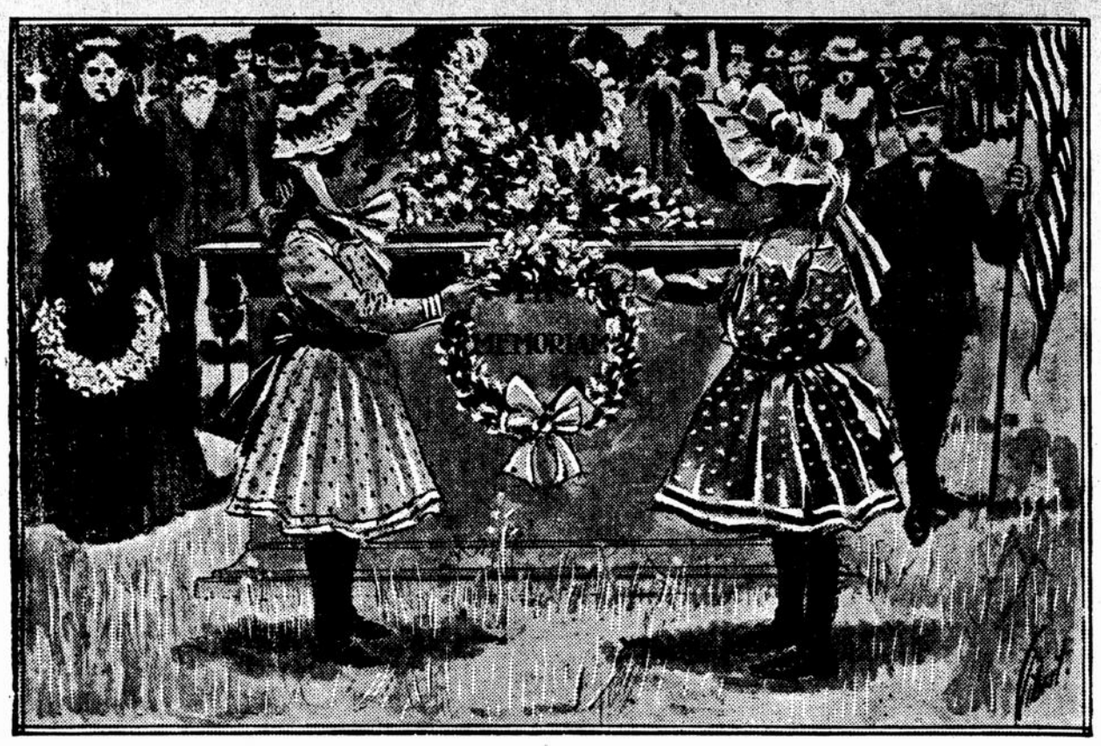

All-But-Open Roses

Being the Story of a Happy Decoration Day

By MANDA L. CROCKER

"ISN'T Genie going, too?"

Vinnie Egerton, Aunt Helen's guest, paused to glance back over her pink shoulder knots at a neat figure in gray standing in the center of the room, as she asked the question. Her hostess pursed up her mouth mysteriously and whispered "O, no!" looking straight at Miss Egerton.

"Ah!" The half-suppressed exclamation of the curious Vinnie was met with a solemn shake of the head by Aunt Helen, and, together, they went down the steps.

It was on the occasion of the first Decoration day, and all Clear Brook was out patriotically in honor of the brave departed. But Miss Genie, the shy little southern girl, who lived with the Burnhams, shrank from taking part in the exercises.

Miss Buffington had come north at the close of the war to make her home with Aunt Helen; and no one knew better than she why the dark-eyed niece did not join the flower-laden ranks in memory of the nation's dead.

Then, this northern auntie knew of something else; a strange-looking mound—that is, strange for a garden—hidden away in the farthest corner behind the big syringa.

Yet it was there, fashioned by Miss Genie's own hands, a memorial to the brave but mistaken lover who fell at Allatoona.

