

Family Department.

EASTER CHIMES.

BY JULIET C. MARSH.

Ring loud and clear your bells for Easter time,
Now quick, now slow.

From sea to sea, catch up the happy chime.
Bring all the flowers that blow,
For wreath and crown, an offering pure and
sweet,
Christ's rising morn to greet.

Ring long and deep your bells for suffering
borne

With tender grace.
Bring purple pansies, colors that are worn
Best with a sorrowing face;
And weave, with pine and cypress, and young
moss,
An emblematic cross,

Ring soft and slow your bells—a tender knell,
And softly weep;

Bring amaranth, and stainless asphodel,
In memory of that sleep
Which wrapped the world, in three days' shen
gloom,
While He was in the tomb.

Ring, ring your bells across the happy land,
This Easter morn.

Christ sits in heaven, at the Father's hand.
Bring blossoms to adorn
The conquered death whose victim has arisen—
The grave, which is no prison.

THE UNSPEAKABLE GIFT.

What then, is it, some one will say, this indwelling of the Spirit? If it be not sensible, and if it be not magical, surely it is nothing at all. My readers, this is one of the most sacred subjects upon which one man can speak to another; and I cannot but answer that he would be guilty of the most arrant presumption who should dare to say that he can define accurately, and decide exactly, how the Spirit of God is or is not to work. The words of the Saviour himself must surely be our guide in this—"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth; even so is every one that is born of the Spirit." In the visible world you cannot measure out the coming and going of the breath of heaven; you can only stand by and watch awhile. Now it is whispering softly through the Summer breeze, and now is driving wildly through the Winter storm. "Thou canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth." It is an influence before which the reed must bend, and the oak break; yet an influence intangible and unseen.

Even so, saith our Lord, is the Spirit, is the coming and going of the Divine influence. The human heart is like the chaos of the waters, rent and torn and troubled by the conflicting forces of creation, that are struggling to work out the second birth; and over the face of the deep there is brooding, as of old, the Spirit of God working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. It is true that we cannot see Him; it is true that our senses cannot feel Him; but, nevertheless, we know that He is there by the wondrous power which He exerts on the life, and the wondrous help which He is ever ready to give. But how, you will say, is this consistent with that other assertion, that the influence of the Spirit is not to be apprehended by the senses? The answer is simple enough; that that which is intangible in its operation may be very tangible indeed in its results. You cannot see the storm pass by you, but you know that it has passed where the oak lies prostrate. You cannot see God's Spirit succouring a man who is struggling and wellnigh falling before the attack of some fearful temptation, but you know that it has succoured him, when you see the temptation overcome. And you know that it was not in his own strength that he overcame when you see next day, his brother, like him in all but his possession of God's Spirit, weakly yielding to the attack of something infinitely less formidable. The work of the Spirit is, indeed, to be known by its fruits—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, patience, meekness, temperance. These things are not innate in fallen human nature; but these are things which God's Spirit will, if unresisted, pour richly into every heart, and by their presence there you shall know that it is His home.

One other question men sometimes ask: "How shall I get possession of this Spirit of God?" Reader, I think

that that is a mistaken question. I think it is put altogether the wrong way. If our God whom we worship were a distant Being, one who had to be sought after by long searching in order to be found; if He were a hard being, who denied Himself, and concealed Himself from all but the most pressing, then that question might well be asked. But such, blessed be His Holy Name, is not at all His character. If there be any truth in the words of the Bible, if there be any truth in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, then our God is not a distant God, not a hard God, loving to hide Himself, but rather a loving God longing to reveal Himself, and the question which we must ask is not so much, How shall I gain possession of Him? but how shall I let Him take possession of me? Ah! it will not do for us to think of God's Spirit as something far away from us, which we have to go long distances to fetch, which we have to struggle to gain.

