

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

DECORATION DAY.

Thirty-five years have passed away since the opening gun of the greatest war of modern times on the American continent; and tomorrow, Decoration Day, May 30th, comes to us for special consideration as a day on which to direct particular attention to the heroes of that time. There were two sides—a disagreement between brothers in the national family—and both were intensely in earnest. The contest was stubbornly, fiercely waged, and victory rested on the Union flag, carried by men who wore the blue. The vanquished soldiers who wore the grey uniform have accepted the arbitrament of that great conflict of four years' duration, and today find the blue and the grey strewing flowers over the dead with thankfulness that the Union was preserved.

Now the bitterness of a third of century ago has passed away in the generous nature of those who met in the deadly combat. Very many of those whose hearts thrilled at the song of national triumph when the war ended, many whose souls were gloomy and sullen but were brightened again in the balmy atmosphere of peace, have responded to the summons of the grim reaper whose presence they courted amid the din of battle, and comparatively few remain who bore the burden and the heat of the day; all the great leaders have been laid away. But the work they wrought endures with the people of a prosperous nation as these unitedly engage in sacred memorial service for the heroic dead.

Decoration day—the legal holiday set apart in this State—and Memorial Sunday—the next preceding Sabbath to May 30—have acquired a sweet and solemn significance among the people. Foremost in the service on these days is the memory of those who died that the Union might remain; and closely allied thereto is the memory of other loved ones who have passed to the great beyond in age, in manhood, or in infancy. The reverence for the nation's heroes and the affection for nearer family connections who sleep beneath the silent sod, combine to intensify the love for each. So may it be. And while all the nation claims as its own those who gave their lives in its defense, love for them is kept fresh and strong through the steady stream of humanity that is passing to "the other side." Strew flowers on the graves of all, in love for those who have died, yet "will live again."

POSSESSED WITH A DEMON.

Some time ago the strange pretensions of a French woman, Mlle. Conedon, who claims to have conversations with the angel Gabriel, was mentioned in these columns. The lady continues to create considerable interest in France.

The Catholic church, as is well known, does not deny the possibility of communication with the other world,

nor of miracles, but any claims to supernatural powers are always subjected to the close scrutiny of scientists and theologians, and they are received as genuine only when they have stood the test and are found to be in harmony with the interests of the church. In accordance with this rule, the visions and utterances of Mlle. Conedon have been investigated with the result that they are ascribed to a demoniacal source. Some time ago a committee was appointed by the Society of Psychical Sciences, charged with the task of analyzing the true nature of the phenomenon. This committee retired unable to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. Another committee was appointed, among whose members was Canon Brette of Notre Dame, a well known Parisian divine. They were commissioned to ascertain, first, whether the lady acted in virtue of a condition unknown to science; secondly, in virtue of divine inspirations; thirdly, whether, on the contrary, she acted in virtue of diabolical inspiration, and, fourthly, whether she had a mission to fulfill, and, if so, what.

The report of this committee has now been made public and it indicates that the French divine has satisfied himself that Mlle. Conedon is really possessed with an evil spirit.

In the report it is pointed out that the committee could not, in the present state of science, reply satisfactorily to the first question. As to the second, however, it was plain, there could be no doubt; the lady did not act under divine inspiration, for the reason that she refused to obey the mandates of the church and denied the infallibility of the pope. The spirit that possesses her, Canon Brette says, does not understand Greek or Latin. He dislikes prayers and flies into a rage at unwelcome visitors. He is leaning toward Jansenist heresies and holds other wrong doctrines, and his language about the cardinals of the church is unfit for publication. The conclusion therefore is that he is an evil spirit.

Without passing any judgment on the logical reasoning of the committee, it is worth while noticing that the case is interesting outside of France, inasmuch as it is another reminder to a world fast sinking into materialism, of the fact that there are more things between heaven and earth than philosophy ever dreamt of. There have always been psychical phenomena that the keenest scientists have been unable to classify, and those evidently of a questionable origin seem to multiply in this age of enlightenment to a surprising degree. Is it because evil influences are becoming more powerful among the children of men and consequently find more opportunities of manifesting themselves through human agencies? The thoughtful observer can hardly fail to draw comparisons between the present age and former times, when at the eve of great revolutions the powers of darkness and light seem to have descended on earth, mustering their forces on the fields of human activity for a decisive contest. Then there has been a comparative calm until the

next great battle, but through all, light and truth have appeared triumphant, leaving no doubt of the final outcome.

BUILDING UP THE STATE.

The loyal, patriotic citizen who resides in any state of the Union is always found doing his part to build up his own locality, though he may scorn to follow a method which would bring apparent advantage to his own by pulling down others. That citizen works for his town, city or state, not hindering others in doing likewise in their particular neighborhood, knowing that by each person performing his part in various localities, the building up of the whole is accomplished. On the other hand, the citizen who, while doing some good in a special line, indulges in carping criticism of others not in with his particular hobby and strives to discredit or pull down the work of others merely to glorify himself and rise on the ruins he has created, is unpatriotic, no matter how persistently he may make his claim in words. His conduct displays a selfishness that is not conducive to the general welfare.

In our own State we have energetic, persistent workers for the progress of this part of the country in every direction that will tend to promote the welfare of the people; and in helping the neighborhood they are operating in, they are strengthening the State and the nation. We also have, unfortunately—and yet fortunately they are comparatively few—some who may do good work in various directions but mar its excellence by the time and energy they spend in rivalry with neighboring towns or in finding fault with somebody else who may be as sincere as they in seeking the general good, and wiser in not abusing or meddling with their neighbors. When these rivalries and this thrashing away at neighbors are eliminated it will be all the better for the State.

Under the circumstances of the settlement of Utah, it was the Mormon people who performed the chief labor of establishing a prosperous commonwealth here. Their leaders were the men who were foremost in building up the State, and they threw all their energies into the work; and now those of them that are dead receive especial thanks—deservedly, too, though rather late—for the great labor they accomplished.

In the later years there have been many earnest workers in building up this part of the West; and not all of them have been associated with the Mormon people in a religious sense. But they have united with them in the general labors of developing the State, and the mining and other industries have made rapid advance. For all of this they deserve credit and commendation; and it should not be held back altogether until they are dead, for the reason that a little or it sometimes is a great encouragement to the living.

So far as the advance of the State is concerned, however, the leaders among the Mormon people have not faltered in the persistency of their efforts to build up this commonwealth; nor have they fallen back to a second place in