Although he had turned in misled duty from the Stars and Stripes to the Palmetto, he had been royally loyal to her to the last; for had he not staunched his wounds with his coat of gray and kissed her picture as he faintly said: "Good-by, little sweetheart; it is all over with me now!"

And no one ever gave it a thought, either, why the girl was so partial to gray gowns trimmed with blue, and blue gowns trimmed with gray; that is, no one but Aunt Helen. She had figured it out after the unerring arithmetic of a woman's heart, and understood.

"Antony was wrong," Miss Genie was wont to say, "but he was true as the heavens to what he deemed duty, and to me." She always looked so pained when she said this, that one could almost see the shadow of carnage on her face.

But she had put away the "mistake," and, in honor of a once more united brotherhood under the old flag and the memory of hand-

"ISN'T GENIE GOING TOO?"

some Antony Packard, she habitually wore blues and grays.

"I heard what she said," mused the neat figure in the middle of the sunny morning room; and two misty eyes looked wistfully after the disappearing ladies. "O, yes; I heard, but auntie will keep my secret, I know."

A thankful confidence lighted up her countenance as she turned away to finish the dusting, for Miss Genie was a real Ebenezer in the Burnham home.

By and by she put on a broad-brimmed hat, something after the style of sweet southern days and pleasant plantation custom, before there was a confederacy, and went out alone in the soft May weather.

The spring had been tardy and the old-fashioned roses were still in great, sleepy buds, the last few kindly days of warmer airs not having been sufficient for their unfolding.

But the plumy lilacs, white as milk, and purple as royal attire, were still in bloom; besides, there were oceans of pansies and violets.

"The lilacs are like—conquering plumes," she said, dreamily, holding her flushed cheek close to their wealth of fragrance, "and the pansies have such innocent, earnest faces"—looking down lovingly at them—"but the all-but-open roses here are most suitable," and she kissed the dawning beauty of Sharon and the "great double white."

Gathering a basket to the overflowing, of the "all-but-open" treasures and a sprinkling of pansies and, taking a wide, shallow dish and some water, Miss Genie timed her feet to an old southern melody of childhood days—his and hers—and marched slowly down the garden path.

The birds warbled little tender notes as she passed, and the bees droned in lower monotone as the lonely procession of one made its way to the corner shielded by the friendly syringa.

"Of course, he isn't here," she said in tremulous tones, as she knelt to arrange the offering, "but he isn't there, either," thinking of the cemetery where now the people were assembling, "so my flowers are as appropriate in this place as—anywhere."

THRUST THE LETTER INTO HER HAND.

Pressing the dish into the earth, she filled it with water, and then arranged the bursting buds so that they all might "look heavenward," bordering them with the other blossoms.

"Pansies," she murmured softly, touching their surprised faces, "I leave you, dainty little soldiers, on picket duty. Keep off the enemy; these unblown roses, my sober little friends, are types of—of his life and—mine; full of beautiful possibilities, but broken off before the realization."

Then, bowing her head, she breathed a prayer that even the pansies did not hear.

The afternoon shadows were lengthening on the lawn and Miss Buffington sat on the steps, humming "America," and mending wee Bobbie's flag. "The stwipes got tored from the stars, didn't a'?" questioned the miniature soldier, leaning comfortably on his sedate cousin's knee.

"Yes, Bobbie; the dear old flag has seen lots of trouble," and her lips shut tightly over a sigh, as she fastened the last stitch uniting the "stwipes" to the stars again.

"An' lots o' wars an' things?"

"Yes, dear."

"An' Decoration day comed 'en?" persisted Miss Genie's young relative, waving the mended flag thoughtfully.

"Yes, Bobbie."

"An' folks put posies on sojers' graves 'cause they're solly??"

"Yes, I think that is one reason," she answered, looking away over Bobbie's head and seeing Aunt Helen coming through the shrubbery alone.

"Are you solly, too, Cousin Deena?" and the blue eyes were lifted curiously.

"Your mamma is coming, dear," she replied evasively; and away went Bobbie to meet his mother and pour a grist of questions into the maternal ear.

