

AN EASTER LILY

Once, in a mossy garden old,
The angel of the flowers
Walked in the silver mist of dawn
And watered it with showers.
He saw an Easter lily there,
Coo beautiful to fade,
And changed its fragrant loveliness
Into a little maid.



BEHOLD HER ROBED IN FILMY WHITE.

Behold her robed in filmy white
Where in the church she stands,
The long stemmed lilies in her arms,
The psalter in her hands.
Her face is lifted to the morn;
Its glory round her lies,
And all the brightness of the day
Is mirrored in her eyes.

On every altar in the land
The lilies bud and blow;
The air is heavy with perfume
From chalice of snow;
A dewy garland round the world
The blossoms stretch away,
But she is still the sweetest flower
That blooms on Easter day.
—Mamma Irving in Leslie's Weekly.

Egg Rolling at the White House.

The egg rolling of Easter Monday at Washington is the most interesting of American Easter practices. The fete is held on the White House grounds, as is well known. Thousands of children are admitted to the broad green sloping lawn to indulge in competitive egg rolling, egg knocking and other games, a scene unrivaled in picturesque and happy interest. This Easter Monday celebration has been emulated in other places in America. In Atlanta, Ga., recently the park commissioners at their own expense procured 10,000 eggs, had them prettily decorated and hid them in one of the city parks, concealing them just sufficiently to give zest to a hunt, to which all the children in the city were invited.

Easter Customs.

The idea of having new articles of dress for Easter seems to be the one custom which through the ages has been most lastingly preserved, and it is not very probable that all of the many young ladies who could not go to church on Easter without new bonnets or of the young gentlemen who so conscientiously visit their tailors a few weeks before Easter know of the old superstition that new apparel worn on Easter would bring good fortune in love affairs during the ensuing year. If they did, the crush at the tailors and the demands on the dressmakers would probably be something enormous.—Washington Star.

Easter at Christ Church School.

In London there is an old and felicitous custom on Easter Monday, when the boys of the famous Christ hospital school repair to the Mansion House to receive from the lord mayor what are known as "Easter hobs." Each "Greecian" receives a sovereign, and the others, according to their relative standing, are given coins of lesser value. Refreshments of lemonade and buns are served, after which the mayor and the civic authorities conduct the boys to Christ church, Newgate, where they hear a sermon.

The Origin of Easter.

The word Easter, derived from the Anglo-Saxon "Eostre," or, in Teutonic, "Ostara," the goddess of dawn or spring, whose chief festival was celebrated about the time of the vernal equinox, is probably of the same root with East, signifying "bright" or "shining." The Germans to this day call April the "Ostermonat."

Easter Observance.

Fokes, picture hats and toques and fans, Blouses and dusters, smiles and curls. The girls see nothing but the hats, The men see nothing but the girls.

Easter on the Jordan's Banks

AMONG the numerous pilgrims who visit the Holy Land at Easter time by far the greater number are Russians, who hope to win Divine favor by taking part in the two great ceremonies of the Greek church in Palestine—that of the holy fire in Jerusalem and of baptism in the Jordan.

In the waters of the Jordan the pilgrim believes he will find sure atonement for all his sins. Therefore, after witnessing on Holy Saturday the descent of the sacred fire in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, to the Jordan he wends his way. The distance from Jerusalem is about seven and a half hours' riding—as distances are measured in the orient.

Most of the pilgrims walk, but some ride on donkeys and horses and some on camels. The aged have to be held on to the backs of their beasts, and the women in many cases are suspended in baskets. The strange spectacle of these pilgrims marching to the Jordan for this baptismal ceremony is certainly unique, thousands of pilgrims of all ages and description traveling in a mighty band during the night through the narrow defiles of the mountains and across the dreary plains, illuminating the wild scenery with the glare of countless torches and startling the intense stillness of the desert air with penitential chants and harmonious melodies, like a living picture of the Israelites taking their departure from Egypt on just such a night and in just such a manner. The view from this plain to the Jordan is beautiful.

The procession reaches the Jordan before early daybreak. Immediately every one prepares to enter the sacred river. As the sun rises over the tops of Mount the river bank of the Jordan presents one of the most remarkable scenes in the world.

The pilgrims, disrobing in great haste and rushing down the banks, plunge into the river in an undisturbable mass. The garments they wear are the white robes sanctified



AS THE SUN RISES OVER MOUNT A STRANGE SPECTACLE APPEARS.

by the holy fire and which will eventually be their burial shrouds. Here are men of all ages and seasons, from tottering octogenarians, aided by strong youths, to crawling babies, who are immersed by their parents. Some creep in cautiously, and others reflect before entering the muddy and treacherous stream. Others leap in almost wildly and swim like seals and then reappear upon the banks and repeat the performance three times. They all either dip or plunge in three times in commemoration of the Trinity. Many of the women enter upheld by three men, who drag them. Others only step in ankle deep and are baptized on the brink of the river. The men, with their dark hair of great length, present a strange appearance. Holding to the grass, they dip three times and then shake themselves like dogs.

The site on the banks of the Jordan, held by the Russians as consecrated because of Christ's baptism having taken place there, is the last point where the river displays any charm before it narrows and carries away its brownish hued waters to the Dead sea. A wooden cross marks the spot declared by the Greeks to be that of Christ's baptism.

The pilgrims are not satisfied with bathing in the Jordan, but dip in garments which thereafter will be preserved as sacred, and even drink the turbid water not only out of their own hands, but also out of those of their fellow pilgrims. Then they fill their tin cans with the precious liquid to be taken back to Russia for baptismal purposes.

Witnessing this performance one recalls the scriptural account of the multitude being baptized by John the Baptist in this very river, when "from Jerusalem and all Galilee the people came confessing their sins."

