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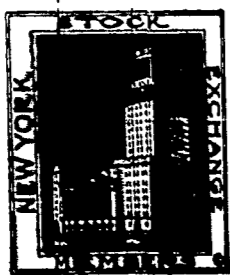
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EASTER



Do saints keep holy days in heavenly places? Does the old joy shine new in heavenly faces? Are hymns still sung the night that Christ was born, And anthems on the Resurrection morn?

What is their Easter? For they have no graves: No shadow. There the holy sunshine craves Deep in the heart of some idle marvelous, Whose breaking glory reaches down to us.

How did the Lord leap Easter? With His own! Back to meet Mary, where she grieved alone With face and mind all tenderly the same, Unto the very sepulcher He came.

May we not think (as He came back to her) The many mansions may be all astir With tender steps that hasten in the way Seeking their own upon this Easter day?

Parting the veil that hideth them about, Perhaps they do come, softly, wistful, out From houses of Heaven, that only seem so far, And walk in gardens where the new tombs wait



EASTER'S MESSAGE

By LEONARD A. BARRETT

"If a man die shall he live again?" This is the greatest and most important question of the ages. It is a question that has claimed the thought of the world's best philosophers.



Fisk argues for immortality, saying that it would be an absurd thing for the great God to make a man, as a child would build a play-house, just for the purpose of turning it down. Socrates, having drunk his hemlock, died discoursing upon immortality. Cicero, the great Roman philosopher, tells us there must be something after death, or whence the desire for a future life? The Indian buries in the grave of his dead the gun and the dog, in order that the departed may be completely happy in the hunting grounds beyond. The Egyptian built the pyramid to last forever. Life's injustices plead for immortality. Human nature demands justice. The garden scene between Hegel and Heine is historic. Pointing to a distant star, the poet exclaimed: "That may be a place where meet the master spirits of earth." The philosopher replied: "Has Socrates then never had his wrong righted? Has justice never been done for Judas and Jesus?" Unrealized plans and ideals call for an immortality, as Robert Browning writes: "In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more chance"—in which our ambitions and nobler dreams may be realized. The sorrows of earth call for an immortality—a point in the upper air where blend in a sovereign harmony all the discordant tones of earth. Man's first discovery is that Nature's first law is Death, his second discovery is that "Life is ever-lost of death, and love will never lose its own."

Celebration of Easter Old as Humanity

THROUGHOUT Christendom men, women and children rejoice in the Easter festival, a time of gladness and flowers. Although Easter has long been a Christian holiday, celebrating the bodily resurrection of Christ, this feast day is thousands of years older than Christianity.

The theme of Easter is as old as humanity. To each age of culture it has had a special meaning, but perhaps to all it has had much the same significance. Little is known of the connection of the Hebrew feast and the English celebration, yet in the passing of the feast from the Semitic to the Aryan people and the interweaving of these two cultures there has been a blending of customs that from time to time have been a part of the feast of the Passover.

The celebration of Easter in the early days of the Christian church included the observance of the Lord's Supper, baptism of candidates, freeing of slaves, liberation of prisoners and other demonstrations of joy. At that time there was no rubic for determining the date on which Easter should fall. Much later, however, certain unfortunate controversies arose regarding the exact day on which the resurrection of Christ should be commemorated. After long discussion the time was definitely fixed during the reign of Charlemagne, and the present mode of computing its annual occurrence was ordained by Pope Gregory XIII.

Many Ancient Customs. There were many beautiful customs in those days associated with the celebration of Easter. One of particular interest was for Christians to salute each other with the words, reverently, "Christ is risen." The person addressed would, in turn reply: "Christ is risen, indeed." This practice is still retained by the followers of the Greek church the world over.

The ceremony of the Holy sepulchre, originating in Jerusalem, having its rise in the old mystery plays, also was of peculiar interest. This was considered one of the most beautiful and touching rites in ancient church ceremonies. It pertained to the burial of the cross. Following its adoration on Good Friday the cross was washed with wine and water, which was given to the people to drink after the communion in memory of the blood which flowed from the side of the crucified Christ. The cross was then carried to the sepulchre to remain until Easter morning, when it was triumphantly taken to the high altar of the church.

Sepulcher of Flowers. The sepulcher, though in use only for three days of the year, was a most beautiful and costly structure surrounded by a wealth of adornment consisting of floral offerings and 13 candles, representing Christ and His apostles.

The offering of eggs to illustrate the elements of future life, as an emblem of the resurrection, has formed a part of the Easter celebration for centuries. This custom, now observed chiefly by children, formerly was universal among all Christians, both old and young. In various parts of England, Ireland, Germany and France it is still the practice of the peasants to roll, throw and finally eat the egg with the belief that its virtuous qualities will contribute to their spiritual strength.

The use of lilies at Easter is one of great antiquity as well as one of great beauty. The lily, the emblem of purity and grace, is known as the Virgin's flower, and has been associated with the resurrection since the Fifth century.

Another very old as well as universally observed custom is the belief that every one should be dressed in a new suit for Easter. There was a superstition prevalent in old English times that some part of one's dress must be "brand new" at Easter so that good fortune would follow throughout the year.

At Easter let your clothes be new or else be sure you will be.

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