THOUGHTS FOR EASTER-TIDE

Many of the Psalms of David are filled with beautiful and great thoughts; the recognition of God's love, mercy and the greatness of his works; but, beautiful as these are, they do not move us so much as those in which the soul of the man cries out in agony of body or mind. Here we find common ground. David is no longer a king, who reigned hundreds of years ago, or a poet who wrote some of the greatest poems the world has ever known; he is rather a suffering human being, who, in his distress, feels that he is alone in the world, with no help in sight. He feels that God has either forgotten him, or else is punishing him for his sins.

"Thou hast laid me in the low-st pit. Thy wrath lieth hard upon me; Thou hast afflicted me with all Thy waves. Why hidest Thou Thy face from me?" All these are real human cries, cries that go up from the souls of men to-day when pain and sorrow press heavily upon them.

There are other passages in the psalms that come to us when the pain is lifted, or the trouble is less poignant; then we share in the psalmist's gratitude, in his praise to God, "who forgiveth all his sins and healeth all his infirmities."

When the pain is over we may be willing to agree with the great surgeon who speaks of it as a blessing. Our joy comes in the great peace that usually follows great pain; there is weakness, but such a wonderful sense of freedom. To rest quietly, knowing that the suffering is past, is a great joy; enough for the present.

After we have been through an ordeal of pain, anxiety or sorrow we are very likely to realize, as we never have done before, that our life here is an incomplete one. We may have thought quite differently until one of these things came upon us so suddenly that our whole outlook upon life was changed. Sometimes the years go by with only a few outward changes. Blessings may abound, and but few trials come to us; yet even if we are blessed in this way, our neighbor may suffer, and in viewing his troubles our hearts may be sorrowful.

In some way the realization of the limitations of human life is brought to our knowledge. No one can live on selfishly; all must recognize that life cannot be one broad glare of sunshine. There are lessons to be learned, however, and joys to be known, even in the incomplete life, and they have never been better expresed, it seems to me, than in a more or less familiar poem, whose author is, I regret to say, unknown to me:

If none were sick and none were sad,
What service could we render?
I think if we were always glad,
We scarcely could be tender.
Did our beloved never need
Our patient ministration,
Earth would grow cold, and miss, indeed,
Its sweetest consolation.
If sorrow never claimed our heart,
And every wish were granted.
Patience would die, and hope depart—
Life would be disenchanted.

The peace that follows pain—that seems to me to be a thought especially suited for to-day, the day after Good Friday, the day before Easter, a halfway station between earth and heaven. How well we remember the expressions of peace upon the faces of those who, having suffered, have been released from further pain! Our first thought upon gazing at those quiet countenances has been the right one—a feeling of thanksgiving that the pain was past and that peace had taken its place.

Such a thought may have been in the minds of Christ's faithful friends when they laid Him away in the tomb in the garden. They may have forgotten for the time being all the promises He had made concerning His resurrection. At that moment they could think of Him only as a dear friend, the best they had ever had, who had undergone a bitter and painful death, and was now released from all suffering. They, too, may have been grateful that peace had followed pain.

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Easter.

Easter, the anniversary of Our Lord's resurrection from the dead, is one of the three great festivals of the Christian year—the other two being Christmas and Whitsuntide. From the earliest period of Christianity down to the present day, it has always been celebrated by believers with great joy, and is accounted the queen of festivals. In primitive times it was usual for Christians to salute each other on the morning of this day by exclaiming, "Christ is risen"; to which the person addressed replied, "Christ is risen indeed" or else, "And hath appeared unto Simon"—a custom still retained in the Greek Church.

The common name of this feast in the east was the Paschal Feast, because kept at the same time as the Pascha or Jewish passover, and in some measure succeeding to it. In the sixth of the Ancyran canons it is referred to as the Great Day. Our own name Easter is derived, as some suppose, from Eostre, the name of a Saxon deity, whose feast was celebrated every year in the spring about the same time as the Christian festival—the name being retained when the character of the feast was changed, or, as others suppose, from Oster, which signifies rising. If the latter supposition be correct, Easter is in name, as well as reality, the feast of the resurrection.

Through there has never been any difference of opinion in the Christian church as to why Easter is kept there has been much as to when it should be observed. Indeed the controversy lasted for many centuries and it was not until the Council of Nice in 325 definitely settled the matter by decreeing the observance of Easter on the Sunday following the Jewish passover that there was any harmony on the subject. Even this did not last for long. The date, so far as we are affected thereby, was decided at Whitby, England, in 664, when the centention of Agilbert, Roman Catholic bishop of Dorchester, who upheld the custom as it was observed at Rome, prevailed over the plea of Colman, bishop of Lindisfarne, who represented the native branch of the church.

