

The Angels of Easter.

God hath sent his angels to the earth again,
Bringing joyful tidings to the sons of men.
They at first at Christmas thronged the
heavenly way,
Now beside the tomb-door sit on Easter day.

In the dreadful desert, where the Lord was
tried,
There the faithful angels gathered at his
side;
And when in the garden grief and pain and
care
Bowed him down with anguish, they were
with him there.
Yet the Christ they honoured is the same
Christ still,
Who, in light and darkness, did the Father's
will.
And the tomb, deserted, shineth like the
sky,
Since he passed out from it into victory.

God has still his angels, helping at his word
All his faithful children, like their faithful
Lord;
Soothing them from sorrow, arming them in
strife,
Opening wide the tomb-doors leading into
life.

Father, send thine angels unto us, we pray;
Leave us not to wander, all along our way.
Let them guard and guide us, wheresoe'er
we be,
Till our resurrection brings us home to thee.

EASTER EGGS.

LONG before they were Christianized, the Scandinavian races had a spring festival called, after the goddess of the spring, *Eostre*, and the eating of eggs upon her festive day was a custom then as it is now. The Finns, whose superstitions and myths affected the Scandinavians very greatly, when they were not drawn directly from Scandinavian sources, believed that the world itself grew up in the spring-time from a magic egg which Thor tried to hatch in his brawny arms, but allowed to drop into the sea.

The connection between this legend and the eating of a large number of eggs on *Eostre's* day is not very remote, as our ancestors may have reasoned that there was no knowing when another magic egg might be laid, an accidental interference with which might produce another earth—something not to be desired by thinking men of that age.

The custom was not confined to the Scandinavians, although the name *Easter* is for Persians, Jews, Egyptians, and Hindoos, who also give and receive Easter eggs. The Persian custom arises, doubtless, from the legend of the mundane egg for which Ormuzd and Ahriman were to contend until the consummation of all things.

The Easter or Pasch egg of the Christian has but little connection with the Easter egg of the Scandinavian or the Persian egg of contention. It was a part of the Jewish celebration of the Passover to give and eat special Paschal eggs, and in accepting Christ's feast as the new feast of the Passover, they in particular accepted the Paschal egg, because in the egg they saw a peculiarly apt symbol of the resurrection. They coloured it red as

type of the blood of their Redeemer, and gilded it as a token of his glory.

In the ritual of Pope Paul V. is the following: "Bless, Lord, we beseech thee, this thy creature of eggs, that it may become a wholesome sustenance to thy faithful servants, eating it in thankfulness to thee on account of the resurrection of our Lord."

Easter has always been observed as the most sacred of Christian festivals, and the custom of giving and eating Easter eggs is the most widespread of any among Christians. In Russia, in particular, Easter is observed with great solemnity, and many old forms—once common to all Christians—are still observed there. The Russian meets his friends on the morning of Easter day, with uncovered head, and the words, "Christ is risen," "He is risen indeed," and gaily coloured eggs are exchanged. Tremendous quantities of eggs are prepared in every Russian family, and the children, in particular, are given many of them. They have several curious customs, one of which is to roll them down a board at one another. The colour of the egg which breaks decides many important matters for the little ones; for instance, if the egg be red, the young omen-seeker will get a fine red dress; if it is golden, a pocket full of money, and so on. A little maiden trying her fate in this manner is the subject of Oeber Mere's celebrated Easter picture.

In Russia they believe to this day that the Easter sun not only shines gloriously, but dances for joy on Easter morning. This belief was not confined to Russia two hundred years ago, as Sir Thomas Browne proves, for the worthy and erudite knight thought it was worth while combating the belief in his work on "Vulgar Errors." How often Sir John Suckling's lines—

"But, oh! she dances such a way,
No sun upon an Easter day
Is half so fine a sight."

are quoted, but how many of those who use them remember that Sir John really believed that the sun actually danced?

THE DYING SOLDIER.

I WAS in Murfreesboro, just after the battle, and at one o'clock in the morning a man came to me, and said such a one wanted to see me. I went as requested; and when I reached the place, the man said: "Chaplain" (for they called me chaplain), "I wish you would help me die."

