

Easter Hymn.

Shine forth in all thy splendour;
 Joyfully pursue thy way;
 For the Lord and my defender
 Pose triumphant on this day.
 When he bowed his head, sore troubled,
 Thou didst hide thyself in night;
 Shine forth now with rays redoubled,
 He is risen with thy light.

Faith, be joyous and glad-hearted,
 Spread out all thy vernal bloom;
 For thy Lord is not departed,
 He has broken through thy tomb.
 When the Lord expired, wide-yawning
 Thy strong rocks were rent with fright;
 Greet thy risen Lord this morning,
 Roused in floods of rosy light.

Say, my soul, what preparation
 Meetest thou for this high day,
 When the God of thy salvation
 Opened through the tomb a way?
 Dwellst thou with pure affection
 On this proof of our power and love?
 Doth thy Saviour's resurrection
 Raise thy thoughts to things above?

See! thy Lord himself is risen,
 That thou mightest also rise,
 And emerge from sin's dark prison
 To new life and open skies.
 Come to him who can unbind thee,
 And reverse thy awful doom;
 Come to him, and leave behind thee
 Thy old life,—an empty tomb.

Easter Customs.

BY J. K. BLOOMFIELD.

EASTER is a joyous festival observed in Christian churches in many parts of the world from the earliest times. It represents the Jewish Passover mentioned in Acts 12:4 as Easter, as well as later with us as the resurrection of Christ.

In Russia the Easter festivities begin with great pomp at midnight, with a long procession, the clergy bearing tapers, the military and civil authorities torches. This is to signify that light has come into the world through the glorious resurrection of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. They also salute one another with the cry: "*Kristos voskres!*" "Christ is risen." "He is risen indeed!" comes back the answer; and those of the same rank kiss one another and present a coloured egg.

In the Moravian church, in Bethlehem, we are told, the children of the Sunday-school are seated together in the church on Easter morn, for a very early service, and before leaving the church a small lighted candle is given to each child, then they form in procession and march out of church singing a hymn as to Christ being the Light of the World, risen to redeem them. The congregation then follow and all go to the cemetery near by, and scatter flowers, emblems of the resurrection, on the graves.

Flowers, in various ways, are used profusely at Easter; the beautiful white lily, emblematic of purity, being the favourite. Of late it has been the custom to send the flowers from the different churches to the poor sick members confined at home, also to the hospitals and homes for the aged, where they are eagerly welcomed for their fragrance, beauty and breath, as it

were, of the out door life from which they are secluded. Another pleasing custom has recently been established, that of sending Easter cards and letters to the sick by the City Missionary.

There are many rites of heathen origin still observed in some parts of the Old Country, but the most universal and pleasing one now is the use of *Pasch eggs*; coloured or ornamented in various ways and hidden about the house or grounds. And a merry time is had searching for them, to see who can find the most. The little German children imagine that all their curious coloured Easter eggs are laid by hares, which live in some near forest. For weeks before Easter they are busy preparing inviting nests for the little hares or *haschens*, as they call them. The nests are made of hazel twigs stuck in the ground, in such a way as to form circles, and these circles are filled with straw. It is said the hares never lay any eggs for curious children who hide behind trees and bushes to watch for their coming. But the good children, who trust them, are rewarded by finding their nests brim full of bright coloured eggs.

Another use made of Easter eggs, which signify life coming out of a tomb, is a game called "Kippen." Two hard-boiled eggs are struck against one another, and the one that is cracked is given to the person holding the whole egg. The possessor of a hard shell egg is often fortunate in gaining nearly all the eggs from those taking part in the game.

A German game called "Eierlesen," is not so generally known. The boys collect from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and thirty eggs, and march with a band of music to a distant meadow or pasture. The eggs are placed in a long row about two feet apart. The empty basket stands at one end of the row, and at a given signal, a boy runs to the other end, takes the last egg, and carries it to the basket; he then goes for the next, and so on, back and forth, until all the eggs have been placed in the basket. In the meanwhile another boy runs to a village about a mile and a half distant, and brings a broom or some other object to prove that he was actually there. The one who performs the task first is pronounced victor. They then march back to the village, the eggs are baked and eaten, and songs sung.

Much more could be told of the tansy cake and tansy pudding prepared in England and Scotland at Easter, and intended to represent the use of bitter herbs at the Paschal feast, and of other Eastern customs, did space permit. We can only add, in all our games and various observances let us not forget the one great fact that has given us Easter—the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

MIND your heart! Don't let the love of sin dwell in it. Don't give it to Satan, but ask Jesus to make it his throne.