On Easter Day depend all the moveable ecclesiastical feasts and fasts throughout the year. The nine Sundays before, and the eight following after, are all dependent upon it. The nine constitute the six in Lent and Quinquagesima, Sexagesima, and Septuagesima; the eight following are the five after Easter, the Sunday after Ascension Day, Whit Sunday and Trinity Sunday.

Easter is best kept by a rising from some dead past into newness of life.

Meat of young animals is more tender but not so nutritious as that of maturer animals.

THE ETERNAL YEARS

Transcendent light, with Easter born,
Fill with thy glow the battle-torn;
"Seek the living among the dead,"
Awaken those whose blood was shed;
Dim with thy glory cannon's flame,
Cleanse humankind of all its shame
Ere day is done.

Awake, O nations of the earth!
Comes morn of hope, of life, new birth.
Heed ye the Resurrection call,
Rulers of kingdoms, foemen—all;
Let strife be o'er, the tumult cease,
Crown Him anew the Prince of Peace
Ere day is done.

Easter Myths and Menus

The word Easter is derived from the Saxon word Ostara or Eastrae, the Goodess of Spring, which signifies the return of life to the earth after the long death of winter.

This goddess was dearly loved by the Teutons. From old heathen times comes the custom of exchange of presents of colored eggs, the egg being the symbol of life.

In Germany the collection of eggs is still observed. Many colored eggs are hidden about the premises. These are supposed to be laid by the Easter rabbit. Both young and old hunt the eggs. Then amid great shouts of joy and hilarity, feasting and dancing the day is concluded.

The Russian eggs bear the inscription "Christos Vokress," which means "Christ is risen." When a Russian presents these eggs to a friend he repeats these words with religious fervor. Many novel and attractive dishes are served on this occasion; they include fancy cakes, pastry and sweetmeats.

In many parts of Hungary the boys sprinkle the girls with rosewater, and then the girls in turn present the boys with gaily colored eggs.

In France the Easter festival is observed with great joy. Easter has always been a grand affair since the days of the kings, when all Parisian nobles paid a visit to the king and received a royal egg. This egg was decorated in gilt. Boys, too, had their fun; they rolled eggs down Montague street, St. Genevieve, Paris. Later many boys nicked the eggs for "keeps." Many students still seek eggs from the householders. Decorations and ornaments on eggs date from the thirteenth century.

England is rich in Easter lore. In many parts of England, especially in the shires, names are written on the eggs and they are then stored from one year to another. This custom is second only to the custom of writing the name on the flyleaf of the Bible. In many homes great quantities of these eggs are to be found. 'Tis said that even the sun dances on Easter morn.

To the great new world of ours the early pioneers brought many of the Old World customs and festivals. In various parts of the country celebrations can be found which typify their origin abroad.

Easter Goodies

Easter eggs can be very easily made at home. Gather the family around you and have them all help. The pleasure and anticipation will surely be a reward for the trouble.

Eggs may be made with or without cocoanut, dipped in fondant, which may be tinted, of chocolate. Use a deep tablespoon to mold the egg, making two halves, which can be put together.

Before putting together, lay a piece of string through the centre of the egg from end to end, letting it extend sufficiently so that it may be held while dipping. Take one-half can grated cocoanut, sufficient sugar to mold. Press milk from the cocoanut, then work in the sugar, kneading well. Mold, putting the two halves of the egg together. Stand aside to dry for twelve hours, then dip in white, tinted or chocolate fondant.

Fondant for Dipping Eggs

Two cupfuls granulated sugar, three-fourth cupful water, one-fourth teaspoonful cream of tartar, one-half teaspoonful glycerine, two tablespoonfuls corn syrup. Place the mixture in order given in a clean saucepan. Stir well until sugar is dissolved, then wipe the side of saucepan with a clean, damp cloth to remove all loose grains of sugar. Cook until it forms a soft ball in cool water. The best way is to use a candy thermometer. Cook to 238 degrees Fahr., then take from fire, pour on a slightly buttered platter. When cool work together from the sides to the centre. As soon as it starts creaming use your hands to knead like bread. Set in a bowl, cover with a napkin rung from cold water. Set aside for twelve hours to ripen. To use, heat in a double boiler until you can hardly bear the finger to touch it; beat constantly. Now tint and dip in eggs, holding them by the piece of string. Put to dry on a waxed paper.

