

DECORATION DAY

It Will Abide as Long as the Nation Endures.

FOUR decades have passed since the day of war was a reality, and men hurried forward to prove their loyalty to which their faith was joined. Greater no man can show than that he offer him self as sacrifice for truth and country.

In more than a thousand battles great was made of heroism, and all of these were counted as but trials in comparison with the blessing of a cause pledged to liberty and freedom. Blood flowed freely as water after great rains. Lives were lost steadily or went out quickly after each valiant effort. Legions were wounded sorely, only to die later of the shock, or to linger on to this day affected by the burden of the leaden masses.

So dear and so priceless the blessing of a country, and one indispensible. More than two millions of soldiers were enlisted during the civil war, and nearly as many men and hundreds of thousands of those died in the land of the express and the telegraph. Their blood has been hallowed to the healing of revolt and desolation.

In this, the fortieth year since the first guns were fired on Sumter, and in the first year of a new century, more than one million survivors remain of the great hosts who gave their lives to the cause of freedom while their feet moved to beat of drums. They live bearing in their persons the witness of perils undergone, heroic acts performed, and faithful service rendered for the republic they love.

These, the living as well as the dead, are brought before a new generation, one born and brought up in man's estate since the day of Appomattox. They speak of a nation's glory and of men's daring for the increase of that glory. They speak in their deeds and in the results of those deeds.

All that the dead could give they handed in for the union cause. Yet the living offered just as much—life itself, which, in their cases, was not accepted. None the less was theirs the honor and the glory, although theirs is the record of weakness, the preciousness of the heritage, the reward to the generations to follow after them.

Individual men live and act their little parts. But the greatest of these pass away, one by one, and their places are filled by others. Their deeds only survive, and it is deeds only in this world which receive the baptism of immortality. Decoration day comes and again each ennobles the greatness and glory of the battles that were fought, and in each recurring anniversary the number of brave survivors grows less and less. Only too soon their number will fall to tens of thousands, and then to hundreds. The day is not distant in the years when a bare half-score will remain, and finally, the name of the last survivor will be given.

And then the Decoration days shall come and go and be commemorated with equal zeal as when the survivors were upon earth and lent their part to the display and pomp of the ceremonies. The day will be and



abide as long as the republican endure, because it is one which glorifies deeds and not the individuals who performed those deeds. A man dies and his memory often times is forgotten. It is permitted to a few only in each generation that their names shall be handed down to subsequent generations for praise and honor.

Decoration day gloriifies the deeds of the unknown dead who sleep their long sleep in the national cemeteries equally with the skill and strength of force of Grant and Sherman.

The war was a battle royal between men of the same race and country who differed as to questions of right and policy. Each battle added a new witness to the glory of courage and patriotism and served to make prouder and nobler the citizenship of the Republic.

The passing years have effaced bitter memories and wiped away traces of regret and the former things of discontent and rebellion. The first Decoration day of the new century shows a people united in love for the union—a union the mightier and greater and nobler because it was tried by fire and proved itself equal to the severest test of human strength. And the coming years of the century will bring with them more and more a deeper and higher appreciation for the union preserved by the trials and heroism of the soldiers of the civil war. With the steadily expanding majesty of the republic will come quickening and broadening appreciation of the triumphs of the incomparable victory of union over division.

WILLIAM ROSSER COBB

CIVIL WAR Death Record.
During the civil war 5,221 commissioned officers and 90,598 enlisted men were killed in action or died of wounds received in battle. Of the commissioned officers and 182,329 enlisted men died in battle or of disease, making a total loss of 292,320 men. Deaths occurring after the men left the army are not included in these figures.

Vicksburg National Park.

The Vicksburg National park will soon be complete as far as the association land is concerned. It will comprise all the 1,221 acres. It is proposed to restore all military features that marked it in the struggle of 1863.

ONE DECORATION DAY.

North and South Lovingly Clasped Hands Once More.

THE old soldier stood at the entrance to the lot. He gave one backward look at the group of the great with their bright flags streaming in the wind. Then he turned to the lot and saw carefully clipped and the shells which outlined the mounds were even and white. There was one more grave in the lot; on it clumps of Sweet Williams and Heartsease were blithely blooming. The old soldier shaded his eyes, but not from the sun, as he looked.

"Well, it's the last Decoration day I'll see here," he said. "I'd better get over to the soldiers' home next week and say 'Good-bye' over. A pension's good enough, s' far as it goes, but it don't keep a man's house am' mend his clothes. Martyr was a good

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