

Easter Day.

BY L. EVA KINNEY.

Rejoice in the Lord, ye saints,
This Easter Day.
O, hush all your sad complaints
On Easter Day.
For Christ the Lord has come,
He's burst the bars of the tomb,
And taken away death's gloom,
This Easter Day.

O, that all would praise the Lord
This Easter Day
Believing the truth of God's Word
This holy day
Accepting the wisdom and light,
He gives by the power of his might,
To save from an endless night,
On Easter Day.

O, how sweet to think of his love
On Easter Day,
Of the glories of heaven above
This Easter Day.
Prepared by our Father above,
Through Christ, who was given to prove
The wonderful depths of his love
To all who obey.

Yes, his praise we will ever sing
On Easter Day.
An humble tribute bring
On Easter Day.
For had Christ not risen again,
All our prayers and faith would be vain,
And no hope of salvation remain,
Nor Easter Day.

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WILLIAM BRIGGS,

Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto.

C. W. COATES, S. F. HERRIS,
2176 St. Catherine St., Wesleyan Book Room,
Montreal, Halifax, N. S.

Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK
Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, APRIL 9, 1898

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

APRIL 17, 1898.

SOME LITTLE THINGS THAT ARE GREAT.

Take us the foxes, the little foxes,
that spoil the vines for our vines' sake
tender grapes. Song of Solomon 2:15

The culture of the vine in Palestine is a very important industry. The use of grapes, raisins and grape juice, that is, unfermented wine, form a considerable part of the food of the people. But the tender vines may easily be injured through being gnawed by the little foxes that abound in Palestine. It is largely a rocky and hilly country, and in the caves and crevices of the rocks the foxes abound. The young foxes, with a taste for the sweet, tender and juicy vine, may work great havoc, often without being seen.

The meaning of all this is that there are certain bad habits that young people form, which, if not guarded against, will injure their character and blight their lives. A bunch of grapes is a very beautiful and delicate thing. It will not bear much handling, without being bruised and the fine bloom being rubbed off. So the tender delicacy and bloom of the lives of boys and girls may easily be injured or destroyed. The company of bad boys and girls, the using, or even the hearing, of bad words, or thinking bad thoughts, will take off the bloom that nothing can ever restore.

The provocations, or stories, or "white lies," as they are sometimes called, the slightest departure from

truth, will destroy the tender grapes. The very coveting of that which is not ours, not to speak of pilfering or purloining, will break down the sense of honesty and prepare the way for theft and fraud. Let young folk remember that as the old rhyme has it, "It is a sin to steal a pin."

One of the evils of the times is the lack of reverence for parents and teachers. Some young people get into the way of calling their teachers nicknames. I hope none are guilty of speaking of their fathers as the "Old Man" or the "Governor." But there is sometimes not the prompt and ready obedience that there ought to be. With obedience to parents is coupled in God's Word the promise of long life. "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

There is, too, a tendency to neglect God's day. A man was driving his cart one Sunday when some person threw up his hands and exclaimed, "There, there, you have broken it." The man jumped off to see what was the matter, when he was told that he had broken the Sabbath day. I am afraid that young people sometimes forget what God has told them, to remember to keep his Sabbath day. It is not necessary to make the Sunday a sour and solemn day, but one of cheerful service. I hope none of you would think of playing games, bicycling for pleasure, reading secular story books, which may be proper enough for week days, but not suitable for Sunday. Watch against these little foxes which spoil the vines.

EASTER IN RUSSIA.

Some one has said that "All Russia kisses all the rest of Russia at Easter," and this is pretty nearly true. To be sure, Easter in Russia does not fall on the same day as with us, since in that country they reckon time by the "Old Style," but the same wonderful fact is celebrated, and some of the Easter customs are very curious. The Easter kissing is one of the most peculiar of these customs, and the person who should refuse to take part in it would be looked upon as a churl, or even something worse. For the ceremony is closely connected with the religion of the country, and how can one be considered glad that Christ has risen unless he kisses his neighbour—no matter who or what the neighbour may be?