To Coat With Chocolate

Melt bitter or sweet chocolate until barely warm, adding one tablespoonful of butter to every one-half pound of chocolate. Chocolate must be stirred carefully while heating. Neglect of this important point will cause poor results.

Easter Rabbit

Use the egg mixture, mold into rabbit forms and dip just the same as the eggs were dipped. Easter chicks may be made the same way.

Two Easter Menus

Shoulder of spring lamb
Mint sauce
Mashed potatoes Creamed carrots
Easter cakes
Coffee

Vegetable soup
Stewed chicken
Scalloped potatoes Mashed turnips
Easter balls
Coffee

Easter Cakes

Make a sheet of butter sponge cake, using a pan one and one-half inches deep, in which to bake the cake. Cream well and add yolks of three eggs, one cupful sugar, four tablespoonfuls butter, four tablespoonfuls milk, one cupful flour, two teaspoonfuls baking powder. Mix well, then fold in the stiffly beaten whites of three eggs. Bake as directed in moderate oven for forty minutes. Cut into squares. Ice with orange water icing and decorate with section of orange.

Orange Water Icing

Two tablespoonfuls orange juice, yolk of one egg, sufficient icing sugar to spread.

Easter Balls

One-half cupful sugar, one-half cupful flour, one-quarter teaspoonful cream of tartar. Sift three times, then carefully fold in the stiffly beaten whites of three large eggs. Bake in ungreased custard cups for thirty minutes in an oven. Ice with plain water icing.

Plain Water Icing

Two tablespoonfuls water, sufficient icing sugar to spread.

The Sunday School

INTERNATIONAL LESSON
MARCH 24.

Lesson XII.—Jesus Ministers to the Multitude—Mark 6. 32-44.
Golden text, Matt. 20. 28.

Verse 32. A desert place—The boat is their refuge when the pressure of the crowd becomes too great, and now, on some distant part of the shore, they seek quiet and relief. They have opportunity for conference concerning the results of their missionary tour and also to pl anfor their future work. Luke says they went to Bethsaida, the city on the east side of the lake, but he calls it a "desert place" (Luke 9. 10-12).

33. Saw them going . . ran together there—seeing which way the boat was heading, they ran around the shore at the head of the lake, crossing the Jordan flows into the lake not far from Bethsaida.

34. Came forth—When he disembarked from the boat. Saw a great multitude—They would not be avoided or put off. They determined to be where he was. Two or three miles in the dust and heat around the lake shore were nothing if they could only be with him. The purpose of Jesus to secure quiet and rest was defeated, and now at hand was the ever-pressing throng eager to see and hear and to be helped by him. Had compassion on them—No word of impatience or annoyance, but a feeling of compassion. The word used indicates a yearning toward them. Sheep not having a shepherd—"The people who do not know the law is accursed," said the Jewish leaders. The masses found no place in the thought of the scribes, who called them Am haarets, people of the earth. The formal and freezing Pharisees repelled the multitude and labeled them "publicans and sinners." He began to teach them many things—He spoke fromhis heart to their hearts. Patience and tenderness must have combined these compassionate messages.

35, 36. The day is now far spent; send them away—In their eagerness to be with him all question of supplies had been forgotten. The situation was a perplexing one—the late hour, the hungry crowd, and means of procuring food, for the place was "desert," that is, uninhabited. That they may go into the country and villages . . . and buy—This seemed the only thing to do. There was food somewhere in that region of the country, and if the people scattered about they could find it.

37. Give ye them to eat—Certainly a strange request in the face of the obvious fact that no food was on hand—so they must have thought. They inferred that it could only mean they were to buy it. Shall we buy two hundred shillings' worth of bread?—Only Mark and John specify the sum—two hundred denarii. The denarius was a Roman coin worth about seventeen cents. It is hardly correct to call it a penny. It represents the wages for one day's work. The implication here is that as it would take two hundred denarii, a large sum, the whole thing was out of the question. It was greatly beyond their means. John tells that Jesus himself had his plan all thought out—"he himself knew what he would do" (John 6. 6)—and that his purpose was to test Philip.

38. How many loaves have ye? . . . Five and two fishes—It is John only who says: "There's a lad here, who hath five barley loaves, and two fishes," and he alone shows the absurdity of attempting to feed the people on this ridiculously small supply: "What are these among so many?"

40. Sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties—Literally, they reclined, "garden beds, garden beds," that is, in regular formation, like symmetrical garden beds: two long rows of one hundred and a short row of fifty persons.

41. Looking up to heaven, be blessed and brake—Probably the Hebrew grace before meat, as the father surrounded by his household was accustomed to do at the Passover feast.