I said, "I cannot help you die. If I could, I would take you in my arms and carry you to God." I told him of One who could. I prayed with him; and he said he had a mother in the North praying for him. I thought how anxious that mother would be to get a message from him. I thought of Christ's conversation with Nicodemus, and the man riveted his eyes upon me as I read: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even

so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

The dying man said, "Stop! Is that there?"

"Yes."

"Just read it again."

I read it again, and as I read, the man bowed his head, and brought his hands together and said, "Bless God for that. Read it again."

I read it a third time. It did not seem as if anything else made any impression upon the dying man. When I got through, his hands rested upon his bosom, his eyes were closed, and his lips quivered, and leaning over to listen, I heard him whisper, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up—that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Then opening his eyes, and fixing them upon me, he said, "There, Chaplain, that is enough."

There was truth enough in those two verses to save the dying man; and putting his trust in those two verses, he went up in the Saviour's chariot, and took a seat in the kingdom of God.

I WANTED TO HEAR MORE.

MISS AMES was passing the corner of a street, when she felt a little hand pulling her dress. Looking down she saw a ragged child with a thin, eager face and dark eyes lifted to hers.

"Please, ma'am, ain't you Susie's teacher?"

"Susie O'Neill's? Of course I am. Why didn't Susie come to mission school last week, and the week before?"

"She couldn't, ma'am; she got runned over by one o' them street cars, and she's had her leg taken off, and she's up at the hospital now. Please, ma'am, won't you go to see her?"

"I am very sorry, my child," said Miss Ames, putting a little money into the child's hand, "and I will go and see Susie this week. I cannot go to-day, but I will visit her very soon, indeed."

Miss Ames went on her way a little saddened by the thought that the bright, merry, black-eyed Susan would never more be able to walk and run as she had done; but she was very busy that day, and it was not until night that her thoughts reverted to the promise she had made. Three days went by before she stood by the lowly pallet where lay little Susan, dying. White, still, scarcely able to speak, the large, mournful eyes alone recalled the child as she had been three weeks before. She smiled feebly as she looked at her teacher, and murmured something Miss Ames could not understand.

"Susie," she said, "are you happy? Do you know you are going to Jesus? Do you feel that you love him? for oh, how he loves you!"

Slowly, painfully came the words from the pale lips:

"I hope so; but I wanted to hear more—more." And with one sigh the soul departed.

Days and nights passed before Miss Ames could get the echo of those words out of her memory. She was ever hearing the dying, sorrowful cry, "I wanted to hear more!"

With a chastened spirit she taught her little class thereafter, and no one was more faithful in looking after the absent ones from that time forth.—*S. S. Times.*

Easter.

ONCE more the yearly miracle
Is wrought before our eyes,
And over all our waking earth
A tender beauty lies—
A rapt expectancy of desire,
When soon the pomp shall be
Of drifting blossoms rolling far
Like billows of the sea.

Fair spring! she comes with lilies pale,
Like vestal virgins white
Who bear the bridegroom and the bride,
And meet them in the night;
Fair spring! she bears a seal divine,
For on her shining way
She gives the world her Eden back
On every Easter day.

Our hearts, that waited at the door
Of Joseph's guarded tomb,
Exalted are in wondrous joy
Above their grief and gloom—
For oft as Easter's morning light
Along the sky is poured,
We hail the Prince of endless life—
Our mighty risen Lord.

No bond of death could hold him fast,
Or stone could shut him in—
The sinless One who laid him down
The sacrifice for sin.
In mortal weakness we forget
How strong our souls should be,
Since Christ has risen, and man lives
For all eternity.

IMPROVING EVENINGS.

Don't smoke, drink cider and idle away any of the evenings. Life is short enough and time flies fast enough without the adventitious aid of provocatives. Settle accounts, make calculations and estimates for future use, attend meetings of farmers' clubs, institutes and granges; read and digest good and profitable books and periodicals; overhaul the children's progress in school, and see that they make proper use of that invaluable institution, the school library; encourage singing in the family, of sacred music and moral and patriotic sonnets, which is a far better recreation for both young and old than the chequer-board, cards, etc. Indeed, don't waste or kill time, but strive to increase your leisure by acquiring knowledge that will prove beneficial.—*The Christian at Work.*

DRINK is the key-stone of the bridge which leads to moral degradation, physical deterioration, and political slavery.

"WHAT! kis. such a homely man as papa!" said mother in fun to her little girl. "O but papa is real pretty in his heart," was the reply.