"Who did she march with? Did Miss Eddyton dit lost? Who carried the flag; and who drummed the big drum? And, could he go next time if he growed a whole lot?"

But the maternal ear seemed seized with sudden deafness, for Mrs. Burnham marched right through the swarm of interrogatives and, almost over the interrogator and, coming slowly up the steps, sank into a rocker, dusty, weary and warm. Unloosing her bonnet strings and fanning herself with a magazine for some minutes, Aunt Helen finally said:: "I came around by the post office and was lucky enough to get the mail before they shut up. Here's your Atlanta paper and the usual letter from cousin Mab," and she tossed Miss Genie's mail into her lap; then she went out to the well to get a "rest up" drink.

When she came back with a pitcher of water, her niece thrust the open letter into her hand without a word and, turning away quickly, went into the parlor, locking the door after her.

"Well, I never!" exclaimed Aunt Helen, "cousin's dead, or some dreadful thing has happened, I'm sure."

After rummaging the clock shelf and work basket for her "near glasses," Mrs. Burnham finally found them on the table, "in plain sight."

"Of course she wanted me to read it," she said, settling herself in the rocker once more and unfolding the paper. And this letter—not Mab's—met her astonished vision:

"Eugenia, dearest:: When I was carried off the battlefield I was supposed to be dying; but, after months of hob-nobbing with death, I recovered.

"I have searched for you, Genie, until I knew not which way to turn next. To-day I met your cousin in Marietta and she gave me your address.

"Is the old love warm and true, dearest? If so, come to me to the deserted homestead and, together, we will build it up anew. You were so right in the matter of the war, Genie; I bless the dear old flag which waves over me to-day!

"Believing you will come, I inclose a draft for your expenses, and will be watching for you. Your own Antony, still."

Mrs. Burnham read the letter through, drawing her breath in sharply at the close. "Can it be possible!" she exclaimed, half aloud; then she went to the parlor door and listened.

But, hearing nothing, she said to herself: "Fudge! she has sense enough to be glad alone, and I shan't disturb her. I will go and tell Homer.'

Ten minutes later Mrs. Burnham was reading the wonderful letter to her husband out among the all-but-open roses, where he had gone to prune off needless scions. And, together, they rejoiced for their niece. At tea time, Miss Genie appeared looking "like she had taken the sacrament," Uncle Homer thought. A beautiful serenity shone on her face, as she said to Aunt Helen across the table:

"I shall start south in the morning, auntie."

Uncle Burnham got up and, putting his hand on the head of his niece, said, feelingly: "The Lord rewards the faithful, Eugenia. Take my blessing to your sunny southern home!"

Then he went out under the wistaria, lest they should see that a man like him "cried like a baby."

The next morning, before she bade Clear Brook good-by, Miss Buffington tripped lightly down the garden path to the corner hidden by the syringa tree.

And behold! the all-but-open roses were fully and beautifully blown; so much so, that the bright little faces on guard duty could scarcely catch a glimpse of the shining face above them.

This Eagle Killed at Gettysburg

THIS fine specimen of the American eagle was shot and killed on a part of the famous battlefield of Gettysburg on February 22, 1887, hence the inscription that is tied to his feet: "I Also Was Shot at Gettysburg." The eagle, or rather his stuffed figure, occupies a position of prominence in the picture framing store of C. V. Ashdown, on Ontario street, Cleveland. Mr. Ashdown has owned, the eagle for the last ten years and has refused offers

THE GETTYSBURG EAGLE.

of large sums of money for it. The eagle measures seven feet from tip to tip of the wings. The bronze figures of eagles on the Soldiers' and Sailors' monument on the public square were modeled from it. During the national encampment of the Grand Army at Cleveland the eagle was exhibited in a show window, where it was continually surrounded by ever-changing groups of admiring veterans.

Union Will Live Forever.