42. They all ate, and were filled—As the disciples distributed the food it increased in the distribution. Means which are to us inadequate may under the blessing of God suffice, only they must be first placed in his hands.

43. Twelve basketfuls—The small wicker baskets commonly used by the Jews for carrying their food. There must be no waste, even of miraculous power.

44. Five thousand men—Matthew adds, "besides women and children" (Matt. 14. 21).

Easter Waiting.

Waiting for the glorious coming
Of the angels' glistening band.
Waiting for the herald angels
To reach down to earthly land;

Waiting for the rising Saviour
To delight the faithful few—
Holy saints, with Christ behavior,
The bidding of the angels do.

Christ on earth again is breathing
Peace and health and joy and love;
Gracious truths are seething, seething,
Waiting for the dawning dove.

Dove of Heaven, on earth alighting;
Chanted hallelujahs ring—
There can be no sorrow blighting;
Angels hallelujahs sing.

Saints on earth are ready, ready
To clasp close the blessed truth;
Struggling hearts are steady, steady;
Saints are angels now, forsooth.

Messengers are chanting, chanting
To the world from wisdom's store;
Blessed truths are panting, panting;
What is now has been of yore.

The angels on earth and the angels above
Again have recounted the story;
God hath proclaimed the truth; all is love,
To earth will descend all the glory.

Glory to God, His promise fulfilled;
Glory comes with the rising Son;
God and His angels and earth so have willed,
God and His purpose has won.

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WEST TORONTO - CANADA

Jack-in-the-Pulpit's Sermon.

All of an Easter morning,
Jack-in-the-pulpit cried,
"Gather, oh, gather, and listen,
From all of the countryside!
Hither, my congregation!
Hither, ye flowerets gay!
Hither, ye bouncing bunnies!
Listen to what I say!"

Over the hills they hurried,
Out of the field and wood,
Bunnies and blooms of April,
Whither the preacher stood.
There were the yellow jonquils;
There were the pansies blue;
There were the stately lilies;
There were the tulips, too.

Then to his congregation
Jack-in-the-pulpit said,
"Lo, it is Easter morning!
Lift up every head!
Tell to the world your gladness!
Show it the while ye sing
Songs of the vanquished winter,
Victory songs of spring!

"Lo, it is Easter morning!
Go to the world, I pray,
Bearing the glorious message
Born of our Easter Day!
Tell how ye lay imprisoned
Deep in the mould and the night!
Tell how ye burst in beauty
Into the warmth and the light!"

So on an Easter morning,
Over the hills and afar,
All of the flowers of April
Carry wherever they are
Messages fair and fragrant—
Do you not get them, pray?
Telling the world the meaning
Flooding our Easter Day.

Whispers the yellow jonquil,
Whispers the pansy blue,
Whispers the stately lily,
Whispers the tulip, too:
"Long did we lie imprisoned
Deep in the mould and the night;
Then we burst in beauty
Into the warmth and the light!"

Gunns Shur-Gain Fertilizer

Easter Day.

The brook's faint ripple. The forest hush,
A pale green bud on each vine and bush,
A bird's low note on the waking air,
A fragrant lily blossoming there,
A band of children softly singing
Till far and near joy bells are ringing,
And over all the Springtime glory
While lips repeat the wondrous story
Of a risen Christ, Death speeds away
In the clear bright dawn of Easter Day.

The Easter Robin.

A sweet legend of the Greek Church tells us that "Our Lord used to feed the robins round His mother's door when a boy; moreover, that the robin never left the sepulchre till the Resurrection, and, at the Ascension, joined in the angels' song."

Another popular story, however, relates that when Christ was on His way to Calvary, toiling beneath the burden of the Cross, the robin, in its kindness, plucked a thorn from the crown that oppressed His brow, and the blood of the Divine Martyr dyed the breast of the bird, which ever since has borne the insignia of its charity. A variant of the same legend makes the thorn wound the bird itself and its own blood dye its breast.

Easter.

Easter for the world, and does it rise from the dead at morn to glorious skies? Easter for the world; and who to-day from the tomb's portal rolls the stone away? Easter for the world; and mourners stir, like ghosts, about the sepulchre. Easter for the world; Golgotha's cross lies heavy on its grief and loss, while weeping women, sore in pain, wring helpless hands and cry in vain. Easter for the world; and Olivet, with tears of millions now is wet. Easter for the world; its agony recalls again Gethsemane. Easter for the world; beyond the gates of death its resurrection waits. Easter for the world, unjustly tried, shackled and scourged and crucified. Easter for the world, and not unfit. Father, hast thou forgotten it?—W. J. Lampton.