

## EASTER.

The world itself keeps Easter Day,  
And Easter bells are ringing,  
And Easter flowers are blooming gay,  
And Easter birds are singing.

Fair blossoms on the Easter morn  
Give forth their fragrance sweet,  
And tell of Resurrection joy,  
And Jesus' work complete.

But fairer still, the offering  
Each loving heart should bring,  
Of faith, and love, and penitence  
To Christ, the risen King.

—Selected.

## OUR EASTER THANK-OFFERING.

Easter is almost here again, and very soon all the members of our Mission Circles and Bands will be asked for a thank offering for missions.

Last year we gave several hundred dollars, but we must not feel a bit proud or even quite contented unless we are sure that we could not have done a great deal more.

Perhaps we have all seen in stores or in our own mother's cellar, some dark almost ugly bulbs, and when we have asked why they took such care of them we were told that after a while, when they are planted in the ground, they will grow and bloom, and from them we will gather beautiful white Easter Lilies.

I am going to suppose, just for a minute, that our hearts are gardens or flower pots. And this Easter-tide we want a beautiful white flower, called Thanksgiving, to bloom. This Thanksgiving flower is not like the lily in some ways, for it springs from a lovely white bulb, almost, if not quite, as pretty as the flower itself. We will call it Thankfulness or Gratitude.

Now, I do not know very much about flower culture, but I think that to do well, most plants need good soil, water, and to be kept from the frost. So does our Thanksgiving plant. One way to make the heart soil rich is to go to the Mission Band every time it meets and learn how little folk are treated in China, India and almost all other heathen lands. Then if we read a few verses in the Bible every day, and ask God to bless us, it will keep the soil fertile and warm, and gratitude can't help but grow.

It must have water. If we are old enough and can read the life of some missionary, it will keep the heart-soil moist, and to read our bright little Palm Branch every month will do "all sorts of good."

We must keep it from the frost. It is rather a delicate plant, and if it gets a severe chill when it is young it will never bloom as freely, and if it gets really frozen, sometimes it never sprouts again, the flowers die, the leaves fall off and even the lovely white bulb turns dark and dries up. We will call the cold winds that chill and blast our beautiful plant Selfishness

and Discontent; if we have kept it from these it will have more and larger flowers this year than it had last Easter.

I wonder if any of us have a feeling that we have nothing for which to be thankful. We are not rich, no one has given us a piano or nice white pony like the little girl or boy that we have read about. We have no bicycle, or gold watch, or rings, and really we don't know what to thank God for.

Well, a few months ago I spent a little time in "The Blind Institute," in Brantford, and as I followed our blind guide from room to room, and saw the little boys and girls trying to learn geography from blocks of wood, with little nails in them, I felt like saying over and over again: Thank God for eye sight! When I went into the kindergarten room and saw the dear little "tots" feeling about their little playthings it seemed to me that everybody who could see should thank God every day.

I remember reading once of a very, very rich man, and when some one asked him what he would like for a birthday present, he said, "I would rather have a good night's sleep than anything else in the world." Boys and girls, if we are healthy and can sleep all night, when we rise in the morning we ought to kneel right down and say "Thank you" to God.

The common blessings are the great ones after all. I expect if we were taken to a country where there were no Bibles or Churches we would know better than we do now how thankful we should be that we live in a country where the Bible is the cheapest book printed; in homes where the first story we heard was the old, old story of Jesus and His Love.

But why give money to express our gratitude? Because God wants us to. He wants us to send men and women into all the world to tell them about His great love, and thanksgiving in words (while it is very good) will never do that.

You all know about the war now going on in South Africa. Our love for our Queen was best expressed when we gave our boys to fight and die in her service. If we had enough money we could send out a missionary "contingent," a thousand strong to fight for our Heavenly King.

I heard a funny story last week about a boy who had a little dog, named Fido. One day the boy was putting aside the very best piece of the meat that he had for his dinner. When asked why he was doing so, he had to tell that it was for Fido. His father would not let him give the best, but said the scraps that were left would do for the dog. After dinner, when the little boy took out the plate full of scraps he said: "Here Fido, I intended to bring you an offering, but this is only a collection."

If there is the difference this little boy thought there was between an offering and a collection, let us be sure that this year ours is an Easter offering.

Waterford.

E. D.

Hints to Contributors.—Short contributions and plenty of them.