt Martha and Henry, she guessed, because Martha's eyes was most swelled shut next day, but her smile was still there.

Good news was heard from Henry. He was brave and got to be second lieutenant till at some big battle, the name of which I forget, he was among the missin'. From that day to this nothin' more has been heard from Henry Peters. Aunt Martha was clean heartbroken, ma says, but she went about her work, care for the sick and layin' out the dead, as usual. Aunt Martha organized a society, ma says, to send lint bandages, canned fruits and jellies to the sick and wounded in the hospitals and worked on that all the time she could spare from family matters.

Henry Peters' scythe hangs out in the apple tree right where he left it when he went to war. Pa said none of us boys should feel it, and we never have. The blade is terrible rusty—spilled, I guess—but nobody has ever dared take it down.

Aunt Martha never goes to Memorial day down at the Forks, and I often wondered why. All the rest of us do, rain or shine. I didn't think I could go this year, because I was just over the mumps and it was a coolish day, with a raw wind. Just over the hill from our house, at its foot, runs the road to the West Branch cemetery, and, while it is out of sight of the house, you can hear the band as it marches by, but you can't see anything. It is quite a ways round by the road, but cross lots it ain't far.

Ma left her blanket shawl and my pea jacket lyin' on the sofa in the sittin' room, intendin' to take them along to use if we got cold, and in the excitement of gettin' started forgot 'em. "Georgie," she says to me—ma always calls me Georgie when she wants me to do anything—"can't you run home and get our wraps that I hid out on the sofa?" I hnted to. The procession was just formin' for the cemetery—the

band ahead, next the orator of the day and the preachers of the town in carriages, then the flower wagon, with the little girls dressed in red, white and blue; next the Grand Army post, Woman's Relief corps, followed by citizens in carriages and on foot.

I hustled along home, and when gettin' near the house I thought I would steal in and see what Aunt Martha was doin' and mebbe I would find out why she don't ever go to Memorial day. The doors was all open. I slipped into the sittin' room and found the things as ma said. Then I went into the buttery by the window and listened and watched.

I heard Aunt Martha comin' downstairs. Instead of bein' dressed in white, as usual, she had on a dress as black as night and wore Aunt Patience's bonnet and veil that she got when Uncle Wall was killed on the log slide up Kittle creek.

The band was marchin' along the road to the graveyard. I could bear the dirge, and Aunt Martha walked with slow step, keepin' time to the sad music, around the house, out to the pump, where hung the scythe that Henry Peters hitched up there before he went to war. There Aunt Martha stopped. She had a book in her hand, and I heard her read somethin' from it. It is somebody's oration; can't remember the exact words, but it is something like this: "We cannot concentrate; we cannot de-sta-ate this hallowed ground." It's a noble piece. I have heard it read on many a Memorial day by some lawyer at the Forks durin' the exercise. It winds up, "A government from the people, with the people, to the people, shall not perish from off this 'ere earth."

After this I heard Aunt Martha sayin', "We will now precede to decorate the graves of our fallen heroes." And she stepped up and hung a wreath of everlastin' flowers on that old scythe smath. Then she dropped on her knees, bowed her head, clasped her hands as if she was makin' a prayer to God. I could look no longer and took my sneak. I felt mean to think I spied on her, but now I know why Aunt Martha never went to Memorial day.

I went back to the cemetery, and ma was glad to get her wrap. After drivin' all around through the graveyard and lookin' at the decorations we went to the ball game and saw the Catlin Hollow Daisy Cutters mow down the Stony Fork Giants by a score of 34 to 26.

We got awful cold goin' home, but when we all piled out there was a big fire in the elevated oven kitchen stove, the table was spread with a white cloth and a dandy supper ready, thanks to Aunt Martha—eggs "boiled just three and one-half minutes in the shell and sure the water's bollin'," says she; potatoes cut up fine; cooked in ham grease and then cream poured over them, which she knows so well how to fix; fresh apple sauce, warm biscuit, honey, spiced peaches and a one egg cake as light as a feather. Aunt Martha in her white dress, warm in us all with her smile, bustlin' about, helpin' us kids off with our things and givin' us several helpin's of our favorite dishes.

