

A JOYOUS EASTER



With the advent of Spring comes the Eastertide—when everything assumes a joyful aspect,

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Life—An Easter Poem

By Rev. Dr. Edward Everett Hale.

THAT is what we try for, hope for and pray for—
That we may think more, feel more, love more and be more;
That we may have life more abundantly, as He said.



EDWARD EVERETT HALE.

Nothing—nothing helps in this seeking as the sight of it—
The brook which is alive again,
The saxifrage which is alive,
The pussy willow, the crocus,
The snowdrop, the violet,
The bluebird, the butterfly.

GRETCHEN'S SURPRISE PARTY

How a German Housemaid Made a Whole Family Happy.

A German housemaid, very fond of her mistress' little children and wishing to add a bit of homely cheer to their Eastertide, decided to follow a quaint and pretty custom observed in many of the provinces of Germany. Early on Easter morning, before one of the family was astir, she stole out on the lawn and hid little nests, which she had secretly made during her spare hours, under shrubs, trees, behind vines and flowerpots and in every conceivable corner of the yard. In these nests, fashioned of straw, twigs and twine, she placed the freshest of eggs, which were to be cooked for Easter breakfast, and the cooking was to be done out of doors in a kettle placed over a rude campfire for the purpose.

When the family came downstairs the German maid told them that the Easter rabbits had been in the grounds the previous night and that if the children would hunt about the yard they would find fresh eggs for breakfast left there for them by the snow white rabbits.

Eagerly the little ones, accompanied by their parents, who were as full of happy anticipation as the children, ran into the grounds about the house hunting for the eggs the rabbits had brought. Screams of delight and joyous laughter followed the finding of the nests, which were quickly robbed of their contents. Then to the steam-

ing big kettle they all hurried, carrying eggs in hats and aprons, and the German maid, no less happy than the children, superintended the boiling of the eggs, which were taken piping hot to the dining room, where the rest of the breakfast awaited the family.—Chicago Record-Herald.

EASTER, THE GREAT SUNRISE

The Resurrection of Jesus Daybreak of Immortality.

Seek him who maketh the seven stars and Orion and turneth the shadow of death into morning.—Amos.

The words of the poet-prophet, written 3,000 years ago, span like an arch of light our great festival. They unveil the lips of song and hearts of worship. The pageantry of an oriental morning prefigures the splendor of the great sunrise that comes forth from the shadows. The daybreak in the east finds its historical analogue in the dawn of eternal life out of the night of death on the first Easter morning. The resurrection of Jesus from the grave is held before us like the panels of a spring dawn. Nature is God's great workshop overhung with patterns. The sculptor carries the fashion of his work in the model to completion in polished granite or marble. With the dawn and attending stars for a model the infinite artist carries the art of life up into the matchless glory of the morning. In earlier days there had been glimpses of the great thought of immortality, faint gleams on the far horizon of the night. When Christ arose, the day broke over the whole world and upon men of every time, race and condition. That sublime awakening gave a new meaning to history, a new value to life, a new vision of the future. The first Easter morning was the daybreak of immortality, the dawning of the light of hope and faith, and joy, never again to fade out of the skies.—Rev. D. H. Muller, D. D.

Via Crucis.

One of the most peculiar of continental celebrations of Easter is that which for centuries has been practiced by the monks of Ronoevaux. As day breaks on the morning of Good Friday a long procession of the monks files out through the gateway of the abbey, each bearing on his back an enormous and heavy cross by way of annual penance and in imitation of what they consider to have been one of the severest forms of Christ's physical suffering. Through hamlets and villages this pathetic procession makes its way in spite of the trembling knees and aching muscles, while the villagers, with bare and bowed heads, do homage to the cross. That their penance may lack nothing of severity, these monks strike into the country, choosing the steepest and roughest paths.—Chicago Record-Herald.

EASTER LOVE FEAST.

Quaint Custom of the Moravians of Lancaster County, Pa.