With each annual recurrence of Memorial day it appeals more and more to all the people. Each year there are more who personally knew nothing of the bitterness of the war and who are, therefore, better able to appreciate the splendid courage of the men who took part in it on both sides. Of the great armies of men who volunteered in defense of the flag only a few survivors are left. In the columns which march to the cemeteries this year to decorate the graves of the soldiers will be a smaller number of those who wore the blue than ever before. But the number of those who "swell the chorus of the union" is increasingly larger. And to-day more truly than ever before the flag of the union floats over a reunited country.

Story of Old Abe, Famous War Eagle

FOR centuries the eagle has been the emblem of liberty, the inspiration of poets and the terror of his feathered friends. The king of birds has furnished the story-writer with countless incidents, from aerial battles to child stealing. One of Victor Hugo's greatest poems begins: "L'aigle—c'est le genie—Oiseau de la tempete, qui de mont le plus haut cherche le plus haut faite." The poet parallels the struggles of genius with the battle of the eagle for existence, till both spread their wings in the plenitude of power.

These are the fanciful ways of looking at the bird of freedom, and it was doubtless similar ideas that induced the boys of the Eighth Wisconsin infantry to adopt Old

WATCHING THE HORRORS OF WAR.

Abe, the celebrated war eagle, as their mascot in the civil war. Abe's public career began in 1861. He had the true spirit the poets sung of. Perched on his stick Abe fearlessly watched the horrors of 27 severe battles and as many skirmishes. When his company was mustered out the eagle entered civil life with the grace he had shown in war. He was exhibited through the country at soldiers' reunions, attended the sanitary fair at Chicago, occupied a prominent place at the Philadelphia centennial, and was the means of raising funds for many a good cause.

Abe gave the alarm of a fire at the capitol, which broke out near his cage, and when he was rescued it was found the smoke had injured his lungs. He died March 26, 1881, and his body, handsomely mounted, is an object of great curiosity in the War museum at Madison, Wis.

Youngest Soldier in War Honored

THE war department recently added to its records the picture of the youngest union soldier in the war of the rebellion, "Little Johnny" Clem, now Lieut. Col. John L. Clement, of the quartermaster general's department, and stationed at Fort Sam Houston, Tex., is the individual thus honored.

Clem was born in Newark, O., August 13, 1851; when less than nine years old he ran away from home and became a drummer boy in the army. He enlisted in the Twenty-fourth Ohio volunteers, but finding an uncle in the same regiment, he went to the Twen-

YOUNGEST DRUMMER BOY.

ty-second Michigan as a drummer boy. He participated with his regiment in the battles of Shiloh, Perrysville, Chattanooga, Chickamauga, Nashville, Kenesaw and others. Clem was captured by the confederates and confined in a Georgia prison. After being exchanged he returned to the army and served on the staff of Gen. Thomas.

At the close of the civil war Clem studied at West Point, but on account of his diminutive stature could not secure a commission. Gen. Grant appointed him a lieutenant and he rose in the regular service. During the Spanish-American war Clem was stationed at Porto Rico.

The Twelve Greatest Battles.

In the 12 greatest battles fought during the civil war the union losses were as follows: July 1-3, 1863, Gettysburg, 3,070 killed and 14,497 wounded; May 8-18, 1864, Spottsylvania, 2,725 killed and 13,413 wounded; May 5-7, 1864, Wilderness, 2,246 killed and 12,037 wounded; September 17, 1862, Antietam, 2,108 killed and 9,549 wounded; May 1-3, 1863, Chancellorsville, 1,606 killed and 9,762 wounded; September 19-20, 1863, Chickamauga, 1,656 killed and 9,749 wounded; June 1-4, 1864, Cold Harbor, 1,844 killed and 9,077 wounded; December 11-14, 1862, Fredericksburg, 1,284 killed and 9,600 wounded; August 28-30, 1862, Manassas, 1,747 killed and 8,452 wounded; April 6-7, 1862, Shiloh, 1,754 killed and 8,408 wounded; December 31, 1862, Stone River, 1,750 killed and 7,802 wounded; June 15-19, 1864, Petersburg, 1,688 killed and 8,513 wounded. Total in 12 battles, 23,478 killed and 120,859 wounded.