After supper I teased ma to walk out to the pasture with me and see some new lambs that had come while we were gone to Memorial day, and then while walkin' back I told her what I saw about Aunt Martha. She just broke down and cried and said she had never knew such love and de-



A WREATH OF EVERLASTING FLOWERS.

otion. She made me promise not to tell, and I never have, nobody but you. But you won't give me away, will you?

I have been thinkin' what ma said. For the life of me I can't see why Aunt Martha's dressin' up in Aunt Patience's widdler's weeds and goun' out to the pump and hangin' a wreath of everlastin' flowers on Henry Peters' rusty old scythe that has hung there for forty years has anything to do with love and devotion. Can you?

A Story of Grant. General Fred Grant's favorite story of his father is one that very aptly illustrates that great soldier's faculty of sinkin' up a situation in a few words.

"We had an old coachman," he says, "who was not the brightest man in the world, but what he did not know about a horse was not worth knowin'. Mother used to call on him to do all sorts of things that were not in his line, and old John, of course, was always making mistakes to annoy her. Once she sent him to the bank to do some business, and he did it wrong. She told father about it and said:

"I guess you'll have to let John go. He never does as he should anything I want him to do."

"Well, mother," said my father, "if John could do everything you want him to do, and do it right, he would not have to be our coachman."—Philadelphia Ledger.

MEMORIAL DAY



Do you know what it means, boys and girls
Who hail from the north and the south—
Do you know what it means,
This twining of greens
Round the silent cannon's mouth,
This strewing with flowers the grass
grown grave,
This decking with garlands the statues
brave,
This flaunting of flags
And in banners and rags,
This marching and singing,
These bells a-ringing,
These faces grave and these faces gay,
This talk of the blue and this talk of the
gray,
In the north and the south Memorial day?
Not simply a show time, boys and girls,
Is this day of falling flowers,
Not a pageant play
Nor a holiday
Of flags and floral bowers.
It is something more than the day that
starts
Warm memories a-throb in veteran
hearts,
For across the years
To the hopes and fears,
To the days of battle,
Of roar and of rattle,
To the past that now seems so far away,
Do the sons of the blue and the sons of
the gray
Gaze, hand clasping hand, Memorial day.
For the wreck and the wrong of it, boys
and girls,
For the terror and loss as well,
Our hearts must hold
A regret untold,
As we think of those who fell,
But their blood, on whichever side they
fought,
Remade the nation and progress bought.
We forget the foe,
For we live and know
That the fighting and sighing,
The falling and dying,
Were but steps toward the future—the
martyr's way,
Down which the sons of the blue and the
gray
Look with love and pride Memorial day.
—Wide Awake.

THE DRUMMER BOY OF SHILOH

Colonel John L. Clem's Story of How He Got into the Regular Army.

An interesting story is told of the way Colonel John L. Clem, the famous "Drummer boy of Shiloh" and now assistant quartermaster general, got into the regular army. In the early days of General Grant's first term as president Clem, without aid, secured an audience.

The president said, "What can I do for you?"

Clem said, "Mr. President, I wish to ask you for an order to admit me to West Point."

"But why," said the president, "do you not take the examination?"

"I did, Mr. President, but I failed to pass."

"That was unfortunate," said the president. "How was that?"

"Why, Mr. President, you see, I was in the war, and while I was there those other boys of my age were in school."

"What?" said the president, amazed. "You were in the war?"

Clem was then scarcely eighteen and boyish looking.

"Yes, Mr. President, I was in the war four years." And he related his experience.

The president then wrote something, sealed it and, handing it to Clem, said:

"Take this to the secretary of war. I guess it will fix you all right."