Easter Day begins at midnight, and a little before midnight all good Russians go to church. The Emperor and all his family, to the great delight, no doubt, of the little princes and princesses, assemble in the imperial chapel, and the commoner people all over the Empire fill the churches and chapels. Solemn, prayerful silence reigns, as the clock begins striking the hour of midnight. At the last stroke inner doors are thrown open and priests come forth, carrying censers, and chanting, "Christ is risen." The song is taken up by the choir, and the priests respond, "Christ is risen from the dead," walking through the congregation, and swinging their censers as they go.

And now the kissing begins. The church is a blaze of light, for, with the appearance of the priests, the illumination, both inside and outside, begins, bells are ringing, cannon are thundering, and rockets are blazing in the sky.

The kissing goes on. Little groups of friends and acquaintances kiss each other rapturously. Those who have only the slightest possible acquaintance kiss each other, and at every kiss they say, "Christ is risen," and "Christ is risen from the dead."

And the kissing does not end here. All night and the next day, and for several days thereafter, relatives, friends, and chance acquaintances salute one another in this way. The peasants kiss as generally as do the upper classes. Clerks in public offices kiss one another. The general of an army kisses all the officers below him, and the captain of a company kisses all his soldiers!

Maybe you think the Emperor is excused from this ceremony. Not at all. It is his duty not only to kiss all the members of his household at this time, but the poor man has to kiss all his officers on parade, and a delegation of soldiers besides, who represent the grand army. These military parades last several days, for the army of Russia is very large, and comprises many regiments, and the Emperor must get very tired of the performance. Think of kissing a whole army, as it were!

This custom does not seem so strange in this strange land as it would seem to us in Canada. In Russia, kissing is not confined to women and children, as it is largely with us. Dignified officials

salute each other in this way. The simple peasant labourer greets his friend with a kiss, and these signs of cordial friendship, which would excite mirth here when displayed between man and man, are quite the thing there.

Easter should be a time of heartfelt rejoicing among all people, and what more natural expression of joy can there be than a loving recognition of one's neighbour? So, before we laugh at the Russian custom, let us ask if it does not hold some hints for our Easter gladness.

THE FIRST EASTER DAY.

It was the afternoon of a spring day in the year 30 A.D. Within the city of Jerusalem there had been all day the stir and bustle of departing travellers, for the Passover week and the Sabbath were past, and now the pilgrims and "strangers within the gates" were setting out on their homeward journeys.

By-and-bye out through one of the city gates there passed two men walking together, not joyfully and with songs and farewells, as so many of the groups had gone forth, but slowly and sadly, with downcast faces, talking in low tones. Out across the slight valley that slopes away from the city they went, and upon the higher ground just beyond, and presently a stranger came up to them, and greeted them, and the three walked on side by side. But as they journeyed, noticing the silence and sadness of his two companions, the stranger turned on them a look, keen, searching, and yet full of tender sympathy, and asked why they seemed so troubled.

"Ah, master," answered one of them, called Cleopas, "hast thou been at the Passover in Jerusalem this week gone by, and yet knowest not the things that have come to pass?"

"What things?" said the kind voice. "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, our Lord, and a great prophet. The works that he did no other can do, and he taught as no other man ever taught before. We had hoped that he was to be our deliverer, even our Messiah and King."

"And is it not as you hoped?" "Nay, master, for he is dead—on-denned and crucified by our high priests and rulers; and can one who is dead lead a nation to freedom? And we were perplexed and troubled yet more, for this morning some of our company went out early to the tomb where we had laid him, but they found not his body. And they saw a vision of angels, and the angels said he was yet alive, but we know not."

"O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!" exclaimed the stranger, gazing reproachfully upon them. "Do you not remember what our Scriptures have said, how our Messiah should be given a sacrifice for the sins of the world, and should afterward enter into glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained unto them the Scriptures.

As the burning words fell from his lips the two friends listened in awed silence; then new hope and courage sprung up in their hearts. And while he talked, the little town of Emmaus, to which Cleopas and his friend were travelling, was reached, and the stranger seemed about to pass on. But they could not bear to part so soon from this new-found friend, and at their pleading he went into tarry with them.

Then the simple meal was spread, and the wondrous guest sat down with them, and taking the little wheaten cakes in his hand, he blessed and brake them, and then—then at the familiar words and gesture a hundred sweet memories came thronging back to them, the darkness that had clouded their understanding passed away, and they knew him indeed—no other than their Master and Friend, their risen Lord. But while they stretched out eager hands of welcome, the little room seemed suddenly empty again, for he vanished from their sight.

