

EASTER.

BY MARGARET E. HANCOCK.

**H**AT day, in old Jerusalem, when Christ, our Lord, was slain, I wonder if the children hid, and wept in grief and pain:

Dear little ones, on whose fair brows His tender touch had been, Whose infant forms had nestled close His loving arms within.

I think that very soberly went mournful little feet

When Christ, our Lord, was laid away in Joseph's garden sweet, And wistful eyes grew very sad, and dimpled cheeks grew white, When He who suffered babes to come was prisoned from the light.

But hark, ere the sleeping world on Easter dawn had stirred,

Ere in the leafy-curtained nest had waked the earliest bird, Some little child whom Jesus loved in slumber may have smiled,

By fanning of an angel's wing to happy dreams beguiled.

For, hastening down from heaven above while still the east was gray,

The joyful Easter angels came to pause where Jesus lay;

So shining strong, and beautiful they swept along the skies,

But veiled their faces in the hour that saw our Lord arise.

Oh, still, when we are sorrowful, and scarce for tears can see,

The angels of the Easter-time are sent our help to be;

And doubtless he whose task it was to roll the stone away

Is felt in homes where shadows brood, a presence sweet to-day.

With beaming looks and eager words the glad surprise he gave

To those who sought their buried Lord, and found an empty grave;

For truly Christ had conquered death, Himself the Prince of Life,

And none of all His followers shall fail in any strife.

Oh, little ones, around the cross your Easter garlands twine,

And bring your precious Easter-gifts to many a sacred shrine,

And chant with voices fresh and clear—the seraphs singing too—

In homage to the Mighty One who died and rose for you.

To churches grand, to chambers dim, to mounds all green and low,

Your hands o'erbrimmed with snowy flowers, in blithe processions go;

And, better still, let offerings of pure young hearts be given

On Easter-day to Him who reigns the king of earth and heaven.

AN EASTER MESSAGE FOR THE YOUNG.

BY MRS LLEWELLYN (L. A. D.)

"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was buried for our iniquities."—Isaiah liii. 5.

**E**ASTER DAY seems to me the very gladdest of our Christian festivals. I think it is like passing out of the gloom and darkness of a dreary winter's night into the soft, clear brightness of a beautiful spring day, when bird and tree and flower are glad and gay together. Yes; but there is more than earthly sunshine to make our Easter-day so bright. You know Easter is kept in memory of the greatest day our world has known, and though nearly nineteen hundred years have passed since the first Easter-day, yet the wonderful story of what happened then is as fresh as ever.

We have just been specially remembering a very sad event in the life of that precious Saviour whose birth into our world we were celebrating with

thankful hearts at Christmas. Ah, what a wonderfully loving life his was! Not a very long one, though to some of you who are only nine or ten years old, thirty-three years may seem a very long time. But how much of sorrow and suffering there was in it! And why? You know, don't you, why it all was? Our text tells us. Shall we read the whole of it? It is one verse out of many lovely ones in the same chapter—verses which are full of hope and encouragement and glad thanksgiving for you, as you sadly think of all the wrong things in the past, and wonder how you may come to God and be forgiven. You may come through this Jesus, of whom the whole chapter is full. It is just for his sake that God will receive you, and send into your hearts the sweet sense of his favour and forgiveness. I cannot tell you with what pleased readiness the great Father's ear catches the faintest whisper of his dear Son's name from the lips of any who are really wanting his help. But now let us read the whole verse, and see what it teaches us.

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Surely this is good news! You could not have thought of anything so good if God had not written it down in his own book. Here is one who has stood in your place, and borne the penalty of your sin. Think of it! And that one is God's dear and only Son. Yes, he has suffered instead of you; for the next verse tells us that we have all "gone astray" like poor wandering sheep. Instead of following in the steps of our God Shepherd, we have gone on in our own wrong way. Do you not feel that this has been often true of you? And so because we cannot save ourselves, or make an atonement for sin, "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

There is a sense in which these words are true of everybody. It is quite true that Christ died for all—but everybody is not saved. Perhaps some of you are not, as you read these lines. These precious words cannot be a glad message to you until you take the Lord Jesus to be your own Saviour. Will you not do it now? God has laid your iniquity upon him. Remember the precious Saviour was "wounded" and "bruised" and "chastened" for you during those terrible hours in the garden of Gethsemane, when "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood." Ah, you can never tell how much he suffered there! but it was almost more than even he—the divine Saviour—could bear. Well may you love him with your whole heart's love for what he has done for you. Picture him climbing slowly and sadly the slopes of Mount Olivet, and submitting to all the shame of a death on the cross in order that he might save you. And now, if you are truly sorry for the wrong things in your hearts and lives, which have so often wounded the Saviour afresh, God says you may each of you put the little words "my" and "I" into the verse. Let us do it now: "He was bruised for my iniquities, the chastisement of my peace was upon him; and with his stripes I am healed." Yes, even I, a poor little sinful child—"with his stripes I am healed." O, if you can say this, you will indeed have a glad Easter-tide!