The religious atonement takes place soon after daybreak. After a short ceremony of consecration the pilgrims hastily prepare to march onward, the hospice at Jericho being their next resting place.

Their countenances are radiantly happy. They have attained the summit of earthly bliss, and their ecstasies are indescribable. Many eyes overflow with tears of joy, for they now feel confident that they have won eternal

salvation by this climax to their pilgrimage. Henceforth, they will travel with light hearts and glad faces, visiting holy sites on their way through the north of Palestine on to Haifa, where they will re-embark on their own steamers and return to Russia with newly consecrated lives and hearts full of peace and joy.

The long procession presents a picturesque appearance as it gradually passes into the distance, all its members being laden with long branches or with ruts of foliage gathered from the Jordan's banks, waving them above their heads as joyful trophies, while singing glad strains of harmonious chants in melodious tones. The aged lean on their branches as on walking sticks, and the backs of their beasts bear more of the precious verdure.

Thus does this strange pageant disappear from the valley as rapidly as it approached, leaving behind it only the silence and the solitude of the wilderness. This immense crowd of devoted human beings arriving in deep humility and leaving in gladness, shouting songs of triumph, has come and gone. But no trace of the visit is to be seen except the strewn leaves and the foot-prints on the clay banks.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

STANLEY'S EASTER TREE.

A Springtime Suggestion For the Little Folks.

Stanley Ober stood at the window looking across the meadow at the small evergreens that skirted the wood beyond and wishing it were Christmas time again, for the tree had been such a delight, but it was nearly Easter, and there would be Easter eggs and Easter cards and a small party, when all the cousins would be there.

"Mamma!" he cried suddenly. "Well?" asked mamma.

Stanley went nearer and talked earnestly for several minutes. Then mamma's face wore a smile, and Stanley was beaming and mysterious.

The party came off on Easter Monday, and all the cousins were there. A merry time they had of it, with all sorts of Easter games, and then came tea, with pretty sandwiches and cakes and leeks and fruit, and then a door was opened into another room where stood a tree hung with the most charming of Easter tokens. Dainty baskets of flowers, one for each guest; painted eggs suspended by gay ribbons, beautiful cards and homemade trifles, and at the top of the tree were sprays of lovely Easter lilies that looked so pure and white against their background of dark green.

The Easter tree was a great success, and the cousins voted Stanley's Easter party to be the most delightful they had ever known.—Youth's Companion.

Easter Kisses.

The Saxons, and in fact all the Teutonic races, worshiped Easter and kept her feast day about the time of the spring equinox. Unbridled license was allowed on this occasion and jests of every kind played. Many of these survive, notably that practiced by the sturdy countrymen north of the Humber, who, during Easter, sallied forth into the streets and claim a kiss or a silver sixpence from every woman they meet. Not long ago in the town of Bedlington, Northumberland, a coal miner was sued for kissing a woman on Easter. He pleaded the old custom and was immediately released.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

A Singular Egg Trick.

With a large decanter and a hard boiled egg a novel trick can be performed. The decanter, however, must be quite dry, and the egg must be shell-free. First drop into the decanter a piece of lighted paper and as the flame dies out put one end of the egg into the neck of the decanter after the manner of a stopper. In a few minutes the air will cool in the decanter and contract in volume, when the superior pressure of the atmosphere will force the egg through the neck down into the decanter without breaking.

Throwing the Egg.

In some parts of Europe there is an Easter game which is lots of fun, though it is hard on eggs. The children stand toget a line on a smooth place where the ground is soft, and then one by one they throw their eggs, each one aiming to see how far he or she can throw without breaking or cracking the egg. The skilled players aim to throw their eggs so that they shall skim along the ground, and land finally on their smaller ends, which are the hardest.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

A Queer Old Easter Custom.

It was the privilege long ago for men to beat their wives Easter day, but the latter repaid the compliment the next day. This ceremony, as far as can be learned, was not provocative of lawsuits or separations and was, no doubt, a mere loving castigation.

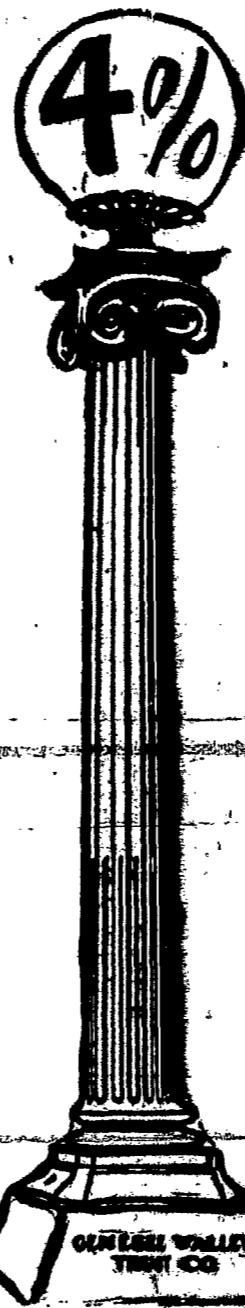
An Easter Race.

Two boxes, each about a foot square, are placed some twenty feet apart; into each are put four eggs, and the course is prepared. The two competitors in the race are each furnished with a spoon and assigned a box. At the word "ready" the contestants take a position to the right of their box. At the word "go" each takes from the box an egg, using for the purpose his spoon and, hurrying to his opponent's box, there deposits it, after which he returns for another. The eggs must on no account be touched with the hands, and to drop one is to forfeit the race. It will be seen that, while each is endeavoring to empty his respective box, the opponent in each case is constantly refilling it, but as his deftness cannot be exactly equal one will soon begin to gain on the other, and the excitement will rise to fever heat. The race is won by him who first empties his box.—Louisville Courier-Journal.



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