

THE PETOSKEY RECORD

~ May 24, 1905 ~

Decoration Day

Yes, the great war is so long over that there are people who ask, "What is all this about?" when they hear the bands playing and see the veterans parading.

Decoration Day is pure sentiment. Sentiment is one of the most precious jewels in the human life. Without it a man is little better than a savage. He is hard in his business affairs and in his home. Nobody loves a man who has no sentiment in his breast.

With it he is humanized. He reveres the very names of the heroes who have fought for the cause they believe in and passed on. He is sorry that they suffered; and tears come easily when he thinks of the grandness of the natures that made possible a great nation, prosperous, happy, progressive.

Tradition! It is the very footstool of this nation. We glorify the greatness of such men as Lincoln and Grant, Jackson and Lee, and say to the rising generation: "A nation must progress to live. See the standard of manhood and devotion set by these heroes. Study them, and know that from your ranks must come the great men who will bear the responsibilities, fight the battles, protect the weak in future. They were real men. You, as their successors, must show an even higher type of manhood. You must do as well, and better.

"They loved their country, as did the thou-

sands of brave fellows who left their wives and children and sweethearts to march to their graves. And only through patriotism and love of one's land is the safety and prosperity of that land assured. If you let business so master you that you have no time to take part in the things that make for the welfare of your country, you will be an obstacle to progress. If you let selfishness exclude sympathy and the chastening effects of memory of good deeds done by others from your mind and heart, you can never be a good citizen."

Perhaps you cannot observe Decoration Day by laying a flower on the grave of some hero, but you can silently thank God for the good that has been and will be; that has been showered on you as a citizen of these United States. You can resolve to be a patriot in the fight for better conditions and higher civilization. It is not waged with swords and guns, but is none the less a battle, and the Right must win if the land of Washington is to endure.

Sentiment! The sentiment that comes with the fragrant flowers of Decoration Day and the haunting notes of the bugle furnishes courage. You can realize that the country that was well worth dying for is well worth living and striving for. Put into your part of the fight the spirit of those who have gone, and you will have done well. — Cincinnati Post



Grand Review of the Army at Washington, D.C.
From Library of Congress