The Easter Lilies

"Christ Is Risen; I Will Arise"

HUMANITY had grown dry, old, withered. All the best springs of its nature had dried up, and there was no flow of invigorating hope, and barely anything of pureness and sweetness issuing from it. The emperor of the world was at once "a high priest, an atheist and a god." The fairest and noblest in life permitted their names to be inscribed upon the "tabulae" of those who had failed to maintain even the cleanliness of the flesh. The human race had gone to seed. But by the overruling of Providence, One Life had been prematurely maintained in righteousness, true to man's original, Divine type. Mown down by the sword of injustice, this harvested seed was sown in a garden in Jerusalem.

Sown, as the sower of wheat flings his good grain into the soil, and simply leaves it to the mercy of the Master of the earth and the Lord of life! As the farmer merely closes the field gate upon his seeded field and can do no more than wait! Just as we sow the forms of them we have loved, set a stone, or some mark to show where we have laid them, and come away to

"—soothe ourselves with weeping
Till life's long shadows break in cloudless love."

There is a wonderful vitality in a seed. A wealthy man once built a great stone tomb for himself and carved upon it: "This tomb, the everlasting abode of its owner, must not be opened to all eternity." Inadvertently the workmen buried a tiny seed with the impious dead man. Swollen by the moisture from his decaying corpse, it sprouted, found a crevice where light shone through, grew to it, and through it, and today a tall tree stands with its roots in the old tomb, and the stones so laboriously built into place are shattered and thrown aside by the resistless growing power of what had been contained in that tiny seed.

There is an immortal vitality about humanity. That sown in the garden at Jerusalem burst through the tomb, and appeared again, as much more glorious than the Body which had been sown, as the field of corn is lovelier as it waves in the autumn sunshine than the bare grain the farmer sowed in the spring. "Sown in a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

It is a prudent thing, however, to apply the actual tests to the seeds of the crop, upon the vitality of which much may depend. That sort of a test was applied to humanity at Easter time. One of ourselves, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, was sown, and by the mastery of the Master of Life, the resurrection process was accelerated, and the innate vitality of man was proved to be a great, glorious reality.

It is the message of spring. It comes to encourage us, just when we are committing so much wealth to the soil, and its Master. It says to the farmer, "have no fear for results, since the flowers have come through the ground, your grain will also come. The Easter lily is a sign to you of the gracious beauty which will crown your hard labor, which will follow what is so disagreeable at the moment. There was nothing lovely about the lily bulb, remember!" The resurrection message is a signal set up in the race through life, reminding it that there is nothing more certain than

"That men may rise on stepping stones
Of their dead selves to higher things."

"He is not here," said the heavenly intelligence to those who sought a dead body in the tomb. To the world of men the message runs, "do not grope in the grave of disappointed hope, or of unfulfilled desire." "Newness of life" is yours. Let the past lie dead, as it will. New days arise for you, with new hopes, better openings. You can never lose vitality! While there is life there is hope. And hope persevered in finds certain fruition at harvest time.

"He is Risen" rings out from the stone beside the tomb. And the little crocus bud, thrusting itself through even snow and cold, points the message:

"Since I am here doubt not He rose
And keep with me this Easter day."

For he was just the testing seed, the first fruits. If he rose, so will our blessed dear ones in like manner, ever so much better for having been laid aside as the watchmaker lays your watch to pieces on his tray.

The answering message is not simply "I, too, shall rise, some day." Not


"TOUCH ME NOT"

only the half comforted cry of bereavement, "I shall meet them all again some time." That is a graveside morality which is only half religious. The true answer to the Easter call "He is Risen" is, "I will arise, and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father!"

"Resurgam!" "I will arise!" That is humanity's watchword now. There is no need for hiding even under the shadow of the cross itself. No shirking of hard duty, even for the blessed security of a life given to devotion and contemplation, away from life's temptations. No sitting under the willow trees in helpless grief. Merry ringlets of golden beauty bedeck even the willows at Easter time.

With all the world springing into renewed activity, man too, cries from his failures, his griefs, his backsliding, "I will arise and go to my Father." Every night he reminds himself, "I shall arise again tomorrow to a new life, somewhere." Every time he slips back in some manner, he cries, "I will arise." Resurrections are occurring all around us every day. New grip is taken on work here, new hope of better life there, everywhere the world is trying to rise and bear flowers, not thorns, for no one now deliberately starts out to do any but the right thing.

