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## Eastertide

Although the Christmas season is pre-eminently the most festive period of the year having in and from the earliest times been devoted to rejoicings in commemoration of the birthday of Christ, the events associated with Eastertide are even more inspiring of joyful thanksgiving than the event which has made Christmas the great Festival of the Christian world.

It is, however, invidious to set one of the sacred seasons in comparison with others for they are all like flowers on one stem, drawing their beauty and fragrance from the same root, that source of vitality to all sacred rejoicing being profound thanksgiving for the infinite blessings which have flowed out from the life, the death, the resurrection and the ascension of the Redeemer of mankind.

The gloomy dramatisation of Good Friday, which appeals to some imaginations, is apt to lose its intended effect by creating in others a sense of unreality, which is highly detrimental to those natures which are entirely out of sympathy with what is, to any extent, histrionic, or, merely representative.

At Christmas this feature in the Festival is made very prominent in some churches, but, as it is an expression of the happiness arising from the sacred elevation of thankful feeling, it gives no offence even to those devoid of imagination. To dramatise Good Friday in any manner commensurate with its overwhelming solemnity is impossible. Thousands of magnificent works of art, paintings, music, poems, dramas, have attempted to depict the awful scenes of the most appalling day in history. The betrayal of Judas, chief of traitors, the trial by Pilate, the Prince of political cowards, the sanguinary demand of the High Priests, the howling, malignant mob on the road to Calvary, the crowning of the Divine Victim with thorns, the nailing Him to a cross, amid the jeers of soldiers and outcries of other prisoners, the sobbing of the heart-riven mother and companions, the lifting up of the cross on which the Son of Man was fixed, the darkening of the Sun and trembling of the Earth as if horror struck, these tragedies concentrated in one day make Good Friday the day of unimaginable undepictable woe. But these events are over, the records of them have sunk deep into the very heart and brain of humanity, to rehearse them should be in a spirit of profound thankfulness for what was accomplished on Good Friday, to give way to gloom is to forget that Calvary was a scene of triumph, it was the day of man's redemption.

Easter Day differs from other Festivals in that Christians thereon celebrate a living fact, they honour, not a historic event merely, but pay reverent, loving homage to their risen, their glorified Lord.

What we know, what we rejoice over on Easter Day inspired the hopes of the heathen in all ages, they mourned their dead, they longed for re-union, they dimly felt the stirrings of immortality without which, as St. Paul said, "we, of all men, would be the most miserable."

The name "Easter" is taken from that of a goddess worshipped by the Saxons in the month of April, the name was, as it were, baptised and consecrated by the early Church in England.

In the North of England boys beg eggs to play with on Easter Eve. They use an expression, "Pray, dame, a pask egg," pask being clearly the same word as pasque. In very early days a blessing was invoked on eggs, as they were regarded as emblematical of the resurrection, inasmuch as an egg contains within itself the elements of future life. The idea still prevails, though we fear there are very few who indulge in what is prepared by confectioners, that ever give a thought to the very solemn though joyful suggestion conveyed in the egg emblem.

The Moravians and members of the Greek Church salute each other on Easter morn, with the words, "Jesus Christ is risen," to which the suitable response is made, "He is indeed risen."

To all who have suffered bereavement, to all who are wise enough to consider other affairs than those of Time, the teaching of Eastertide is most consoling, it tells of the day when earth's wounds will be all healed and all who were loved here will be united for ever.