

Easter Month.

APRIL marks what, of old time, was called the newness of the year. It is the opening season, the month of springing life. Winter, the season of decay and death, is gone; mother earth thrills through all her frame, for life, exuberant and joyous, is coursing through her veins; all nature is made glad, and man, not less than the creation about him, hears and responds to the universal call to rejoice because that which was dead has come to life again.

Forcibly as this comes home to every one of us each succeeding spring, not less forcible is the analogous appeal made by the Church in this season of the Resurrection of Our Lord: "This is the day the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad." Yes, Jesus is truly risen, as He foretold. Let us rejoice; again, I say, rejoice. Oh! who shall tell us the blissful hour, the blessed moment of His holy victory over death? O, beata nox! Blessed night, resplendent beyond the brightest day, that sawest the true Son of Justice rising and dispersing the gloom of night! Tomb, sacred abode of my Saviour's body, bed of His sleep, car of His triumph, thou hast no longer aught of sorrow or of sadness. Surrexit! non est hic: He is risen! He is not here. O death! where are thy arms? Where are thy fetters? Where is thy victory? We have conquered thee. We fear thee no more; for if our head and our God has destroyed thy power, we, His disciples and his friends, will conquer thee in our turn.

Arise then, brethren, arise, all ye who have lived upon the earth, arise and come to the tomb of the risen Jesus that you may learn the lesson of your grandeur. Behold here the cradle of your liberty, the field where life and death met and fought, humanity and Satan, heaven and hell. Surrexit! non est hic.

No doubt, though Jesus be risen, our bodies are still to be the victims of death, and sooner or later will be smitten by its chilling hand. But what matters it? I know that my soul, even as the soul of my Saviour, shall live purer and more perfect; I know that my body, even as the mortal body of my God, shall one day, after a brief hour of sleep in the tomb, awaken to the blare of the holy trumpets. I know it beyond the possibility

of a doubt; for Jesus risen is my head, and could such a head fail to remember a member for which He endured such mortal pangs as His, especially if faithful in its love, it helped Him in His hour of trial and comforted Him in His suffering? I know it, because my flesh is the very flesh of Jesus; my blood, the very blood of Jesus; my life, His very life. I have been fed on His sacraments, His word and His grace; and can I die without hope? No. No!

Do your work then, fleet years! Run on, run on with all the speed you may! Bear away in your course earth and sky and all those lives of men, which are naught but ghosts and phantoms. What matters it whether this body perish by sword or flame? Whether it be honored or despised, loved or hated? It stands in the way of that real life which Jesus has won for us. Let it die that our souls may live more purely.

Besides, shall it not revive, no longer feeble and sickly, but strong, beautiful, luminous and immortal? Yes, such was holy Job's hope amidst the calamities which bestruck him, without, however, overmastering his unconquerable virtue. Such, too, ought to be ours, who have seen the Saviour's resurrection and the miracles it has wrought in the world. Let wiseacres talk as they may, philosophers, unbelievers, impious men; I believe in the resurrection of the body, and this faith is my strength, my comfort, my hope and my glory. Why shall the God who lifted Himself from out the grave be unable to rescue me from its grasp? Away, away with the vain sophisms of men! So long as the world refused to believe in the future life of souls and bodies, it was sceptical, materialistic, impious, given over to sensual delights. Once it admitted the Christian dogma, all was changed; life had a bridle, men knew remorse and virtue looked forward to a reward. Holy dogma of the Resurrection, thou hast done more for men than the books of all the philosophers; be thou forever blessed. Be thou, too, blessed, loved and adored, O risen Jesus, who, in this glorious Easter-season, confirmest our faith and our hope. We shall die; but a new spring will dawn, and we shall walk again in newness of life. "Rejoice, again I say, rejoice."