The Easter-Tide.

AND now comes again this beautiful and most interesting anniversary—the day which marks the resurrection of our Lord. It is a quiet day; not filled with jubilation and merriment of the Christmas-tide. It is not marked with the giving of presents to any considerable extent, nor with the multiplied demonstrations of joy that belong to Christmas; and yet how wonderful is the event it commemorates!

On the Friday previous occurred the dark scenes of the crucifixion. On that day, very early in the morning, and after the agony in Gethsemane, Judas betrayed his Master to his foes. While it was not yet day, Jesus was arraigned before the high priest and the council, and not long after before Pilate, then before Herod, and again before Pilate; and by noon he hung a bleeding victim on the dreadful cross. Then followed the darkness, when, for three hours, the sun refused to look upon the scene on Calvary, and when the earthquake shook the mountain on which Jerusalem stood, and the vail of the temple was rent in twain. And when, on the Friday evening, the sun was setting, the friends of Jesus were laying his dead body to rest in the earth, then came Jewish officials to put a seal upon the tomb, and a guard of Roman soldiers kept watch about it that his disciples might not take the body away. The disciples, thoroughly disheartened and affrighted, were scattered about the city, not expecting ever to see the Lord again in the body in which they had known him, for, though he had said to them that he should be crucified, and on the third day he should rise again, they did not comprehend the meaning of his words.

But now came the third day. It was the day after the Sabbath. And now, having kept sacredly the holy day, the women went to the tomb to complete the embalming which the haste of Friday evening did not permit. How great was their surprise on coming to the tomb to find it empty, and a vision of angels to tell them that Jesus was not there, but was risen, as he said. The great stone was rolled away from the mouth of the sepulchre. The soldiers had been overwhelmed by a power they had never before known, and had fallen to the earth as if smitten in battle. The linen clothes in which Jesus had been wrapped, and the napkin that was wound about his head, were all that now remained to tell that he had lain in the earth. Jesus had broken the power of death, and was alive again.

Soon after this Mary Magdalene saw the Lord. Some time during the day Peter saw him. Toward the evening he walked with two disciples in the direction of Emmaus. In the evening he appeared to ten, Thomas being absent. After this he was seen again of all the disciples, and once by more than five hundred. Then, forty

days after the resurrection, he led the eleven to the brow of Mount Olivet, and, having blessed them, ascended to heaven.

Jesus, though once he was dead, is alive, and sits at the right hand of the Father in heaven, making intercession for us. And to all who love him he says, "Because I live ye shall live also." Not only shall our spirits live with him in heaven, but he assures us that all who are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth again alive.

Easter Eggs.

THEIR SYMBOLIC MEANING AND POETIC SIGNIFICANCE.

THE egg, symbol of unrevealed life, in all ages and every country has been the subject of poetical myths and legends.

In France and Germany the custom of offering eggs at the Easter festival is so old that its origin is lost. The Russians and Jews also give Easter eggs, while the Persians present them at the beginning of the new year. With the Romans the year commenced at Easter, as it did among the Franks under the Capets. Mutual presents were bestowed, and as the egg is the emblem of the beginning of all things, nothing better could be found as an offering. The symbolic meaning is not to be misunderstood. Eggs are the germs of fecundity and abundance, and we wish our friends all the blessings contained within its slender shell when we offer the gift, whose fragility represents that of happiness here below.

In some remote districts of France it is still customary for the priest of the parish to go round to each house at Easter and bestow on it his blessing. In return he receives eggs both plain and painted.

The idea of fabricating imitation eggs in sugar and pasteboard is of comparatively modern origin, and was brought into life by the genius of trade. In both France and Germany their manufacture is an important source of traffic. In Paris, that city which Beranger says is "full of gold and misery," the splendours of the Easter eggs are almost fabulous. Once a Parisian house furnished, as a present for the Infanta of Spain, an egg which cost nearly \$4,000. It was a wonder in its way. It was formed of white enamel; on its inside was engraved the gospel for Easter day; and by an ingenious mechanism a little bird, lodged in the pretty cage, sang twelve airs from as many fashionable operas.

The designs for Easter eggs in Paris are more numerous than the flowers of the field, and more unique and beautiful than the dreams of a barbaric king. Eggs, eggs everywhere—eggs unbroken, eggs opened and revealing wonders within, eggs transported on the shoulders of fairies, eggs decorated in every conceivable style and made of every conceivable material.