

Library Suggest

A Paschal Garland

By Rev. Benedict Ekmann

A medieval court chaplain, Wipo by name (died 1050), composed an ecstatic lyric for the Risen Savior, which the Church has incorporated into the Easter Mass. It is one of those liturgical pieces out of which the miracle and morality plays of a later age are supposed to have grown. No translation can quite catch the sheen of the original Latin.

Forth to the paschal Victim, Christians, bring Your sacrifice of praise.

The Lamb redeems the sheep; And Christ the sinless One Hath to the Father sinners reconciled.

Together, death and life In a strange conflict strove: The Prince of life who died, Now lives and reigns.

What thou sawest, Mary, say, As thou wentest on the way.

I saw the tomb wherein the living One had lain; I saw His glory as He rose again;

Napkin and linen clothes, and angels twain.

Yes, Christ is risen, say hope, and He Will go before you into Galilee.

We know that Christ indeed Has risen from the grave: Hail, thou King of Victory! Have mercy, Lord, and save.

Out of that same early Christian time, when all the light seems like a light of the fresh and dowy morning, comes another singing voice with its tribute—the English Cynwulf, so full of joy that one must weep to think how this joy is no longer felt by many in the wonders of God.

Thus is it known: the King of angels, Maker strong in might, goes up the mountains, leaps the high downs; sets free the world and all earth-dwellers by that doughty leaping. In the first leap He bent down to the woman, to the stainless maiden, taking man's form without shadow of sin; that brought solace to earth-living men; The second leap was at His birth; in a bin He lay in child's likeness, wound in swaddling clothes, Glory of all glories. The third leap was the Sky-King's swift step to mount the cross, with Father and Holy Ghost. The fourth leap brought rest in the deep tomb, coming down from the rood.

Fast in the earth-cave. The fifth leap was to set free those souls in hell in the house of pain. The King there bound the foremost fiend in fiery chains, the angry-hearted one, where yet he lies in his prison, pinioned down.

Sursum Corda

Treating the Colored Man Right

By Rev James M. Gillis, C.S.P.

Here in San Francisco, where I happen to be for the Lenten Season, I find in the papers day after day a continued story about a certain Audley Cole who has passed the civil service tests for employment as a motorman on the Municipal Street Railway, but cannot get the job because he is a Negro. Significantly, that news item has been running in parallel columns with the story of the interest, not to say the excitement, aroused by Pearl Buck's speech on the problem of people of another color than her own in Asia. She had said:

"Today the Colored peoples are still waiting, still watchful. But they are lending an ear to what Japan is saying because they know there is truth in it. For once Japanese propaganda is more than propaganda, and they know it. Lies can be laughed off, but truth is a sober thing. Who can blame our Colored allies if they have reservations toward us, if they doubt our intention for true democracy for them? Ours is a peculiar danger, for one-tenth of our own nation is Colored. Our relation to the colored peoples and democracy does not even lie so far off as Africa or India. It is just outside our doors, it is inside our homes. The deepest loyalties today may not be national."

Evidently the lady uses the argument from expediency. She argues not from the philosophical or theological but from the pragmatic viewpoint. She does not appeal to the Constitution of the United States or the Bill of Rights, still less to the Catechism or the New Testament. She seems to be concerned at the moment only about how the Colored people will act towards us: "If we don't act justly toward them."

We have heard that kind of argument before. A good many people do not like it. They say it carries an implied threat. They even think it suggests a bad thought to the Colored people—the thought of rebellion or insurrection or of disloyalty in the time of the nation's trouble.

In fact it is the lowest kind of argument. But if the white man had listened to it with respect and had governed the vari-colored races in Asia in accordance with that argument and that warning, what has happened in Malaya and Java might perhaps not have come to pass, and the danger of disloyalty in India might turn out to be less.