The Nation's Unknown Dead.

In 79 separate and distinct national cemeteries the bodies of nearly 300,000 soldiers who died during the civil war are interred. Some of the cemeteries contain each a silent army of over 10,000 soldiers, in serried ranks, nearly half of which is inscribed "Unknown."

Decoration Day

"LEST we forget." Bring forward the flowers and lay them upon the graves of the dead soldiers. They fought a good fight, and after the battle they sleep well. Let the people gather and listen to recitals of the valor and patriotism of the men who took such active part in the times that threatened the safety of the people.

"Lest we forget." Dangers past, too often are forgotten. Gratitude, even, is mortal, for one may fail to recall debts that are more precious in value than those measured by the hard and shining gold. Since Appomattox another generation has been born and a full generation of people has passed away. The young soldiers of the civil war who survive are in the sere of age. Active work no longer can be performed by these. The newer generation has taken their place. They live in the eventful past, made glorious by their heroic deeds.

Gone now those weighty differences which could be settled only by the shedding of much blood. They were issues so great that our fathers, Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson and Madison, left them to be determined by a future generation. There are questions so weighty that the sword only may decide them. The civil war was inevitable. The opposition of party could not be bridged by argument. No words of eloquence could unite north and south upon the stupendous problem of union or secession.

They were brave men who held their views to be sacred and worthy to be defended with life as well as fortune. How well these heroes attested their courage is told in the history of Antietam, Shiloh, Gettysburg, the Wilderness. Each side met foemen worthy its steel. Whether of the north or the south, these soldiers maintained the integrity of American citizenship. They differed honestly and they fought honestly, each to maintain the principles each believed to be righteous.

The battles are over, and with the smoke of the final combat disappeared the issues that divided this people. But care should be had that the memory of the deeds of these men shall be kept fresh. It is in deeds that men live forever. Heroic action is crowned with immortality, and shall never die.

These are times of peace. The sword is hidden in the plowshare and the spear is concealed in the pruning hook. There is war no more in all God's holy mountain. But it should be remembered that peace does not abide forever and that war may be necessity and that nations have been glorified by war.

The victories of peace are many, but war long delayed may enervate and corrupt a people. It was not until after Augustus Caesar, of glorious memory, had caused to be closed the temple of Janus that the vices of the east invaded Rome, to corrupt her women as well as her men. War is terrible, but so is the thunderstorm, when earth is wind-riven and lightning-pierced. Yet it is the storm which clears the atmosphere and rids earth of lurking disease and putrescent odors.

War awakens men to action. It gets them out of self and causes them to do and dare. If it bring out the bad it develops the good as well.

But whether good or bad, war will come. It is through battle that every momentous issue of earth has been determined, and man as yet has learned no other way of settling disputes between nations. That nation is honored which exalts patriotism. Patriotism is best taught and best incited through example.

These heroes of the civil war being dead, do speak. Their deeds have been recorded by the historians and they shall never die. The living of to-day are to be congratulated that it is permitted them to see and know many survivors among those who charged cannon and who gave and took sabre strokes and passed through hailstorms of bullets for their country's sake and God's.

"Lest we forget." Tell of the deeds of these men. Make the children familiar with them. Let it be known how they braved all, endured all, suffered all, that the union might be saved. Let it be told that their heroism intensified the merit of the cause made glorious by reason of its exalted principle.

The pageant moves on. Fewer the number of those who fought. Those in the line now march with unsteady feet. Time does not neglect its office ever, and soon it will do its complete work with all of these men. But Decoration day will survive this generation, and generation after generation to follow. When the people cease to honor it they will have learned to forget its lessons and to hold courage and patriotism in no esteem.

But such things will not be. The heartbeat of the people is as the pulse of these soldier heroes—dead and living. The country is dear to all, and what is of the country and what contributed to its glory will be held in cherished and grateful recollection forever. WILLIAM ROSSER COBBE.

Greatest American Festival.

