

### A Breath of Spring.

Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come.—Cant. ii, 11, 12.

The winter is over, and spring is here,  
The blossoming flowers on the earth appear,  
They are scattering beauty everywhere,  
For, oh, they are lovely and sweet and fair!

The winter is over, aye, over and gone,  
And the time of the singing of birds is come.  
Glad music is ringing in wood and dell,  
The joyous notes that we love so well.  
The winter is over, the spring is here

For a lonely heart in its grief and fear,  
And the flowers of hope are blooming again,  
For the storms have passed, and the chilling  
rain.

The winter is over, yes, over and past;  
Glad songs of thanksgiving awake at last,  
For the dark'ning clouds have all fled away  
In the light and joy of spring's dawning ray.

The winter is over, now over and gone;  
Sad heart, take courage, no longer mourn;  
God's covenant mercies thro' wintry days  
Have led to a spring time of joyous praise.  
—C. P., in the 'Christian.'

### The Date of Easter.

The annual changing of the date of Easter is a puzzle to many. In 1894 it was on March 25, and in 1905 on April 23. Some years it may be as early as March 23 and in others as late as April 25, a period of five weeks intervening between the earliest and latest dates on which the sacred festival may be held. Easter is always the first Sunday after the full moon which happens upon or next after March 21, and if the full moon falls on Sunday, March 21, Easter will fall on the following Sunday, March 28. It is arbitrarily ruled that the paschal full moon shall never fall later than April 18, although a consistent method of scientific computation and instrumental determination would make it sometimes fall on April 19.

The name Easter, like the names of the days of the week, is a survival from the old Teutonic mythology. It is derived from Eostre, or Ostara, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring, in whose honor the ancients held a festival every April. Seven movable feasts depend on Easter for the date of their annual recurrence. They are: Septuagesima Sunday, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, and Good Friday, which precede it, and Ascension Day, Whitsunday, and Trinity Sunday, which follow it.—New York 'Tribune.'

### An Easter Painting.

(Helen A. Hawley, in the 'C. E. World.')

It was Thursday of Passion Week. There were not many visitors at the National Gallery in London, only the few who must economize their time for sightseeing.

A young woman, who wandered aimlessly about, had not the alert air which characterizes the usual tourist. She was pale, with heavy eyes encircled by dark lines. She wore plain black; it might be mourning or it might not. She looked at pictures without seeing them. Sometimes she sighed audibly, recovering herself with a start. Her whole aspect was that of one in hopeless grief.

At some distance from her, two others took lively, intelligent interest in what they had come to see. They were evidently mother and daughter. The girl was not more than seventeen. Her sweet face changed rapidly with every impression, as she looked at the

different works of art; yet she was not oblivious to her surroundings. More than once she sent a pitying glance to the sad young woman, who seemed like a restless, aimless spirit. At length, she spoke in a low tone, and the closing words were a question, 'May I, mother?'

The mother, doubtless not unused to her child's loving impulses, answered, 'Yes, dear.'

In a minute the girl had crossed the gallery, and was saying in a soft, entreating voice to the stranger: 'Pardon me, but have you noticed this painting?' She indicated 'The Raising of Lazarus,' by Sebastian del Piombo. 'Won't you look at it with me? It appeals to me much.'

The young woman at first drew herself up rather haughtily; but, seeing the girl's face so refined and almost timid in its entreaty, she answered, 'Since you wish it.'

They stood before the picture, and no word was spoken for some minutes. Slowly, as if forced to come, tears gathered in the sad eyes, eyes which saw, not the risen Lazarus, not the adoring sisters, not the startled crowd, but only the wonderful Christ, full of benignant power.

The woman's lips opened. 'It is possible!' she breathed. 'He can do it! He will do it for her, also. I suppose I believed it before; now I feel it.' She was speaking to herself, unconscious for the instant of any other presence. She looked long, and her face became illumined. Turning to her companion: 'You brought me to what I needed, and I thank you. But how could you know?'

The girl had stepped aside, not to see the other's emotion. She answered: 'I didn't know. I was so sorry for you. It came to me that I should feel as you looked if—if my mother—' She hesitated, and the young woman nodded.

'Mother is over there. Won't you meet her? She will comfort you.'