What the white man did not sufficiently take into account in Asia, he had better take into account in America. The time may come when we shall need the absolutely unquestionable and unexceptionable loyalty of our twelve million Colored people. At present I think we have it. Let us not lose it.

and sealed in air. The Holy One's next leap was His hope-playing when He rose to Heaven, His old home. A host of angels in that holy time were blithe with laughter and great joy. They saw the strength of glory, the great Beginning, seek His own land, the hall of shining ones. Everlasting gladness came to the Blessed at their Prince's playing. Thus here on earth God's eternal Son over the high hills sprang by leaps, high-hearted over mountains. So should we men in our heart's thought spring by leaps from night to night, strive for glory, that we may mount to the highest skies by holy works, where are joy and bliss and ministering hosts. Great is our need to seek our healing with all our hearts, and with our souls live so earnestly that the Savior-Child, the living God may raise our body aloft from here.

Last Christmas I gave you Henry Vaughan's lovely poem on Peace. His Easter Hymn sounds a different key—more rethinking, more happy-go-lucky, suggesting the more sumptuous moments of the old morality plays, making faces at the Devil's boyerman, Death, from behind the open door of the Tomb. I like especially the sixth line.

Death and darkness, get you packing, Nothing now to man is lacking, All your triumphs now are ended, And what Adam marred is mended; Graves are beds now for the weary; Death a nap, to wake more merry; Youth now, full of pious duty, Seeks in this for perfect beauty; The weak and aged, tired with length Of days, from thee look for new strength; And infants with thy pang contend As pleasant as it with the breast. Then, unto Him, Who thus hath thrown Even to contempt thy kingdom down, And by His blood did us advance Unto His own inheritance; To Him be glory, power, praise, From this unto the last of days!

All the washed April freshness of Easter is in the little idyll that Francis James wrote on his baby daughter Bernadette's first Resurrection feast.

Easter; the white hen's egg shines in the moss and the cock has crowed. Cock-a-doodle-doo! Cock-a-doodle-doo! My Bernadette, the faithful have received the sacrament. The calm splendor of God bathes the hills, the brown nest of the bernet hums in the trim garden, the nightingale's song in the morning is full of incense, the earth is opened, death is dead, you will live forever. O Bernadette! Within you, around you, the sky stretches endlessly. The Lord is so humble that Mary Magdalen takes Him for a gardener. Today He may perhaps call you His little sister, because the noise of your rattle sounds like the little bell of a paschal lamb. Alleluia!

(Acknowledgments to Burns Oates, London, for the translation of the Easter Sequence in Cardinal Shuster's Sacramentary; to Shred and Ward for the Cynwulf excerpt from Margaret William's Ward Hoard; to the Macmillan Co. for the Vaughan poem, which I found in Marguerite Wilkinson's collection, The Radiant Tree; and to Bruce Humphries, Inc. for the excerpt from Francis James' My Daughter Bernadette.)

our case it is not too late to exercise towards the black man the fairness and the justice mentioned in the Bill of Rights and guaranteed by the Constitution.

"The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried, Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel." The Negroes are our friends, their adoption has been tried in this land of ours for three generations since their emancipation, if not for three centuries since their introduction to the "land of the free." There remains only the duty of "grappling them to ourselves." We can do it now. By and by it may be too late.

I hope my remarks about the argument from expediency will not be taken as evidence that I think that argument altogether contemptible. It is, as I have said, a low-grade argument, but there are American citizens who cannot be moved with an ethical, or still less a religious argument. I have learned that fact both in conversation and in written correspondence. I cannot pretend to be shocked (I am not so naive), but I have been again and again pained to notice that a good many church-going people instantaneously reject any plea based upon religion for the extirpation of race prejudice. They will not say point-blank that Christ or the Gospel uphold race prejudice, but they dodge the religious issue and appeal, like the veriest unbelievers, to custom and feeling and expediency. I suppose we should give them in return an argument from expediency while waiting and praying for them to grow into a realization of supremacy of the supernatural.

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Five Years Ago--

—in the files of the CATHOLIC COURIER

From Apr. 1, 1937, Edition

Tears welled to the eyes of His Holiness, Pope Pius XI and covered down his cheeks on Easter Day when a quarter of a million people acclaimed with indescribable enthusiasm, his first public appearance since the inception of his serious illness.

