

THE ETERNAL SACRIFICE.

Holy Week and Easter win a wider recognition year by year. The days that commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are observed far beyond the limits of His visible kingdom. We may well be thankful for it and rejoice in any ampler honor shown to our King. But a danger presents itself—the danger that these days, adopted into the calendar that regulates material interests and temporal affairs, will lose the clearness of their spiritual and eternal significance. The Church has had to fight long and hard to resist the perversion, by a selfish world, of her most sacred expressions and her holiest institutions. And the battle is not over yet. One direction from which attack threatens just now is that of the rapid development of the outward and external element in the exercises of Good Friday and Easter. This development is entirely right; the Church must claim the whole nature of every man, must appeal to his eye as well as his ear, to his emotions as well as to his reason, his body as well as his soul. And yet it is easy to see that the more we illustrate in material ways the death and resurrection of Christ the more will those who stop short with the outward show be led to dwell upon the contrast between those scenes, the easier will it be to ignore the underlying unity. Realistic representations of the physical anguish of the Passion and funereal draping and tolling bells will be regarded as a foil for altars ablaze with Easter glory and elaborate music and æsthetic ritual. No doubt there are elements in human nature to which all this appeals. Many religions have owed their power over men largely to their violent contrasts,—the alternations of pain and pleasure, gloom and light. But the delight in sudden change is not moral, the ebb and flow of feeling, the stirring of the sentiments, is not necessarily spiritual.

We are not seeking to cloud the happiness that Easter ought to bring. All that is most beautiful and mirthful in the world may be traced to the Passion.

"Our souls the joys celestial seek,
Which from Thy sorrows flow."

Christian art has more of hope and cheer than heathen art because it has gained a fresh consecration and unselfishness from Him who, though He is the fairest among ten thousand, yet, in the dishonor of the Passion had "no form or comeliness, no beauty that we should desire Him." Family intercourse and social life have more of sweetness and warm, human affection now that they are lit up by the tenderness and love of Him who bore our griefs and carried our sorrows and yet took thought for His mother and His friend even in the hour of His sharpest pain. The earth itself is more entrancing in its spring delicacy or summer

richness, because over its "acres walked those holy feet that nineteen hundred years ago were nailed for our advantage on the bitter cross."

And if life is still a struggle we know that the struggle is not for nought. Even to those who are working hardest for their fellows there come moments of faint-heartedness and despair; the chill wind of doubt springs up and their souls shiver. "After all is the battle worth the pain it costs? Am I not giving up too much for others? Is it not time to draw back and attend to my own interests and let the world get along as best it can?" Yet even to ask the question is to feel the darkness of Self closing in upon the life. But the Easter bells ring out in the breaking dawn and the Risen One calls to us across the waves, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen." Death is the gate of life, sacrifice is the highest reach of human nature; that is what Good Friday reveals to us. Sacrifice is triumphant and eternal. That is the Easter Gospel.—*The Churchman*, N. Y.

SATISFACTION.

BY J. M.

"When I wake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied,"

—PSALM CIII. 15, 5.

"Shall they be satisfied? the soul's vague longing,
The aching void that nothing earthly fills?
On! what desires upon my soul are thronging,
As I look upward to the heavenly hills!"

WHOMAN has not felt the pain of dissatisfaction, with its never-failing supply of unhappiness and wretchedness following in its course? If it is not with our possessions, vocation or friends, often it turns back upon ourselves, our own motives, plans and actions, and the fruits of them. How it is reflected in our striving and yearning after something which is beyond us, or that God in His all-seeing wisdom withholds!

And so we construct, and—as we fondly think—accomplish some cherished scheme, when lo, this destroyer enters, and once in possession finally overthrows all.

A strange theme this for Easter-tide, some may say; yet surely in the Psalmist's words, "I shall be satisfied," the thoughtful reader finds portrayed the expression of that true completion which many a heart is seeking. And what is the secret of our failing to find? Is it not that we are prone to forget the time this shall be? "When I awake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied."

There is the precious key which will open the way:

"Soul and body reunited,
Thenceforth nothing shall divide,
Waking up in Christ's own likeness
Satisfied."