Not empty were their hearts though, but full of sweet surprise and joy. And as they hurried back over the moonlit road the seven miles to Jerusalem—for the good news was too wonderful to keep to themselves and they must share it with the other disciples—do you think the way was any longer weary and sad? Did not their hearts sing within them, even as they had "burned" within them when the Master talked with them only a little while before? What a strange day it had been—full of sorrow in the morning, full of joy at night! A blessed guest had come to them with the twilight and they had welcomed him; and behold, they had entertained their Lord! And with his coming he had brought a peace and strength and hope that Jewish priests and Roman soldiers could not take away.

The Guarded Tomb.

BY MINNIE W. BAINES-MILLER.

Came the Pharisees to Pilate,
And the chief priests, saying, "Sir,
That deceiver, ere he perished,
Did unto his friends aver,
After three days shall have ended,
From the dead I'll rise again."
Let it be by thee commanded—
So men know the boast was vain,

"And his fraudulent disciples
See their cunning scheme revealed—
That his sepulchre be guarded,
And the stone before it sealed."
Then the procurator bade them,
"Go your way, the tomb secure;
Set your watch," they, smiling, left him,
Judah's sway made sure.

Still would blow the silver trumpets,
From the terraced temple's wall;
Smoke of offering and of incense
Spread above its court their pall
Down the altar's steps of marble
Streams of bloody rivers flow;
And the Jew, as God's vicegerent,
Marvelling, the world still know.

Here they are in Joseph's garden—
Roman soldiers, at the tomb,
On the night before the morning
Of that wondrous day to come.
In the evening, after sunset;
In the midnight, at cock-crow;
From the third watch to the dawning;
No neglect their vigils know.

Faithfully, the hours divided,
Watchers wake while comrades sleep;
Naught a stir save cypress branches
Through which twinkling star-rays
creep.

"Are his followers affrighted
That they come not for their 'Lord' ?
Do they fear to taste the metal
Of the two-edged Roman sword ?"

Thus, among themselves communing,
Speak they, scoffing, "Dawn is nigh,
Caesar's signet, still unbroken,
Will delight the Jewish eye;
Prove this fellow's empty vaunting
Of his mission and his birth.
Food for future mirth and laughter—
Ha! The quaking of the earth!"

Then an angel swift descended,
Rolled the stone, and sat thereon;
Bright his countenance as lightning,
Dazzling white his raiment shone;
And in awe the startled soldiers
Fell like dead men at the sight;
Came the Life and Resurrection—
Immortality—to light.

Jesus rose, O blessed portent!
Rise we, too, through him at last;
Since the blood of his atonement
Ope his portal death sealed fast.
Hear the chorus, "He is risen!"
Hymned by angels; join their lay,
Souls redeemed from sin's dark prison
By the Life, the Truth, the Way.

A MONKEY'S LOVE OF SUGAR.

A very funny story is told in The Youth's Companion of a pet monkey, to whom was once given a lump of sugar in a tightly corked glass bottle. The monkey was very fond of sugar and the sight of this lump greatly excited him. He tried every way that he could to get at it, twisting himself around the bottle, watching it slyly for a long time then jumping on it suddenly, as if he thought he could catch it unawares, snapping at it through the glass as if he must reach it, but all to no purpose. He would sit and look at it for hours at a time, as if he were trying to think of some way to reach it, and at such times his face would express the greatest sadness, as if there was no use trying to be happy as long as that lump of sugar couldn't be had. Sometimes he would tilt the bottle to drink out the sugar, and then make a quick spring to catch it as it fell to the bottom. But he couldn't get it till one day a jar of bananas that stood on the table was knocked over and broken the fruit rolling in all directions. This seemed to be just the hint the monkey needed, for almost at once he seized the teasing bottle, lifted it high, and threw it to the floor with great force. Of course it broke, and, of course, the monkey seized the lump and munched it with great satisfaction.

Judge B—fell down a flight of stairs, recording his passage in a bump on every stair until he reached the bottom. A servant ran to his assistance, and, raising him up, said: "I hope your Honour is not hurt?" "No," said the Judge, sternly, "my honour is not hurt, but my head is."