

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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Each in its Own Way.

There's never a rose in all the world
But makes some green spray sweeter:
There's never a wind in all the sky
But makes some bird-wing fleetier:
There's never a star but brings to heaven
Some silver radiance tender;
And never a rosy cloud but helps
To crown the sunset splendour:
No robin but may thrill some heart
His dawnlight gladness voicing:
God gives us all some small, sweet way
To set the world rejoicing.

THE QUEENS MAUNDY GIFTS.

It was an ancient custom in England for the king or queen to wash the feet of a number of aged poor folk in the royal chapel on "Maundy Thursday," in the week preceding Easter. This was done in obedience to our Lord's command to his disciples that they should wash one another's feet as he, their Master, had washed theirs.

An account is given of the ceremonial in 1572, when Elizabeth was queen. Thirty-nine poor women (the number of her years) attended, and their feet having first been thrice washed by the "laundresses," the sub-almoner, and the almoner, the queen entered with her thirty-nine maids in waiting, who carried aprons and towels. She then, kneeling, washed one foot of each of the poor women from a silver basin filled with water and fragrant flowers. Elizabeth then distributed gifts to each, cloth for a gown, a pair of shoes, six red herrings and other fish, and a bowl of claret. Each lady in waiting gave her apron and towel to one of the old women, and the queen, instead of parting her raiment among them, gave each old crone a purse containing twenty shillings.

James the Second (1685-1688) was the last English monarch to wash anybody's feet. His own, though the ceremony was performed by a clergyman in his stead for another century. How Maundy Thursday is observed in Victoria's reign is told by a writer in *The Quiver*:

"The ceremony takes place in Westminster Abbey. We obtain the much sought-for tickets and go early to avoid the rush. Within this fane electric light seems a thing of the future; and it is only dimly that we can discern, seated in the front rows of the choir—the men on one side and the women on the other—those who will presently leave the Abbey some few pounds richer than they entered it.

The poor old dears, they are very tottery," is remarked. Their unusual numbers indicate the years of the reigning sovereign. Most of them look like tradesfolk in reduced circumstances; and they certainly give us the idea of having fulfilled in their time what is, we believe, one of the most stringent conditions of their election—the due payment of the queen's taxes. We are sitting in the choir, and can plainly see the round-table, covered with fair white cloths, which is placed just outside the rails, and on which the royal alms will soon be laid.

The clock strikes, and a procession begins to form in the nave. This is something like the order: The beadle of the Abbey with his mace precedes; the boys and men of the choir; next come

a number of clergymen in black gowns, who represent the parishes from which the recipients have been chosen. These are followed by representatives of the Chapter of Westminster. Now we see the sergeant-major of the yeoman of the guard, who leads the way for that very vivid and important personage, the big beefeater who carries the gold dish which holds the anxiously expected alms. The sub-almoner and the lord high almoner walk next, with stoles of white toweling, in front of the 'children of the royal almonry.' These are nowadays four in number—two boys and two girls. They are always selected from the schools of St. Margaret's or St. John's, Westminster, and receive five guineas a year toward the expenses of their education, as well as a present of five shillings for their attendance on

The service for the day is read, concluding with the anthem, 'Wash Me Thoroughly,' after which the almoners walk down the choir presenting £1 15s. to each woman and £2 5s. to each man. Next the red purses are distributed, containing £1 in gold and £1 10s. Finally the white purses are dealt out with their contents of silver pence, as many as the number of the queen's years. The aged recipients bow and curtsy, and after further singing, prayer, and benediction the ceremony is at an end."

A Spanish paper declares that President McKinley is a naturalized Chinaman born in Canton. Its knowledge of geography is rather weak, and it confounds the Buckeye State of Ohio with the Middle Kingdom.



A STORY OF THE PAST.

Maundy Thursday. The rear of the procession is brought up by a group of gaily-dressed beefeaters. When every official, lay and clerical, has passed into the choir it is pretty to see the two royal almonry girls demurely take their seats near the round, white-spread table on the steps outside the rails. Each has a bouquet, and, indeed, flowers are conspicuous in many places, notably upon the robes of the officiating clergy. The gold dish containing the delicate red and white purses is set upon the round table.

A STORY OF THE PAST.

The world undergoes a good many changes in the space of a generation; and a son loves to listen to the tales his father can tell him of what was done in the days of his youth, when things were so different. Here, in the sunny courtyard of an old French chateau, with his grandchildren around him, the old grandfather, who has seen so much of the world's ways, tells them some story of the past that happened to him long

ago. Already the outline of it is beginning to fade in his memory. One day the handsome little fellow, who seems to be listening so attentively, will himself be the owner of those grey old walls and of the many wide acres which stretch away outside, and then in his turn he will tell to his sons and grandsons stories of the far-distant past, when his old grandfather was alive. And he will point out the very spot to his wondering little ones, where the old gentleman used to sit and relate his long tales that were so fascinating. So the world goes on from one generation to another, and, although we may think that things change very much, yet they remain much the same as they always were, while in reality it is we ourselves who change.

LITTLE GIRLS IN PERSIA.

Away off in the East there is a land named Persia. It is a land where baby girls are not wanted. When a baby boy is born, the servants who carry the news to the father are given beautiful presents, and have feasts prepared; all the relations of the father and mother of the baby boy send gifts and congratulations, and there is given a feast to them in honour of the coming of a baby boy. When a little baby girl comes, there is neither joy nor gifts. Everybody is sad, and the house is filled with gloom. There is a proverb in Persia, "The household weeps forty days when a girl is born." When a man in Persia is asked how many children he has, he gives the number of his sons; but never counts his daughters. One reason given for this is that a daughter marries and leaves her home, while sons stay at home and care for their father. The baby boy is rocked and tended by his mother, who watches carefully over him. The baby daughter is put into a hard cradle. When she cries, she may be rocked in this cradle, or she may be left to cry herself into silence. Her father does not look at her. When she is able to creep about, she may then win her father by her pretty baby ways.

Her feet are bare, but her head is covered. Boys are given their names with great ceremony, but when a girl is named an old woman is called in who puts her mouth to the baby girl's ear and gives the baby girl her name by calling out the name and saying, "That is your name." The names given girls are pretty. Akhtar, which means the star, Gulshan, lilies, Almas, diamond, Shireen, sweet, Wobahar, the spring, Shamsi, the sun.

The children in Persia do not have birthday parties. It would be considered silly for mothers to give that much time to their children's pleasure, especially their daughters. There are no birthdays, and no Christmas. There are no toys for the children of Persia, no play-rooms. Persian mothers dislike noise. When children are in the house, they must be quiet. The dolls are ugly, and dressed always as the women of Persia dress. A popular game for little girls in Persia is one somewhat similar to our jackstones.

There are no kindergartens and no schools in Persia. The children of a Persian family do not sit at the table with their parents, nor are they with them indoors. For that reason they get no training, and are rude unless they belong to the wealthy classes when a nurse is provided for each child who lives constantly with it.

After six years of age a little girl in Persia lives a life entirely indoors. She begins then to learn how to work, especially how to sew. Persian women are famous for their beautiful needlework, especially embroidery. The boys have teachers. If girls are taught, it is to read the Koran, the Bible of Persia, but few ever learn more than this. Many Persian mothers think it immodest for a girl to know how to read.

"They say you have no sympathy for the struggling poor." "Me?" said the accused gentleman, "I have nothing but sympathy."