Together they crossed to where the older woman was waiting. A cordial hand-clasp was the only greeting.

'Come to our rooms with us,' said the motherly voice, 'for we cannot talk freely here. The invitation was frankly accepted. Sympathy, once admitted, was too sweet to be thrust out by one so utterly lonely. She told her story, short, and akin to many life stories.

'I have been in Germany,' she said, 'studying art, and news came that my mother was ill. I was hurrying home to see her; but in London the cablegram met me not to come, for mother had not waited. She had to go without—without staying for me. You can't think how dreadful it was. My faith slipped away. Easter seemed a horrid sarcasm, and I couldn't bear its approach. I was so miserably restless that I went to the gallery because I really couldn't stay by myself—not to look at anything. I thought everybody would be strangers, no one would know. When you asked me to look at the painting, I didn't care what I did, nor what became of me. It seemed as if I couldn't live over Easter. But that face of Christ, how full of glad power! It all came back to me when I looked—the faith which she taught me. We shall meet again, my mother and I. I can bear it now!'

She laid her head impulsively in the lap of the older woman, and her tears were full of healing.

'You shall stay with us over Easter Sunday,' said this other mother, stroking her hair; and the home-sick, soul-sick one breathed a low 'Thank you.'

If Easter morning dawned with hope to that despondent heart, it was because a young girl saw her opportunity, and was not too self-conscious to use it.

He who loves not, lives not; he who lives by the Life cannot die.—Raymond Lull.

### 'They Have Taken Away my Lord.'

So said Mary Magdalene in the garden of Joseph near by the cross on the first Easter morning. It was an explanation of her flowing tears and an answer to a question put by the shining angelic presences as to the reason of her weeping. She had come to the sepulchre very early in the morning, before the sun was fairly up, and bore spices with which to embalm the body of the Lord she loved. The absence of that body, even though it were lifeless, was loss enough to wound her loving heart and open anew the fountains of grief. So great was her gratitude for the redemption from sin brought to her by Jesus, that she coveted the boon of ministering to him even in his death, and to be disappointed in her intended service of love added fresh sorrow to her already bereaved soul.

If love undergoes such affliction in the removal merely of the lifeless physical form, how much sorer its loss and how much greater its bereavement where the Divine personality himself whose Saviourhood and Lordship animated and sanctified that material tabernacle snatched away!

The material body of our Lord was not greatly different from those of other men, but the person within that body was infinitely different, and it was the personality and life of Jesus that made him so dear to Mary and to every Christian disciple. He is not 'the chiefest among ten thousand,' but to a saved soul he is 'the chiefest' among all the millions of earth and all the hosts of the skies. There may be many angels as there are many men, but there is only one Saviour. There was, there is and there will be salvation in none other. As certain as man's greatest curse is sin, and as certain as man's greatest need is salvation from sin, so certain will it be that Jesus Christ, the Saviour, will be more precious to man than anyone else. Rob the world of him and its moral and spiritual sun is blotted out. Take Christ away from the Christian, and he is stripped of all that is most dear.

To commit this awful robbery of taking away the Christian's Lord, they are making preparation who seek to destroy devout and trustful faith in him, in his sinless life and character, in his atoning mission to the lost world, in his divine nature, in his transcendent birth, in his revelation of God, in his supernatural works, in his matchless words, in his sacrificial death and in his victorious resurrection. 'If Christ be not raised your faith is vain.' In raising his Son from the grave God put the seal of his approval upon the whole life and work of his Anointed, overwhelmed his enemies with defeat and laid a firm foundation for the faith of all ages. By that one miracle Jesus was 'declared to be the Son of God with power,' and his other miracles became credible, and man's hopes of immortality became assured. Discredit our Lord's rising from the dead and there is lost the supreme fact in his earthly life. With that gone, faith in his divinity, in his saving works and in his glorious Lordship would wane. With greater grief than Mary knew, the disciples of Jesus, despoiled of that which makes life 'worth while,' robbed of their dearest friend, their brightest hopes and their noblest inspirations, might repeat in inconsolable grief, 'They have taken away my Lord.'

Mary was fearful and sorrowful without real reason. No one had removed her Lord. She was mistaken. He was still there, nearer to her and more glorious than she knew. She