Clem went to the secretary, to whom he had already applied, and was received somewhat coldly. He delivered the note. The secretary read it and said:

"Do you know what this is?"

"No," said Clem, "but I supposed it was an order to admit me to West Point."

"Well, it isn't," said the secretary. "It's an order to commission you second lieutenant in the regular army."—Leslie's Weekly.

Hooker's Grand Chestnut Charger.

General Hooker probably had the finest looking horse in the Union armies. This was Lookout, a horse of rich chestnut color, standing seventeen hands high and possessing all the dainty and elastic action of the most delicately fashioned colt. This was the horse, Kentucky bred, which bore Hooker during the "battle above the clouds."

The horse was intended for exhibition in England, but got no farther than New York, where Hooker bought him, although having to compete with the agent of the emperor of France, who wanted him for his majesty Louis Napoleon.

Close Quarters.

At the battle of Charleston, Mo., in August, 1861, Lieutenant Colonel Ransom of the Eleventh Illinois was urging his men to the charge when an officer rode up to him and said: "What do you mean? You are killing our own men."

"I know what I am doing," replied Ransom. "Whom are you for?" "I am for Jeff Davis," was the reply. "You are the man I'm after," returned Ransom, and instantly two pistols were drawn. The Confederate fired first, hitting Ransom in the arm. Ransom shot his antagonist dead.

The Watch Below.

Bring blossoms for the sailor dead
Who sleep in ocean graves.
Bring fragrant lilies, pale and pure,
To float upon the waves.
And dewy purple lilacs, too,
From many a cottage home,
And starry daisies, white and gold,
To mingle with the foam.

AN INTERRUPTED BATH.

How Sherman Caught Five Thousand Confederates in Adam's Garb.

"Inch by inch," relates an ex-Confederate, "the gray jackets had retired from the Tennessee mountains, contesting every vantage ground down to Kennesaw. But, strive as they might, the advancing column of Sherman's legions was too much for them, and even from the heights of Kennesaw mountains we were driven down through the Allatoona hills to the Chattahoochee river. On July 18, 1864, dusty and battle stained, we stood on the banks of that stream and gazed upon its waters rolling along far below. Masking our cannon on the bluff that overlooks Nickajack creek, we made a break for the river. The water was so aluring that we would have plunged into it had the risk of being surprised by the enemy been even greater.

"In a few minutes the river was full of naked 'rebs' disporting in the waters so deliciously cool after that long, hot march through the Allatoona hills. We were only 600 or 700 yards above the mouth of Nickajack, and the water was quite shallow, as the long drought had brought the river down.

"Suddenly from the direction of Nickajack there was a 'pow, pow, pow.' Imagine the amazement with which we beheld a squadron of Federal cavalry at the mouth of the Nickajack blazing away at us with their carbines and only prevented from completing our surprise by their inability to ascend the almost perpendicular bluff that rose on our side of the stream. There were some 5,000 of us, but our numbers counted little when we had not even the protection of an undershirt from those vicious bullets, and none of us knew what moment some gun might prove superior and send a ball into some of our naked bodies. Our bath was spoiled, and never did 5,000 men dress more quickly than we did.

"In a twinkling we were in line, and the waters of the Chattahoochee were gliding along again undisturbed. We stood off the Yankees until night and all the next day, when Sherman moved up the river, and we changed our position accordingly."—Atlanta Constitution.

The Phantom Army.

And I saw a phantom army come,
With never a sound of life or drum,
But keeping step to a muffled hum
Of wailing lamentation—
The martyred heroes of Malvern Hill,
Of Gettysburg and Chancellorsville,
The men whose wasted bodies fill
The patriot graves of the nation.

And there came the unknown dead, the men
Who died in fever swamp and fen,
The slowly starved of prison pen,
And marching beside the others
Came the dusky martyrs of Pillow's fight,
With limbs enfranchised and bearing
bright.