The presence of God's Spirit is all around us, like the very atmosphere which we breathe, like our native air. It is only when we close the windows and bar the doors, it is only when we insist upon breathing the tainted atmosphere of our own creation, that we keep Him out of the habitation of our hearts. Only unbar the doors, and throw wide open the casements, and you will not need to ask, How shall I gain God's Spirit? for His Presence will come in, like a fertilizing flood, and fill you full of God. Do you ask what difference will it make? What difference does it make when you open the doors and windows of some long-closed house, and let in the glorious air of heaven? For the moment, perhaps, you see no change. But presently there comes an alteration. You begin to breathe more freely; you feel that you are stronger, healthier than before. Life that was sinking and dying in the vitiated atmosphere begins to brighten and revive, and soon, though it is hard to describe the difference, you are a changed man. Even so, my readers, will God's Spirit flood your heart, if you will but let Him. It is not that you must reach Him, but that you must let Him reach you. Only so many of us will not; we will keep Him out; we will follow the guidance of our own hearts, sometimes even wilfully mistaking that for His guidance. May He help us all to get rid of our self-deceit, and just simply to give up ourselves, without one single reservation, wholly unto Himself.—*The Rev. W. Covington.*

THE HEINOUSNESS OF SIN.

Let the Cross teach you the heinousness of sin. So only will it be your salvation from sin. If it brought Christ to the Cross, shall it not bring you to Hell? Yes, if you indulge it; no, if you crucify it. Oh, how the Tempter must look on in Satanic mockery as he sees men trifling with evil, speaking of sin as a frailty of nature; a thing to be palliated, or dealt softly with, smoothed over, or even jested with! It is a solemn, awful, terrible thing; so awful that it could bring all this inconceivable misery upon the Creator Himself, before even He could work its cure and loose its hold upon those He had created. Never in this life can we fully know the terrible-ness of evil. The story of the Cross, the history of the Holy Week, stands written that the eye of faith may look upon it, may study it, may meditate upon it, until something of a true Christian horror of evil may be kindled in us; and then, and not till then, do we lay hold upon the Cross as the weapon of our salvation.

Oh, men and women, think of this when temptation is strong and the flesh weak, when frivolity and levity are sweeping you along, and idle words and foolish fancies, or worldly glitter, are taking all the stamina out of your spiritual life; fall upon your knees; call up the scene of the way of sorrows; the hill of Calvary; the supernatural gloom; and say, "This was the work of sin; I am as good as repeating all that once more." For so you are. You who professed to be saved from sin by the Cross: you to sin wilfully once more; what do you do but mock the Cross you profess to trust in, and embrace the Sin that wrought the Passion? Ah, does not the Saviour bleed again as you crucify Him afresh? See His sad eyes fixed upon you with their silent pleading as they say, "Is it then nothing to you?" And be very sure that to those who pass it by and turn back unto their own wickedness—it will be nothing in that Day when nought but the Cross of Christ can save you from the doom. Thus, then, the

Cross of Christ is the revelation of the awfulness of Sin; it is the standing warning—the tremendous, overpowering, overwhelming warning to all Christian men to the end of time, of the deadly mischief which lurks in every—even the least—access of sin to the soul of man.

And as this thing sin is in us all, and as we have to be cured of it, therefore, Brethren beloved, is it, that no Christian man dares for one moment leave hold of that Cross and Saviour by which and by whom his own Sin is to be cured. The flesh must be crucified, for sin is in the flesh. The world must be renounced, for the world is at enmity with God. The Christian dares not set his heart upon anything whatever in this perishing time. It does not signify much. There is all eternity before us in which to rejoice at will before our God. For the few years we have to spend in this world we must be content to sign all things with the sign of the Cross and set our hearts on none.—*Literary Churchman.*

FAITH AND FEELING.

Faith is to precede feeling. Incalculable mischief has crept into Christian experience through the neglect of this simple truth. A religion that rests upon feeling, for either its security or comfort, will find itself tottering and trembling to the end. Yet so common and so great has been the loss sustained in this way that, having recognized it, we are now not a little in danger of an extreme reaction. There are some who, at least, seem to teach that faith is not only to precede feeling, but to supersede it. . . . Nothing that we discover in heart or life need hinder us in coming to Christ to seek deliverance from sin. We may even use our worst discoveries as our plea in coming. . . . But if, after He has healed me and taught me the conditions of sustaining health. I find myself again unloving, cold, perturbed, fretting, moody, I have not the least right to say that all is well, and that, disregarding all this, I am to believe myself fully accepted in Christ. Unless I bring this disturbance to Him for confession, forgiveness and healing, I am utterly at fault. Our feelings are of importance. The same Creator who set the faithful nerves as sentinels along all the lines of the senses, to give due warning of danger and disease, gave a corresponding sensitiveness to our souls. Faith is not to discharge this as unnecessary, but to retain it in her service.—*Fulness of Blessing.*

A CRYSTAL CROSS.