You can bring no thank-offering this Easter to the Lord Jesus so acceptable as yourselves; and then you may bring all sorts of loving deeds done to everybody you can, as grateful thank-offerings to the love which has saved you. I heard some pretty words the other day which I think I must tell you, and I should like all of you who have already given yourselves to Jesus to remember them every day:

"Loving deeds, for Jesus' sake, Now our best thank-offering make."

God bless you all, dear little ones, and give to each a joyous Easter-tide!

"MARY!"

BY KATHARINE LENTE STEVENSON.

**H**, the sun rose bright, and the birds sweetly sang That first glad Easter day.

When the women came, with their last, sad gifts,

To the place where their Master lay; But their hearts were as hushed as the silent tomb,

The soft light, to them, was but deeper gloom.

Oh, the little birds caroled their blithest songs

When Mary, in sad surprise, Cried, "Sir, if you've borne Him hence away, Tell me, now, where my Master lies."

And they wondered, those birds, that she should not rejoice, That she needed to hear her Master's voice.

But the scales fell swift from her tear-bound eyes,

And her ears caught the anthem sweet, When her Lord struck softly that loved, lost chord

Which brought her, in joy, to His feet; Then her doubts were all merged in the heart's glad creed,

As she sang, with the birds, "He is risen indeed."

Oh, the sun shines bright and the birds gaily sing

On this glad Easter day: For the anthem swell of that wondrous hymn, It abides in the world always.

'E'en the green earth tells of an empty tomb,

Of a victor crowned in its deepest gloom.

But we stand without, blind, as Mary stood, And our doubts dull our ears to the voice;

Oh, speak to us now one low, sweet word, Let our hearts, with the birds, rejoice!

Make it more, on our lips, than an idle creed— This glad Easter song: "He is risen indeed!"

THE TOBACCO NUISANCE.

**T**HE annoyance and insult to which railway travellers and others are frequently subjected, shows that the acquirement has not mended their manners. The very presence of heavy smokers in a crowded and heated assembly, with nature at work to expel the nicotine from their insulted bodies, makes the whole company suffer from the loathsome nuisance. Smokers are—most of them—selfish and disagreeable: they have but little regard for the comfort of others. They have only to remember their own unpleasant feelings when learning to smoke to be convinced how disgusting the weed is to those who do not use it; yet the average smoker will puff his abominable fumes under your very nose, with an air of indifference as sublime as if he were diffusing the aroma of roses.

The unseemly pipe and cigar, the sucking and puffing, the selfish insolence of the smoker in forcing the poisonous smoke, after having been in his dirty mouth and diseased lungs,

into the clothes, food and drink, into the apartments, faces, mouths and lungs of clean persons, ladies and children especially, may be fashionable, but, to say the least, it is not in harmony with the golden rule thus to insult society. Why are these sickening presentations viewed with so little manifestation of disgust, even by the refined? Mostly because we are used to them—they are popular and fashionable.

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien, That to be hated needs but to be seen; But seen too oft familiar with her face, We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

How sensible men can feel comfortable, while seeing those with whom they are conversing avert their faces—turn from their disgusting breath, we do not know. Can it be that those who use the filthy weed think that they are making themselves a nuisance for the glory of God? Such people must know that they are slaves to a foolish, debasing lust, which has greater influence over them than their respect for their neighbours' comfort or regard for the claims of God.

Wherever we go we are reminded that smoking is the foe of good fellowship. In places of public amusement, how often does the announcement, "No smoking allowed!" meet the eye. On some railways they provide cars for the principal trains, into which the smokers may be turned as sheep into a pen, and such cars are labelled "For smokers." Thus everywhere the poor smoker goes about, Cain-like, with the brand of "a pest to society" written on his brow.

To those who make the objection, "But this is a free country, and have I not the right to smoke?" we answer Yes, Mr. Smoker, this is a free country, and other people have rights as well as you; and so you have not a right to annoy others unnecessarily. You may have a right to smoke, according to your definition. We do not believe you have a right to smoke, for we believe it is wrong to smoke, and no man has a right to do wrong.—Rev. A. Sims.

EASTER EGGS.

**W**HEN I was little, like most of you, my pets, it was always a great mystery to me why eggs were used so freely on Easter Sunday. When you break an egg at breakfast on Easter, you are doing just what Roman boys and girls did centuries ago, for they began the first meal of the day with eggs, and the egg was looked upon as a symbol of the resurrection and the future life. The giving of an egg is considered a mark of friendship, and the preparing of it is always a work of love. The Russian salutes a friend on Easter morning with, "Christ is risen," and offers him his Easter egg, and in some parts of Scotland it is said to be the custom for young people to go out early on Easter morning and search for wild fowls' eggs to be used at breakfast, and it is thought lucky to find them.

The confectioner's windows are full of fancy candy eggs, but far prettier are the ones made and decorated by skilful little fingers. Care should be taken, however, that the designs are tasteful and appropriate, and that no ridiculous groupings are painted on them.—Christian at Work.