I thought—'twas the pale moonlight—
They looked as white as their brothers.
And so all night marched the nation's
dead,
With never a banner above them spread,
No sign save the bare, uncovered head.
Of their silent, grim Reviewer.
With never an arch but the vaulted sky,
With not a flower save those which lie
On distant graves, for love could buy
No gift that was proper or truer.

So all night long moved the strange ar-
ray:
So all night long till the break of day
I watched for one who had passed away.
With a reverent awe and wonder,
Till a blue cap waved in the lengthening
line.
And I knew that one who was kin of
mine
Had come, and I spoke—and lo, that sign
Wakened me from my slumber!
—Bret Harte.

A Relic of John Brown

In a very dilapidated condition—in the midst of the accumulation of old casting boxes and scrap lumber with an occasional tramp drifting in as an extra guest—stands the identical warehouse used by John Brown, and his sons, John junior and Jason, between the years 1847 and 1851.

John Brown had lived in Massachusetts before. He studied to be a minister in the family of Rev. Moses Hall-ock of Plainfield just before he reached his majority in the winter of 1819. At that time he was described as "rather tall, sedate, dignified," and he was sent back to his father's tanyard in less than a year because of inflammation of the eyes.

In the warehouse John Brown worked daily with his men, some white and some colored, sorting, classing and transhipping wool. There (1848) Frederick Douglass called upon him and "was surprised to find him in such a small wooden house on a back street."

In that same year Brown, elated at his successful sales, "plunged" to the extent of going to Europe to interview English buyers. It is related that he was phenomenally astute in grading wool by the sense of touch. A half dozen Englishmen met the Yankee farmer and, having heard of his keenness in this particular, resolved to put it to the test. He was led into a dark room in which three small sample packets were lying. Brown instantly detected which was Saxony, which was from Ohio, but at the third he hesitated a moment. Turning to the jokers, he said, "If you have any sausage machines in England that will work up dog's hair, put this in it!" The laugh was on his companions, for they had indeed used the shearings from a poodle to fool him.

Brown greatly endeared himself to the blacks. In his Springfield warehouse he formed a lodge of "Springfield Guildmates," primarily aimed to protect the negroes from gathering trouble with the whites. Forty-four members joined, Beverly C. Downing heading the list. He would have them come to the downstairs, low-ceilinged office an hour before work began in the morning, and they were there far into the night after work was over.

The late Thomas Thomas, long a restaurateur in Springfield, was engaged at the very first of Brown's career in



JOHN BROWN'S WAREHOUSE.

that city as a porter. He said that when he asked Brown how early in the morning he should come to work the reply was, "We usually begin work at 7, but come earlier, for I want to talk with you." He declared that Brown was wont to talk by the hour with white or black sympathizers.

It made little difference how pressing the business; the enthusiast was always ready to call a halt when the opportunity to exploit his views presented itself. He preferred to do most of the talking and appreciated a good listener.

In the collated correspondence of Brown there are two later items having a distinct bearing upon this wool working Springfield era. On the copy of Brown's letter to his son John, as given in Dr. G. W. Brown's book, appear these words apropos to the father's elation at making a business connection with Colonel Perkins (Jan. 11, 1844):

"This, I think, will be considered no mean alliance for the poor bankrupt and his family in a manner so unexpected. I most certainly hope we will have the wisdom given us to make the most of it."

In the letter quoted in Frank B. Sanborn's book, under date of April 16, 1858, when he was rapidly nearing his self imposed martyrdom, addressing "dear wife and children, every one," Brown speaks of "the liabilities I incurred while connected with Mr. Perkins" and further says, "Most of you know well I gave up all I had to Perkins while with him."

It was somewhat startling to see recently, after almost sixty years have passed, on the great billboard which now completely hides this dilapidated, tumbledown wool storage warehouse from passers on the railroad, the lurid advertisements of a traveling "Uncle Tom's Cabin" company, with fugitive slaves being chased by bloodhounds, when less than three feet from the base of the same boarding stands the same counting room which heard, back in 1840, fiery denunciations of just such scenes from the lips of old "Ossawatimbe" Brown. If, even then, planning the tragic course which led him at last to the Harpers Ferry raid and to the gallows.—Boston Globe.

