

## An Easter Carol.

SWEETLY the birds are singing  
At Easter dawn;  
Sweetly the bells are ringing  
On Easter morn;  
And the words they say  
On Easter day  
Are "Christ the Lord is risen."

Birds! forget not your singing  
At Easter dawn.  
Bells! be ye ever ringing  
On Easter morn.  
In the spring of the year,  
When Easter is here,  
Sing "Christ the Lord is risen."

Easter buds were growing  
Ages ago.  
Easter lilies were blowing  
By the water's flow.  
All nature was glad,  
Not a creature was sad,  
For Christ the Lord was risen.

## AMONG THE STARS.

ANY clear night, if the watcher has patience, he may see one or more "shooting-stars," or meteors. These are not stars at all, but often are more brilliant than any star, because they are so near us that their friction against the earth's atmosphere either causes them to glow at white-heat or to flame up like a torch. Even a very small meteor, one not much larger than a pin-head, might become distinctly visible in this way, and seen against a background of constellations, outline the North star.

The whole solar system, astronomers say, is strewn with particles of matter known as star-dust, while larger bodies known as meteoroids chase one another about the sun at intervals of a few miles. Usually when these meteoroids encounter the earth's atmosphere they break into small fragments and fall harmlessly to the ground. It is thought that only six or seven hundred of these meteoric stones reach the surface of the earth unbroken in the course of a year, while the number of small particles which fall has been estimated at 2,000,000 a day. If the air did not act as a cushion, no casualty would be more common than being hit by a meteorite.

Meteorites are usually composed of iron, silicon, and oxygen, the three elements which are most common in the earth, and as no new elements have been found in these visitors from space, it is believed that the solar system, and perhaps the universe, are made out of the same material as the earth. The motion of falling meteors is very curious. One has been known to travel on a line almost parallel with the earth's surface, and from sixty to one hundred miles above it, all the way from Indian Territory to Central New York, where it is supposed to have fallen in fragments. Another passed from Michigan across New York State and on out to sea between New York city and New Haven. These meteors travel six or seven hundred miles an hour after they become visible. Meteors are most common about August 10 and December 7, when the earth annually encounters long droves of meteoroids as they journey around the sun. Once in thirty-three years the earth crosses the thin stream of Leonides which seems to come from the constellation Leo, and is so long that six or eight years are required for this flock of meteors, travelling twenty-six miles a second, to pass a given point. When the earth meets this great torchlight procession there is a display worth seeing. The next one will take place in November, 1899.

Where meteors come from is not known. Whether they are fragments of a bursted planet or collected star-dust can only be surmised. Once it was thought they kept up the sun's supply of heat by running into him, but that theory has been abandoned. What is certain is that the planets are becoming somewhat larger and heavier every year through the shower of meteors and star-dust that is constantly falling. Thus it happens that while it never rains pitch-forks, yet iron enough to make a pitchfork rains upon the earth every day.—*Harper's Young People.*

## QUEER CHARACTERISTICS OF JOHN CHINAMAN.

As an inventor John has achieved some distinction, and has won for himself the name of the "Yankee of the East." Besides the mariner's compass, type, printing, paper, porcelain, silk, gunpowder and clocks are some of his alleged discoveries. He has kept the knowledge of these things to himself as much as possible, scorning to give to those so much inferior to him as he supposes other nations to be, the knowledge which he has made his own. John himself and his countrymen are "Celestials"; his emperor is the "Son of Heaven"; why should he stoop to benefit a people so much beneath him as the inhabitants of England or the United States! John's school books give amusing testimony to the abundance of his national pride and self-satisfaction. His geography allots nine-tenths of the globe to China, about a square inch to England, and no space at all to our own great country! This same self-conceit helps to account for the lack of progress noticeable in John and his countrymen. For centuries they held

themselves quite apart from other nations. At the same time, John's nation is, in its way, an educated nation. All public offices are open to the graduates of their colleges, without any distinction of class or creed. Brains and skill, rather than money, are the highways to honour and office.