It is a great privilege to witness the Easter observances at the old Moravian town of Lititz, Lancaster county, Pa. In churches of this denomination the men and women sit on the opposite sides of the "meeting house," as do the Shakers and Quakers and the Harmonists of Economy. During the love feast a number of men servers come in at the door on one side of the house and a like number of women enter from the opposite side. They carry wooden trays piled high with sweetened bread, and after they have passed this all around, the men serving the men and the women serving the women, they bring in enormous cups of steaming hot coffee. The feast is partaken of in silence on the part of the feasters, but the preacher exhorts all the while, and the band plays without ceasing. Every Moravian church has its brass band.

The love feast is held the Saturday morning preceding Easter Sunday. But in the afternoon of that day these people have a pretty custom of decorating the graves of their dead, which seems to be particularly appropriate at the Easter season since done in the faith that the dead "will rise again and live forever."

Later on in the day the mothers of the little Moravians prepare the nests of what is known to these small people as "the good rabbit." How they do shout and rejoice on Easter morning when they discover the nests all filled with colored eggs laid by the good rabbit in nests hidden in dense grass, straw piles and other hard to find places!

At 5 o'clock Easter morning the Moravian minister takes his stand on the church steps and reads a litany and the verse of a hymn, which the congregation, standing around him in the chilling dawn, take up and sing to music furnished by the church band. After this they make a second pilgrimage to the graveyard. This service is to commemorate the visit of the holy women to the tomb of Jesus. The minister bares his head and reads the Easter litany.

By this time the sun has risen, and its light gleams across graves that were yesterday strewn with flowers that are now beaded with diamond dew. It would be hard to imagine a more impressive ceremony than this. All that would seem to you and to me gruesome now dies out of the hymn, and a song full of joy and triumph, denoting "Christ has risen," seems to rise to the very heavens, and the people exult and shake hands and rejoice. The Moravians share the belief of the Irish peasantry that the sun dances on Easter morning.—Washington Post.

Easter Morn in Rome.
Surely no sun upon an Easter day is half so fine a sight in any part of the world as in Rome. The relief is so intense after the realistic scenes of Passion week. First we have the ceremony of lighting the fire in the vestibule of St. Peter's, from which the fire is taken to light the lamps before all the altars; then the washing of the high altar in holy oil by one of the cardinals; then at a given signal, solemnly the blast of the trumpet from the loggia of St. Peter's, the bells of 400 churches peal out the good news—
Ring out the darkness of the land!
Ring in the Christ that is to be!

The curtains are drawn from the paintings, and the organ booms forth with the glorious "Jubilate." My heart swells to bursting as I recall the scene and my intense "Thank God!"
Mrs. M. E. Gabbett in Atlanta Constitution.

Holy Saturday in Florence.
At Florence on Holy Saturday a chariot is drawn into the square before the cathedral. Within the chariot are bundles of powder connected one with another by means of a fuse, and from the chariot to the high altar of the cathedral runs a wire. When the crowd has gathered at a safe distance around the powder laden car and just as the bells strike noon, the archbishop releases a toy dove, which travels down the wire with a bit of flame in its beak. As the messenger of fire flies into the chariot its gaudy decorations are hurled into the air, with a roar and a cloud of smoke. If the dove flies steadily to its goal the year will be a propitious one, but if the bird hesitates there is evil ahead.—New York Tribune.

A Novelty For Easter Brides.
One of the new features of Easter weddings is the introduction of the prayer book with shower-crow markers in lieu of the bride's bouquet. Through the leaves of a pure white prayer book there are laid three ribbon markers, the ends falling down to within a short distance of the bottom of the gown. At intervals each of the six ends is tied with little of the valley with double bowknots, making a shower effect exactly the same as with the shower bouquet. The ribbon is white, of course, and about a third of an inch in width.

New York's Easter Collection.
There are above 400 churches of one kind or another in Greater New York, and their total collections on Easter morning reach about \$250,000. Last Easter twenty of the larger churches had collections of \$2,000 apiece, seventy-five averaged only \$500 apiece, and the remainder took much less than \$500 in the contributions.—New York Times.

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