How Sherman "Put the Lid On"

During the siege of Atlanta some of the Confederate batteries opposing Sherman on the west front of the city were sheltered from attack by a mountain which could not readily be scaled by Federal artillery. After long delay and tedious labor the light field-pieces of the Eleventh Indiana battery were hauled to the crest of the mountain, where the men of the Second Massachusetts had cut a roadway and constructed earth and log pits to shield the guns. A day was fixed, the earliest possible, to open fire upon the lines below. Sherman, General George H. Thomas, the "Rock of Chickamauga," "Fighting Joe" Hooker and General J. M. Brannan, Thomas' chief of artillery, were on the ground to witness the effect of the fire, which was expected to open the way for a success-

ful attack upon Confederate positions which baffled the advance of Thomas' troops.



"WE WILL NOT OPEN FIRE TODAY."

The time was August, and the heavy, stifling atmosphere inclined the men of both armies to suspend activity. The stillness of death reigned everywhere except around the isolated battery on the mountain top. There the gunners moved with the grim energy of soldiers facing a crisis. Guns were trained upon the most conspicuous and vulnerable targets. Sherman and his lieutenants stood apart, scanning with fieldglasses the camps where the shots were to strike.

At last the signal was given. Battery men went forward to pull the lanyards and send the shots home, when attention was diverted by the soft pealing tones of a bell trembling on the heavy air across the valley. Louder and still louder the measured chimes sounded over the city, over the camps, up to the mountain crest. Sherman raised a warning finger to gunners, who looked into the eyes of their officers for explanation of this strange gesture. The officers, equally non-plused, looked to the generals, and Sherman spoke out calmly, but in tones for all to hear, "Gentlemen, we will not open fire today." Then, turning to the chief of artillery, he said, in the same quiet tones, "General Brannan, you will open fire tomorrow."

"Today" was the Sabbath, a day, according to Sherman's orders, not to be interrupted by the inferno of guns and shells.—Harper's Weekly.

Minus the Picture.

The bridge builder with Stonewall Jackson's army was a rare character if the following story be true:

The Union soldiers, retreating from the valley of Virginia, burned a bridge over the Shenandoah. Jackson, who wanted to pursue, sent for his old bridge builder.

"Sir," he said, "you must keep men at work all day and all night and finish that bridge by tomorrow morning. My engineer shall give you the plan."

Old Miles saluted and withdrew.

Early the next morning the general sent for Miles again.

"Well, sir," said Jackson, "did the engineer give you the plan for the bridge?"

"General," said the old man slowly, "the bridge is done. I don't know whether the picture is or not."—Herald and Presbyterian.

Swearing in the Cook.

The darky contrabands who frequently strayed within the Union lines were often very acceptable as servants, particularly as cooks. The non-commissioned officers frequently had a heap of sport with these unsophisticated negroes. Occasionally there was great formality in swearing in these cooks. The drums would be sounded or the bugles blown, and amid much impressive pomp the darky would assume his new duties, having sworn to perform them properly, to support the constitution of all the loyal states, clean the plates without wiping them on his coat sleeve, solemnly swearing to put milk in the coffee every morning and other like deeds.

The Unknown Dead.

Now many a soldier slumbers,
His resting place unknown;
His hands were crossed, his lids were closed,
The dust was o'er him strewn.
The drifting soil, the moldering leaf,
Along the sod were blown.
His mound has melted into earth;
His memory lives alone.

So let it live un fading,
The memory of the dead,
Long as the pale anemone
Springs where their tears were shed,
Or raining in the summer's wind,
In flakes of burning red,
The wild rose sprinkles with its leaves
The turf where once they bled.
—Oliver Wendell Holmes.