## Easter Lilies.

A LITTLE maid walked smiling on her way,
Bearing white lilies on an Easter day;
Herself, a lily, pure and fair as they.

But as she passed they bore along the mart
A little child whom death had set apart,
His small hands lying empty on his heart.

Close to the bier the little maiden pressed,
And laid her lillies on the pulseless breast,
Saying, "Take these to light thee to thy rest.

"If to my Lord I bring no lily bell,
He is so near my heart he knows full well
I love him more than any tongue can tell."

She heard the organ's solemn voice that soared,
As if in heaven to seek the risen Lord,
Crowned by his angels, by his saints adored.

The little maid knelt down with reverent grace,
And a great light fell on her upturned face,
Bringing a vision of the heavenly place;

Wherein she saw her Lord, with smiling eyes,
Amid the countless hosts of Paradise,
Bearing the little child by death made wise.

Her very heart ran o'er with joy to see
Her lilies blooming by the Master's knee,
Grown fair as any deathless flowers might be.

While from the blessed child this message fell:
"Dear Lord, thy little maid who loves thee well,
Sends these, by me, her faithful love to tell."

Blessed are they whose prayers in deed find wing
Whose hands the gifts of humble service bring,
And in his lowly children serve their King.

Blessed are they who hear the Master plead
In every cry of human woe or need;
Lo! in their hearts the Lord is risen indeed.

## One Easter Offering.

SHE was such a queer-looking little body. The faded dress and forlorn shoes were quite in keeping with the old red shawl which was thrown over her head and held tightly under the chin. But there was a brave look in her bright eyes as she stopped on the corner, as if hesitating which way to go.

Ruth and Rachel, on their way to school, walked a little slower, that they might watch the little stranger without being impolite.

"I believe I'll speak to her," said Ruth, who was the elder sister, and usually did the talking. "Have you lost your way, little girl?"

Startled, she only shook her head, and turned the other way.

"If you are going to school, this is the way," said Rachel, kindly.

This seemed to awaken unhappy thoughts, for she turned to them, the tears coming to her eyes.

"I can't go any more."

"Why not?" asked Rachel, much distressed. "Tell us all about it."

"'Cause I haven't any shoes, nor dress, nor—nothing," said the little stranger, desperately. "The boys all call me 'rag-bag,' so mother said I shouldn't go again; but I'm going to have some soon"—brightening—"for I'm looking for some."

"Looking for some!"

"Yes. You know the mission-teacher says if we look for what we ask God for, we will find it—certain, sure; so I'm going to keep on. But, say," growing confidential, "would you go down the fine streets or the poor ones?"

"There's the bell, Rachel!" exclaimed Ruth; "we must go. Where do you live, little girl, and what is your name?"

Giving the name of a cross street not far distant, she added: "My real name is Katherine Marlow, but they all call me 'Kitty Marl,' 'cause my name is too long."

"We'll come to see you," called Rachel, as she ran after Ruth, who was walking very fast toward the ringing bell. Just in time to escape the dreaded tardy mark, Rachel took her seat, thinking more of Kitty than of coming studies.

Queer how, all the long morning, thoughts of shoes and dresses would come into the lessons! The map of Africa looked like an immense shoe, just ready to walk off to join its mate, South America; and instead of figuring the cost of potatoes, as the Arithmetic lesson would have it, Rachel found herself trying to calculate the price of a calico dress.

It seems that Ruth's thoughts were travelling in the same direction, for as they walked toward home she said, abruptly: "Rachel, what size shoes do you wear?"

"I don't know," said Rachel, stopping to study the toe of her well-fitting boot. "Do you suppose mine would fit her?"

"Nonsense! You can't give her your shoes; we must manage to get her a pair somehow, for it's dreadful to think of her praying for something and not getting it—for may be all the time God means us to try and get the things, don't you see? Still, we haven't any money but our Easter offering, and, of course, we can't use that."

Ruth and Rachel had for months been saving toward an Easter offering, and it looked like a large sum to them; and it was large, if counted by self-denial and sacrifice. There was a bright silver dollar—Ruth's birthday present—to be spent just as she chose. Then there was a ten-cent piece, earned by Rachel wiping the dishes on Monday mornings; and several copper cents, representing as many self-denials of butter-scotch. The money counted four dollars and sixty-three cents, and it seemed a positive necessity to raise it to five dollars in the two weeks yet remaining before Easter Sunday.

