

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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[No. 13.]

The Watch at the Sepulchre.

From east to west I've
marched beneath the
eagles;

From Pontus unto Gaul,
Kept many a watch on
which, by death sur-
rounded,
I've seen each comrade
fall.

Fear! I could laugh until
these rocks re-echoed,
To think that I should
fear—
We have met death in every
form unshrinking—
To watch this dead man
here.

In Daclan forests, sitting by
our watch-fire,
I've kept the wolves at
bay;
On Rhetian Alps escaped the
ice-hills' hurling
Close where our legions
lay.

On moonless nights, upon
the sands of Libya,
I sat with shield firm set,
And heard the lion roar in
this fore-arm
The tiger's teeth have met.

I was star-gazing when he
stole upon me,
Until I felt his breath,
And saw his jewel eyes
gleam; then he seized me,
And instant met his death.

My weapon in his thick-
velned neck I buried,
My feet his warm blood
dyed;
And then I bound the wound,
and till the morning
Lay couched upon his side.

Here, though the stars are
velled, the peaceful city
Lies at our feet asleep,
Round us the still more
peaceful dead are lying
In clumber yet more deep.

A low wind moaning glides
among the olives
Till every hill-side sighs;
But round us here the
moanings seem to mus-
ter,
And gather where he lies.

And through the darkness
faint, pale gleams are
flying.

That touch this hill alone;
Whence these unearthly
lights? And whence the
shadows
That move upon the stone?

If the Olympian Jove awoke
in thunder
His great eyes I could
meet;

But his, if once again they
looked upon me,
Would strike me to his
feet.

He looked as if my brother hung there
bleeding,
And put my soul to shame;
As if my mother with his eyes was
pleading,
And pity overcame,
But could not save. He who in death
was hanging
On the accursed tree.

Was he the Son of God? For so in
dying
He seemed to die for me.
And all my pitiless deeds came up before
me.
Gazed at me from his face;
What if he rose again and I should meet
him?
How awful is this place!



THE FIRST EASTER.

The Lord of Life is Risen.

The Lord of Life is risen!
Sing, Easter heralds, sing!
He bursts his rocky prison;
Wide let the triumph ring!
Tell how the graves are quaking,
The saints their fetters breaking;
Sing, heralds, Jesus lives!

In death no longer lying,
He rose, the Prince, to-
day!
Life of the dead and dying,
He triumphed o'er decay.
The Lord of life is risen;
In ruins lies death's prison,
Its keeper bound in chains.

We hear in thy blest greet-
ing,
Salvation's work is done:
We worship thee, repeating,
Life for the dead is won,
O head of all believing!
O joy of all the grieving!
Unite us, Lord, to thee.

Here at thy tomb, O Jesus,
How sweet the morning's
breath!
We hear in all the breezes,
"Where is thy sting, O
death?"
Dark hell flies in commotion,
While, far o'er earth and
ocean,
Loud hallelujahs ring!

Oh, publish this salvation,
Ye heralds, through the
earth!
To every buried nation
Proclaim the day of birth!
Till, rising from their slum-
bers
The countless heathen num-
bers,
Shall hail the risen light.

Hail, hail, our Jesus risen!
Sing, ransomed brethren,
ding!
Through death's dark,
gloomy prison
Let Easter chorals ring.
Haste, haste, ye captive
legions!
Come forth from sin's dark
regions!
In Jesus' kingdom live.

THE EASTER FESTIVAL.

On this happy Easter morning, it is perhaps not amiss that we should tell our young readers something of the history of this great Christian festival. It is held in commemoration of the resurrection of our Saviour, and is called Pascha by the Roman and Greek Churches. It is a movable feast, occurring at any date between March 21 and April 25, and by it the other movable feasts throughout the ecclesiastical year are regulated. It is held about the same time as the Jewish Passover, or Paschal Feast, although it very seldom happens that the Christian and Jewish festivals are observed on the same day. In the early Church this festival lasted several days, and catechumens were then usually admitted to the rite of baptism. At present its celebration is confined in the

Church of England to Easter-eve, Easter Sunday, and the Monday and Tuesday in Easter week. In the Roman Catholic Church it is a time of enjoyment, because the restrictions imposed during the preceding period of Lent are no longer to be observed. Some ascribe the institution of the Easter festival to the apostles, but the