

EASTER CUSTOMS IN OLD ENGLAND.

Many of the old Easter customs are still observed in different parts of Great Britain. The custom of distributing the "pace" or "pasche ege," which was once almost universal among Christians, is still observed in Lancashire. Even in Puritan Scotland, where the great festivals of the Church were suppressed, the young people still get their hard-boiled dyed eggs, which they roll about, or throw, and, finally, eat. In Lancashire, Cheshire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire the ridiculous custom of "lifting" or "heaving" is still practised. On Easter Monday the men lift the women, and on Easter Tuesday the women lift the men. In Durham, on Easter Monday, the men also claim the privilege of taking off the women's shoes, and the next day the women retaliate. In early times, both clergy and laity used to play at ball in the churches at Easter-tide for tansy-cakes, and although the profane part of this custom is discontinued, tansy-cakes and tansy-puddings are still favourite Easter dishes in the South of England. In Dorsetshire, even until quite recently, the parish church-clerks used to carry white cakes to every house, as Easter offerings, and in return for these cakes they received a gratuity. In the parish of Biddenham, in Kent, there is an ancient endowment for the distribution, on Easter afternoon, of cakes among the poor. In the history of the city of Chester, it is stated that the Easter "ball-throwing" was observed in the Cathedral before the Reformation, and that even the bishop and Dean took the ball, and at the commencement of the Antiphon began to dance, throwing the ball to the choristers, who handed it to each other during the time of dancing. The service over, the clergy and the choristers retired for refreshment, which included a gammon of bacon, eaten in abhorrence of the Jews, and a tansy-pudding, symbolical of the bitter herbs of the Paschal Feast. Mr. Lyons, the Keeper of the Records of the Tower of London, has given an extract from one of the rolls in his custody, which mentions a payment made to certain ladies and maids of honor for "lifting" King Edward the First on Easter Monday. The sum that "Longshanks" paid for this luxury was no trifle, for it was equal to at least two thousand dollars of our money. These old customs are only the remnants of many observances that characterized Easter as a holiday rather than a Holy Day. Now, all England keeps the Queen Festival. Not only the Established Church, but Christians of all names recognize the significance

and importance of this, the yearly Anniversary of Christ's Resurrection.

EASTER THOUGHTS.

It seems clear that a pure spirit will arise from the seed of a pure body, and a loving spirit from the seed of a loving body. If the body we sorrowfully put aside has been one full of charity, helpful, kindly, and eager to speak tender, pitying words—one that has thought no evil, and has believed all

body, it is not alone the natural body we are creating, but the seed of the spiritual body which is to come after. This is not a mystical doctrine. All those who in this life have attained some knowledge of their spiritual natures will testify to its truth. The change from a natural to a spiritual living is like the growing of a plant whose seed we have sown. The right plant surely grows in a man who has sown the right seed. As the spiritual nature of such a man begins to develop, the purer, higher elements in him grow stronger, and one by one the baser sort die. Hate dies, and revenge, and anger. Cruelty dies, and all unkindness. Narrowness of mind dies, and contempt for the frailties of others. The part that lives and grows stronger is love. Purity and truth and courage are but parts of love, and, as it grows greater, by-and-by comes the sureness of knowledge, and faith itself is swallowed up in fruition. This is the daily burial of the old man, who was "earthy," and the daily rising of the new, who is the "Lord from Heaven." To such a heart Easter comes every day.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

Our illustrated Scriptural subjects this week are taken from drawings for stained glass windows, by N. T. Lyon, 141 Church St., Toronto, and show the excellence of the work produced by this firm. We hope to be favoured with others in the near future.

EASTER DAY.

Easter Day, the Queen of the Church's festivals, is the joyous commemoration of our Lord's Resurrection from the dead. Our blessed Lord rose again on the first day of the week, and it was on this day that He made repeated appearances to His disciples. Easter, then, is the first Lord's Day, and each Sunday is a lesser Easter. It has been called "The Great Lord's Day," "The Bright Day," "The Lord's Day of Joy." Upon Easter depend all the other movable feasts and holy days. It is always the first Sunday after the full moon, which happens upon or next after the 21st day of March; and if the full moon happens upon a Sunday, Easter Day is the Sunday after. The observance of Easter is known to have commenced as soon as the early Christians were permitted to worship openly and without persecution.

The Church is a Divine Institution with a mission to reach and save your soul. Will you not surrender yourself to her holy influence this season, that you may have peace now and eternal joy hereafter.



From a drawing for stained-glass, by N. T. Lyon.

"AND HE OPENED HIS MOUTH AND TAUGHT THEM."

things, and hoped all things, and endured all things,—can anyone doubt what should come of such a seed-planting? The natural comes first, and after that the spiritual. But "as is the natural, so is the spiritual." It is far more glorious, but, after all—the same! So we may bring Easter, with its wonderful deep meaning, into the life of every day. How? By teaching ourselves to comprehend the truth that while we live this human life, and develop this natural