In Memorial day the American people have an observance of greater breadth and scope and appealing to more varied emotions than does that of any other national festival. Washington's and Lincoln's and other birthdays commemorate particular men, but this commemorates all who have served the nation in the crucial war test of its energy. Labor day is emblematic of industrial achievement, but Memorial day is emblematic of broader forms of achievement. The Fourth of July exemplifies national pride, but Memorial day conjoins joy and sorrow. Christmas the American people share with all other Christian nations, but Memorial day is all their own. It is the great and high American festival, and as such as the years go by will it be increasingly regarded and observed.

The Victories of Peace.

All glory to the old boys in blue, who fought in the cause of freedom! All glory to the younger boys in blue who took up arms against Spanish tyranny and misrule! Let Decoration day be fittingly celebrated and with flowers bespread the graves of those who have joined the mightier hosts. But let us learn from the day the lessons of peace, knowing full well that her victories are more profound than war's, for they make for the kingdom of Heaven on the earth and the universal brotherhood of man.

A Great Day for Children.

Decoration day is an object lesson in patriotism to the children. How eagerly they take part in the exercises; with what enthusiasm rises the shrill, childish voice in recitation or chorus! Nor will they forget the lesson thus inculcated. In the days to come, should the flag once more need defenders, they will gladly come from the ranks which to-day are learning that he who dies for his country lives forever in the hearts of his fellow countrymen.

Union Soldiers in the Field.

The number of soldiers on duty in the federal army during the civil war is given as follows: July 1, 1861, 183,588; January 1, 1862, 527,204; January 1, 1863, 698,802; January 1, 1864, 611,250; January 1, 1865, 620,924; May 1, 1865, 797,807.

By T. C. HARBAUGH.

We come with love and flowers fair
To deck our sleeping brave,
The rose and lily debonair
We strew on many a grave
Among the laurel and the bay
We twine the deathless yew,
To crown, this calm and holy day,
The boys who sleep in blue.

No more they march with shout and song
Behind the stirring drum,
No more, two hundred thousand strong,
By Victory crowned, they come;
Beneath Virginia's spreading pines
They camp for evermore;
They sleep in long and silent lines
By ocean's sounding shore.

The robin with her breast so red
Sings to them from her tree,
And o'er our missing hero dead
Hums low the golden bee;
The stars above look nightly down
From Heaven's azure dome,
And with their soft light sweetly crown
The brave who came not home.

Their swords are sheathed, their bayonets rust,
Their bugle blasts are still,
The gallant steeds they rode are dust
On many a plain and hill;
And now where Freedom's breezes blow
One starry banner waves;
O may it never cease to throw
Its shadow on their graves!

We call them "lost" when we cannot
Above them roses spread,
But God has marked each holy spot
Where dream the Nation's dead;
Aye, hard by many a hist'ric stream
Of proud and glorious name,
I catch to-day the sudden gleam
Of snowy tents of fame.

I seem to hear the drums again
That thrilled their gallant souls,
And o'er the blooming Southern plain
A wave of battle rolls;
I hear the tread of armed men—
Of heroes brave and true,
And there in Shenandoah's glen
I see a line of blue.

'T is but a dream of what has passed;
'T is but a vision grand;
No more we hear the bugle's blast
Nor see that noble band
Which, crowned with fame, came from the wars,
A thinned and broken line,
And laid our flag with all its stars
On Freedom's hollest shrine.

How few remain of all that host
That marched to dare and die
For Country's sake! From coast to coast
At rest the comrades lie;
So we to-day the flowers strew
Above the sacred sod,
And lift the brave who wore the blue
In silent prayer to God.

O Father! Thou whose sleepless eye
Doth mark the sparrow's fall,
Look down on those who, proud to die
For Country, heard her call;
Let not one grave by sunlight kissed,
Wherever it may be
This holy day, be flower missed
Upon the land and sea.

They are our dead, the brave who rest
Beneath the flag they saved;
In peace it streams above each breast,
In war it o'er them waved;
O may it float for evermore
Above the loved and true!
May flowers fall from shore to shore
Where sleep the brave in blue!

DEFECTIVE PAGE