

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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THE WALK TO EMMAUS.

What a wonderful walk those two disciples must have had as they went to Emmaus and knew not the whole time that their companion was Jesus himself, whom they thought to be dead. At first they were alone; but after some time a third person drew near and entered into their conversation. They thought nothing of this, for although he appeared to be a stranger, yet people in their country made a habit of at least saluting one another as they passed, and often of stopping to have a chat about the events of the day. Thus they discovered not who their guest was, for besides this we read, "their eyes were holden that they should not know him." But when he began to expound the Scriptures to them they must have wondered to themselves who this person might be, who seemed come just in the nick of time, to strengthen their waning faith in our Lord's prophecy regarding his resurrection and to explain so beautifully the Scripture concerning himself. When the two disciples had reached their destination, they asked their fellow-traveller to come in, and "it came to pass that as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave to them." They at once thought he must be more than he seemed to be, for being their guest, it was their duty to break bread and hand it to him, and we read, "their eyes were opened, and they knew him, and he ceased to be seen of them."

EASTER EGGS.

What could be more beautiful or more appropriate than the symbolism of the Easter eggs? Each year, at this spring-tide festival, they seem to come to us with new meaning and fresh power. The dainty little book of Anna Barrows, so recently published, with its "Facts and Fancies" concerning "Eggs," is so timely and appropriate that we cannot resist giving copious extracts from its pages for the benefit of our readers: "The most prevalent and characteristic custom of the Easter festival has always been the giving of eggs. Sometimes they were eaten, oftener kept as amulets, or used in playing games.



THE WALK TO EMMAUS.—THE FIRST EASTER EVENING.

"The pagan people at their New Year feasts presented each other with eggs as a type of the new life of nature—which they coloured to show their joy at the return of spring. The Druids used eggs in the worship of the Goddess Eoestre. The early Christians continued this practice and coloured the eggs red to symbolize the blood of their redemption. "The contrast between the cold, lifeless egg and the warm, downy chicken, full of life and motion, may well have made the former an emblem of the endless life of the soul. A German writer says: 'The egg as a symbol of the resurrection of Jesus, who broke forth from the grave as a chicken from the shell, has been from very ancient date an Easter gift with Christians.'

"After the fourth century the church prohibited the use of eggs as well as of other animal food during Lent, but the

hens were heretical enough to keep on laying and the accumulated eggs were dyed for the children at Easter. The Greek Church still forbids the use of eggs during Lent, but other churches allow their use during the Lenten feast.

"From the custom of giving Easter eggs we have derived the pleasant fashion of sending cards and small gifts at that season. Naturally many of these take the form of the egg, though resembling it in no other way.

"The shop windows at this season seem like huge bird-nests filled with all manner of fanciful eggs. There are eggs of all sizes, made of confectionery and more enduring materials, chocolate eggs with cream where the yolk should be, eggs adorned with mottoes, eggs of soap, of glass and china, ostrich eggs for bon-bon boxes, egg-shaped boxes, baskets

incantations of her race, more for pastime than anything else, was betrayed to the other party, and the idea of witchcraft was immediately seized upon as a means of terrible vengeance. Accusations and arrests were quickly made, and the magistrates, being full of superstition brought with them from old England, hastily tried and sentenced one after another until a large number of innocent men and women had been hung. This occurred in Salem, Mass., and was continued until the people of Andover, with representatives of the people of Salem, assembled with their remonstrance, and demanded that such wholesale murder should be stopped.

The man who pities himself never gets much sympathy from others.

and lockets, note-paper to imitate egg shells, etc.

At the pagan New Year festivals many games were played with eggs. In this country there has of late been a revival of some of these games with other quaint Easter customs. Many children in days past have matched their eggs or rolled them over the green grass lots in the grounds of the White House at Washington.

"Passion week in Paris may be called the feast of eggs. In the streets may be heard the cries of 'des oeufs' from women bearing piles of red and white eggs on barrows, and everybody presents his neighbour with an egg, real or artificial."

TRYING THE WITOE.

Nearly two hundred years ago, in the early days of the Puritans, a wild idea seized the people that certain pure-hearted women, living perfectly blameless lives, were witches and had dealings with the devil, for which they were put to most severe torture to force from them confessions of guilt.

As far as I can learn, the origin of this dreadful witchcraft in this country, our own free America, was from a slight quarrel, in the first place, between an ignorant minister and his still more ignorant people, which so increased that it became a very bitter strife, attracting the attention even of the general courts.

One poor Indian female servant, having practised

some of the wild