A FRIEND of ours has a remarkable formation of quartz crystal. A large rough boulder, being broken into hemispheres, was found to contain a chamber in which was a perfect crystal cross, rising perpendicularly from the base of the boulder. Its upright part just touched the top of the little cave, and its arms reached almost to the stone wall on either side. The rains of many winters had filtered through the soil and the granite, and by some secret method had formed that crystal cross as perfect as a jeweller's art could fashion, and far more beautiful.

So in silence and darkness God forms the jewels for His Kingdom, and through the agency of storms builds up in human hearts the cross of faith. Aimless and ungoverned as sometimes seem the disciplines that sweep over us, pitiless and without law the afflictions that pursue us, God locks the secret of His operations in invisible places. It is not for the world to read the methods of Divine Grace. It is not for the subject of trial to be conscious always of its uses. They may elude the deepest scrutiny till eternity breaks apart the secret of Divine Love. Then it may appear how subtly and finely, and with what heavenly art, our life has been led onward. The clouds that beat upon us, the tears that drilled furrows into the heart, the silence which was the only answer to the spirit's sob, "How long, O Lord!" all moved to a Divine rhythm in building up, not so much a character, as a faith, in making crystalline not a tool of service, but a cross of trust. At last in experience as in theology, the passion and planning, and waiting of life, gather into crystals in the form of a cross. The roughest boulder that clumsy workmen throw aside as unfit for a place in earthly building, may, by the chemistry of God, reveal that crystal jewel that concentrates the splendor of the Word for whose upbuilding all storms are sent, and all sunlight falls. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee."—*The Interior.*

EASTER.

"The LORD is risen." "The LORD is risen indeed."

"Vain the stone, the watch, the seal,
Christ has burst the gates of hell."

Easter means rising. Every thought about this glorious feast brings us to the idea of rising. Jesus Christ died for our sins and was buried, and on the third day He rose from the dead to open for us the way to everlasting life.

This is, then, a time of great rejoicing. Is it so to all? It ought to be, of course. But it can be only to those who have truly sorrowed with Him at His cross, who have kept Lent well. Those holy women who were the latest at the cross on Good Friday, were the earliest at the sepulchre on Easter morning. And so it will always be. We said that Easter means rising. The Easter joy expresses it; the beautiful early service expresses it; the flowers with which loving hands deck the House of God express it. But what rising, what Easter is there for any one who has not humbled himself in the dust before the bleeding cross of Christ? Having buried our sins with Him, our Easter is the rising from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above." God grant we all may do so and have our citizenship in Heaven.

"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through JESUS CHRIST, our LORD."

CONFIRMATION.

THERE are some things which a man can see with his eyes open. Look into your New Testament at the Acts of the Apostles, the eighth chapter and the seventeenth verse, and you will find that the Apostles, when persons had been baptized, "laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost." Look into the same Book, at the nineteenth chapter, and you will find St. Paul doing the same thing for the converts at Ephesus, and the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, you will find the same writer saying that confirmation or the laying on of hands is one of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. Go to an Episcopal Church, at the Bishop's visitation, and you will see him doing just what the Apostles used to do. He lays hands upon the people who have been already baptized because the Apostles did it. Go back a little in history, and you will find that the Bishops have always, as the heads of the Church, done this. You find that where there is a true Bishop, one of his sacred duties is to administer the rite of Confirmation. Where there is no Bishop, there is no Confirmation, and so much of the Church of Christ as goes with this act is omitted and put away.

Now then, this is a mark of the true Church. This one act, shows so far as it goes, that the Anglican, or, as we say in this country, the Episcopal Church is a true part of the Church of Christ. It is a living witness to any one with his eyes open, that we are not a modern sect that we go back in our practices, to the early Church and do just as the Apostles did. — It shows where the Church stands amid rival societies, each of which claims to possess the whole doctrine of the Gospel. Let people think of this, Why all the denominations do not have the Scriptural rite of Confirmation? The answer may be, "Because we have no Bishops." "Why no Bishops?" we reply, and here you at once perceive that modern religion has changed its base and is not the same kind of religion as that which you find in the New Testament. Is it not a matter of some importance to belong to a Church whose usages come up to the New Testament idea of the Church? If you may omit Confirmation, why may you not omit Baptism, or the Lord's Supper, or anything else? Who is to say how much or how little?—*Am. paper.*

JESUS EVER NEAR.