However, this Easter offering never reached the much-desired sum. A queer little girl, living on a narrow street, was, before Easter-day, wearing a pair of shoes which took part of the money; and several other bright pieces had gone to pay for a plain hat, a dress, and other things. With mother's help, it was surprising how much the money bought.

"So we haven't any Easter offering, after all," said Ruth, dismally, the day before Easter Sunday. "But we can carry some wild flowers, any way."

And a beautiful basketful they had. The morning dawned for a bright day, and instead of the usual Easter-card, both Ruth and Rachel found upon their dressing-tables cards, on which was printed in gilt letters: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—*Our Sabbath Home.*

## Easter Thoughts.

THE world owes to Easter the best music and the best songs of the ages. Who can sing in this world, if there be no hope to pitch the key-note? If death is the *finale*, why should there be more in music than a moan? Build no organs. String no harps. Write no songs. Let the soughing of the winter winds through the dark pines suffice. At best, chant requiems. Leave no place for Hallelujahs! Plant cypresses and weeping willows, and give them names after the old mythological gods—Chaos and Erebus and Mors and Nox. And when our beloved die, bury them under the shadows of these trees of death, and raise no mound. Plant no flowers. Let the dead be dead, and let Love die, and Hope and Joy also; and let us call life a failure and a delusion. But, somehow, the Hymn of the Ages refuses to let Hope and Joy and Love die out of the world!

The Hymns say that "Death and sorrow, earth's dark story, To the former days belong;" that "Jesus hath cheered the dark valley of sorrow, And bade us, immortal, to heaven ascend;" that "Henceforth in Christ are no more dead, The grave hath no more prey." And with a vision of glory before his eyes, the poet sings:—

> "The morning kindles all the sky,
> The heavens resound with anthems high;
> The shining angels, as they speed,
> Proclaim, 'The Lord is risen indeed!'"

Now, all this that the poets sing has a foundation in fact. Jesus Christ did arise from the dead. He became the first-fruits of them that sleep. There is life after death. There is hope for the dying. There is comfort for the bereaved. And, better than all, the life which is brought to light is more than life. It is Life. It must be spelled with a capital letter, for it is more, vastly more, than warm vitalized blood, more than heartbeat, more than motion and force. It is Life. It is more than existence. It is Life from God. Life with God, Life from God, Life in God. Easter-day signifies all that Life at its best and largest signifies—Love, Strength, Hope, Peace, Rest. That Fact more than 1,850 years ago, which we commemorate on Easter Day, meant then, and means now, everything that the most capacious and richly-endowed and royal soul of man can conceive of and long for. It means that all glorious possibilities lie before the redeemed man, and simply await his willing embrace. Thank God for Easter Day, and all that it suggests and signifies!—*Our Youth.*

## Easter Day.

'TWAS Easter Day, glad Easter Day!
But Death, relentless, claimed as prey
Our best beloved; we prayed him nay
In vain that Easter Day.

For other hearts the song and bloom,
Our thoughts but lingered at the tomb;
We felt the hush, the loss, the gloom
That cheerless Easter Day.

And ah! for her whose short'ning breath
Too surely owns the victor Death,
Can ought atone, the human saith,
For pang of Easter Day?

For her celestial bloom and psalm,
And health, and joy, and rest, and calm;
For her the harp, the robe, the palm,
O blessed Easter Day.

May we not join Earth's glad refrain?
She lives with God, released from pain,
The one we loved. Aye, Death but gain,
This joyous Easter Day.

## The Kingfisher.

THE kingfisher is a large and beautiful bird, is very fond of fish, and is a skilful fisherman. Seated on a branch which overhangs a stream he watches with his keen eyes every movement in the water beneath. As soon as he sees a fish he darts into the water and usually succeeds in capturing him. If the fish be small he swallows him at once; but if it be of good size he carries it to a stump or stone and beats it two or three times against wood or rock until it is insensible, and then swallows it at his leisure.

Sometimes, however, in his greediness, Mr. Kingfisher gets too large a mouthful, and then he chokes to death or is carried into the water and drowned by the fish he has caught, or which has caught him. A gentleman once saw a kingfisher thus struggling in the water with a fish, when a huge pike came to the surface and took both bird and fish with him down to the cavernous depths below, where he doubtless made a good meal of both of them. Fishing is a very uncertain business.