If a little flower can preach an Easter message, how much more a man or woman or child? Cheery fighting against trouble and difficulty has blessing in it for all who witness it. In rising to better things by sheer hard climbing, many another is helped too. The ruin of a man, who has found his way back to the strength which has made a man of him again, is himself one to whom others look and almost incredulously cry, "He is Risen," and possibly some one may say, "Then will I also cry, "I will arise and go to my Father' also."

In the words of one of the sweetest of the Easter hymns, written just as its author was telling his dying body, "I will arise," the Easter message, translated into action, has for its motto:

"I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness;
Where is Death's sting? Where Grave thy victory?
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me."

Sharing in Easter.

To have lost no joy, buried no hope, known no suffering is to come to Easter day with little sense of its meaning and fellowship. Only those who have deeply suffered can enter deeply into its glorious message.

Easter is the symbol of life triumphant, life more abundant, life rejoicing over death. It is the birthday of immortality, to be celebrated by all men with gladness. Whatever hope has been defeated in our lives, Easter offers us the victory. The dead we loved are not dead; they live forever in newness of life, awaiting our entrance into immortality. The things we have hoped to do, the things we have longed to reach, are only anticipations, after all, of what the soul shall possess in the larger life that Easter foreshadows.

In our modern living, of the day and for the day, the thought of immortality is often pushed aside. Easter bodies it out afresh—immortal love, immortal life, endless joy, everlasting hope, a clarion-call of power—Harper's Bazar.

Orig'n of the Easter Egg Custom.

The favor accorded to eggs among Eastertide observances is said to have originated from the ancient worship of Ostara, goddess of the East, whose feast was celebrated with much eating and drinking, many special offerings being made, including the egg of sea fowl. From northern Germany the worship extended into Great Britain. The Anglo-Saxon name for April, the season of the festival, was Easter monath, and in Germany this month is still known as Ostermonath. Many other of the popular Easter observances, especially in the Netherland and Germany indicate traces of similar origin. The egg is symbolical of the resurrection.

Explained.

"Why am I always the goat?"

"Because you persist in butting in."

The Process.

"How can a milk trust be investigated?"

"By pumping the witnesses."

Corrected.

"Bliggins always knows the latest story.

"Not the latest," replied Miss Cayenne, wearily, "the longest."—Washington Star.

Plea for Liberty.

Mrs. B. was entertaining a few friends and Elsie was allowed to remain in the room, provided she made no disturbance. But she was interested and talkative and asked so many questions that at last her mother became exasperated.

"Elsie, if you open your mouth another time, you'll have to go back upstairs. Now, remember!"

Elsie was accustomed to obey, so, for a long time, Elsie's lips were kept tightly closed. At last, however, she touched her mother and said softly:

"Mamma, can I open my mouth if I don't say anything?"—Chicago Tribune.

Too Late for Answer.

Henry Watterson, the well-known American journalist, told this story at a recent dinner party:

"One day when I was the city editor of a small newspaper, a fine turkey was left at the office. We all hankered after the bird, but the editor finally claimed it, took it home, and had it cooked for dinner. The next day a letter was handed in to him, which he opened and read:

"'Mr. Editor—I sent you a turkey yesterday which had been the cause of much dispute among us. To settle a bet, will you please state in tomorrow's issue what the turkey died of?'"

HIS CHANCE.

Mrs. Henpeck—Why, I only married you to spite Dick Jones.

Mr. Henpeck—Glad to hear it. Heretofore I thought it was because you had a grudge against me.

Member of the Union.

Men who worked under a former city editor on the Washington Post vouch for the truth of this story about him.

The telegraph editor, so the story goes, got a "flash" one night that John La Farge, the painter, was dead. He called the news out to the city editor, who, catching only the name and profession, yelled to a reporter:

"Willoughby! A painter by the name of La Farge is dead. Rush down to the Central Labor Union and see what you can dig up about him!"

Cruel to Be Kind.

"What makes you carry that horrible shriek machine for an automobile signal?"

"For humane reasons," replied Mr. Chuggins. "If I can paralyze a person with fear he will keep still and I can run to one side of him."

Its Nature.

"What's the weather report?"

"Blowing great guns."

"Great report!"

However, the man who knows just how to manage a woman never tried it.

No, Cordelia, a criminal lawyer isn't necessarily a criminal.

Silence is the college yell of the school of experience.