Jesus is very near to us, if we seek a lesson for our daily guidance in every act and word of His; and there is no reason why He should not be as constant a guide to us as He was to His disciples, if we can only divest ourselves of a certain conventional way of looking at His life, and generalizing His precepts. Time spent with Him should be fruitful; and if we really wish it, He is ready at all times

to take us into the inner sanctuary of His heart. It is not for one to inquire what the other has seen and heard. God has secrets for each one of us; His special revelations which He makes in His own way, and His way is never twice the same. He has Peters, and Johns, and Magdalens, among His children to-day, as in the days of old. To some He comes in baptismal innocence, to some He shows Himself in repentance, and to some, again, He reveals Himself fully only in sorrow. Let us seek Him according to His Word; let us knock; let us ask; let us make ready for His coming; but when He has come we shall need no man to tell us; for our hearts shall "burn within us," and we shall learn "things hidden from the foundation of the world."

HOW TO BE MISERABLE.

Think about yourself; about what you want, what you like, what respect people ought to pay you, what people think of you, and then to you nothing will be pure. You will spoil everything you touch, you will make sin and misery for yourself out of every thing which God sends you. You will be as wretched as you choose, on earth or in heaven either. The proud, greedy, selfish, self-seeking spirit would turn heaven into hell. It did turn heaven into hell, for the great devil himself. It was by pride, by seeking his glory—so, at least, wise men say—that he fell from heaven to hell.

EASTER is the believer's day of rejoicing, the Christian's special season of comfort. Most precious of all is it to those who mourn, whom it bids "not to sorrow as men without hope." It might indeed be to all who profess and call themselves Christians the Days of days, were it not for those mischievous teachings of a special judgment, of the annihilation of the wicked, of purgatory, and of the heavenly translation of the Saints, the mingled web of Popery and perversion which has been spun around the Catholic faith. We believe it yearly grows in power, and that they who in honoring "do the will" are coming to "know of the doctrine." There is still a little, a very little, lingering prejudice against it, but this cannot long withstand the spirit with which the day is kept. For that leads the preacher to look into the cause for keeping it, and thus into the Scripture Word; and when this is done, the cause of the truth is more than half won.

OH, THE GLORIOUS JOY OF EASTER! However great the mystery that surrounds and conceals the future life, that future life is assured; and however little may be the knowledge which has been vouchsafed to man regarding that life, there is the belief—the profound, the all-absorbing conviction—for Christians, that they "shall ever be with the Lord." It is enough. It is the grandest statement, and the most wonderful knowledge ever given to man.

A PERSON who denies the Apostolic Succession because nowhere literally stated in Scripture, ought in consistency to deny the Godhead of the Holy Ghost, which is nowhere literally stated in Holy Scripture.—*Tracts for the Times.*

Marriages.

ATKINSON—McROBERTS.—At the residence of the bride's father, Carleton Mills, Kent County, N. B., on the 6th inst., by the Rev. F. H. Almon, Rector of St. Mary's, Mr. J. F. Atkinson to Margaret G., daughter of A. McRoberts, Esq., formerly of St. John.

MACRAE—RAFUSE.—At Halifax, N. S., on the 14th inst., by the Rev. A. F. Townend, Farquhar Macrae, Ross-shire, Scotland, G. B., to Miss B. M. Rafuse, Martin's Point, Lunenburg County.

HARVEY—ANNAND.—On April 6th, at St. Leonard's Church, Streatham, by Rev. S. Eardly, John Noble Harvey, of Empire Ranch, Arizona, U. S., (formerly of Halifax), to Alice Maud, fourth daughter of William Annand, Esq., Thorndean, Streatham, Surrey, England.

Deaths.

FIELD.—On Saturday, April 16, at 65 Cornwallis Street, Halifax, Sarah C., widow of William Ford, and daughter of William Dorey, Hubbard's Cove, in the 48th year of her age.

TWINING.—At Halifax, on Thursday, 14th inst., Winniett Edward St. George, beloved son of H. St. George and Ada Twining, aged 2 years and 9 months.

HOCKIN.—At Pictou, 14th inst., Maria, beloved wife of John M. Hockin, in the 39th year of her age.