While his heart was greatly saddened by conditions afflicting the Church in Mexico, His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, in an Apostolic Letter addressed to the Mexican Hierarchy under date of Easter Sunday, gave expression to the consolation he found in the affection shown him by the Hierarchy and clergy of that country and in the constancy shown by Mexican Catholics under circumstances which required really heroic conduct for profession of their Faith.

For the first time in the history of Cornell University, Roman Catholic services were held in Sage Chapel on the campus. The occasion was the traditional Catholic "Three Hour" services on Good Friday.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Advertisement for '4 Nails' shoe polish. It features an illustration of a man in a suit and a woman in a dress. Text includes: 'IT IS A VERIFIABLE FACT THAT 4 NAILS... AT THE ORIGINATOR AND PRE-MEDICAL ARTIST ALWAYS SELECTS OUR LONEST FEET NAILED SEPARATELY TO THE CROW.' There are also smaller text boxes with testimonials and a 'GIVE' button.

EDITORIALS

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forms of preparation for victory; she calls on us to loan her the rest of the money needed.

Defense Bonds, Defense Stamps, are offered us now! The government will pay us a good return on our money. But the interest return is the small part of the benefit we reap for ourselves through purchase of these bonds and stamps. Our best return is the feeling that we have been of patriotic service to our country, that we have helped her when she needs our help most.

Buy more Defense Bonds! Buy more Defense Stamps!

BLACKOUTS

The discipline of a free people is well demonstrated by the readiness with which the requirements of the trial blackouts have been met by all. To go into nine counties, to tell the people to turn out all lights except in a room well protected against leakage even of the faintest light-rays into the outside, to find a response that is practically universal,—is a tribute to the cooperative spirit of the people with those charged with their safety in impending danger.

Serious-minded citizens know that the purpose of these trial blackouts is of the deepest concern to all. We may never have any bombing attacks; and we may have them at any time. Only few years ago magazine articles by alleged experts were telling us how air-raids would be so impracticable as to be eliminated as possible sources of dangers to European cities. London and Paris and Rotterdam tell us a different story. We can profit by their experience; we can prepare. Patriotic Americans are ready to use well the advantages given them by the authorities in these trial blackouts and in other protective services.

THAT THEY MIGHT ANOINT JESUS

It was a sad duty that led the holy women out early on Sunday morning to the tomb of Christ. Christ had died on the eve of the great Sabbath, had been placed in the tomb late on Friday evening. Jewish law forbade the touching of a dead body on the Sabbath. The early hours of Sunday, therefore, found these holy women going to the tomb for a belated anointing of the body of Jesus. Their thoughts were of the dead Jesus; their thoughts were of a dead body that was to remain in its tomb forever; their purpose was to prepare the body for a burial that would be permanent. They came "that they might anoint Jesus."

Where was their faith? Where was their memory of Christ's promise that He would rise again? Where was their recollection of His words that He would go into Galilee after His resurrection to see His Apostles?

The tragedy of Good Friday had blotted out all thought of His promised resurrection. Jesus had been destroyed, His enemies had prevailed over Him! The holy women felt that there remained for them to give Him their last tribute of sorrowing love, to anoint His dead body.

Then the joyous message of the Angel clothed in white who sat within the tomb: "You seek Jesus of Nazareth, Who was crucified: He is risen, He is not here: behold the place where they laid Him!"

The message of the Angel was followed by the appearance of Christ over a period of forty days to His Blessed Mother, to Peter and John, to the eleven, to more than five hundred at once; in Judea, in Jerusalem, in Galilee; finally on the Mount of the Ascension.

There was no need to anoint the body of Jesus! Easter morning found that body living, glorious, immortal. Death could no more have power over it; never could it see the corruption of the tomb. The resurrection of Jesus stands as the pledge of the resurrection of our bodies on the last day. Over the grave of every man that is true to God shall be said on the last day: "Behold the place where they laid him!" The loss of hope of the holy women gave way to renewed faith in Jesus when they beheld the accomplished fact of His resurrection. May His resurrection be a lasting foundation for our unchanging faith in Him as our Lord and Redeemer!