



#### THE EASTER LILY STORY.

Would you like to hear a little Easter lily story?

Once upon a time in a very large, old house, there was put to bed a little Easter lily baby. It was a funny little thing, round and hard, and wrapped tightly in a yellow-brown jacket. And it was so sleepy that as soon as it was made comfortable in a warm bed, and nicely covered over with a soft, brown cover, it went to sleep.

The old house was very still and very dark. There were no doors; no windows; only a few cracks, and these not near enough to let in any light. So the baby slept on and on, through many nights and days.

The sun shone warm and bright over the great brown house, and it was very comfortable.

After a long time the rain began to fall, then the sunbeams danced and played again; and the baby moved in its little bed.

Its yellow-brown jacket felt tight, and it twisted and turned, and swelled, till all at once, the jacket cracked open! Then the baby felt better, and began to be really awake.

There was plenty of food by it that its mother had put there, and several times the rain-drops brought it water to drink. So it had all it needed to help it grow. And it did grow, larger and larger every day.

And when the lily bulb baby was fairly awake, and growing every day, it changed! And it was a very wonderful and beautiful change that came to it. It was given a new body.

Every day the lily grew, and changed, and became more beautiful. The life that was in the little bulb body was taken up into the new plant body.

One by one, glossy green leaves grew from the stem, and the stem grew tall and strong, and lifted them up higher and higher, till the lily plant had grown as tall

as some of you little children. And, then, when it was able to reach far up in the light, at the very top of the stem, it put forth a new bud, a soft, pale, green, tender thing, that grew, and swelled, and turned silvery white.

It was spring time, and the bluebirds were singing. The most beautiful day in all the spring came—Easter Day—and the white bud opened, and curled back its pure, white petals, and breathed forth a sweet perfume on the still air.

The lily grew just as God meant for it to grow, pure and beautiful. God gave it the plain bulb body, and God gave it the lovely plant body.

And, little children, the Easter lily tells you, that God means for his little children to grow more pure, more lovely, every day, by doing just the things he means for you to do. He wants you to keep your body pure and clean, and your heart pure and clean, and so he is always sending you his loving help, as he sends the sunshine to the lily, that some day you may rise in new beauty.

How many a poor boy has been led to commit some crime that seemed small, and was small in itself, but it led to greater and still greater crimes, until a sad end was reached. We remember one poor lad who, standing on the scaffold, with the black cap on his face, said that his first crime was stealing a pin, the next one an apple, the next a knife, and so on, until he had at last killed a man. Beware of the little sins that ruin the life and damn the soul.

#### EASTER.

Give flowers to all the children  
This blessed Easter Day—  
Fair crocuses and snowdrops,  
And tulips brave and gay.

And tell them, tell the children,  
How in the dark, cold earth  
The flowers have been waiting  
Till spring should give them birth.

All winter long they waited,  
Till the south wind's soft breath  
Bade them rise up in beauty,  
And bid farewell to death.

Then tell the little children  
How Christ our Saviour, too,  
The flower of all eternity,  
Once death and darkness knew.

How, like these blossoms, silent  
Within the tomb he lay,  
Then rose in light and glory,  
To live in heaven for aye.

So take the flowers, children,  
And be ye pure as they,  
And sing to Christ our Saviour  
This blessed Easter Day!