John's language is said to be the hardest of all to learn. His alphabet has two hundred and fourteen letters, and such complications of tones and inflections that one word spoken in ten different ways means ten different things.

John, as a soldier, is so brave that he goes to a night attack with his lighted lantern. It may expose his whereabouts to the enemy, to be sure, but if the hostile soldiers are to be dreaded, much more the dark—in John's opinion.

John's religion? He has plenty—such as it is. Every trade has its patron divinity. The joss-houses have their idols by the dozen, and John smokes and chats as he prays. As he has only a single tongue, however, he must use some device to do either the chatting or the praying. So he prays by means of two sticks, half round, determining by the way they fall whether or not his prayer is granted. Or he prints his prayer on a strip of red paper and pins it on the wall near the door. At the proper time the priest sends it, with other accumulated prayers, up into the air on wings of fire.—*St. Nicholas.*

## AN EASTER LILY.

A SEED fell into the ground; it died.  
And from its grave there grew a lily.  
Tall, fair and pure as an angel by the throne of God, the lily stood erect in a crystal vase.

And its golden tongue praised God.  
The florist said, "It is the queen of my Easter offering."

The poet came to buy a flower for the woman he loved.  
He saw the lily and he said, "She is as fair as that flower."

And on Easter Sabbath morning the lily rose and fell upon her breast.  
In the great congregation, when the waves of glorious music touched the lily, it quivered and thrilled as the heart beneath it pulsed to the glad voices.

Out beneath the golden stars the poet stooped to kiss the lips he loved, and the lily broken and bruised, fell to the ground.

And creeping to her cellar, a beggar girl, cold, tired, hungry, with pain of body, mind and soul, saw the fair lily glistening in the moonlight; she picked it up, and looking into its depth, she saw a picture of her childhood's home.

Into her hardened eyes came tears, and each tear held a face: the mother face, the father face, the faces of loved ones long dead. And out of her heart she said to the lily:

"Oh! lily, thou art so fair, so pure. I knew you long ago in my country home; have you a message for a sinner like me?"  
And the golden-tongued lily seemed to sing to her:

"Oh! weary one, the Christ of the lilies is your Christ. I sing to you of rest and peace at home."

And kissing the lily the beggar slept in rags upon the cellar floor and dreamed of home.

In the morning they found there a broken, faded lily.

In the morning they found there a dead girl with a smile upon her face.  
Her dust fell into the earth.

And from the earth an angel joined the lily-bearing host of God.—*N. Y. Voice.*

## REMARKABLE ANTS.

A COOK was much annoyed to find his pastry shelves attacked by ants. By careful watching it was discovered that they came twice a day in search of food—at about seven in the morning and four in the afternoon. How were the pies to be protected against the invaders?

The cook decided to make a circle around the pie with molasses and await the result. He did not have long to wait, for at 6.30 he noticed that off in the left corner of the pantry was a line of ants slowly making their way in the direction of the pies.

They seemed like a vast army coming forth to attack the enemy. In front was a leader, who always kept a little ahead

of his troops. They were of the sort known as the medium-sized red ant, which is regarded as the most intelligent of its kind, whose scientific name is *formica rubra*.

About forty ants out of five hundred stepped out and joined the leader. The general and his aids held a council, and then proceeded to examine the circle of molasses.

Certain portions seemed to be assigned to the different ants, and each selected unerringly the point in the section under his charge where the stream of molasses was narrowest. Then the leader made his tour of inspection. The order to march was given and the ants all made their way to a hole in the wall, at which the plastering was loose.

Here they broke rank and set about carrying pieces of plaster to the places in the molasses, which had been agreed upon as narrowest. To and fro they went from the nail-hole to the molasses, until at 11.30 o'clock, they had thrown a bridge across. Then they formed themselves in line again and marched over, and by 11.45 every ant was eating pie.

## GOOD-NIGHT.

THERE is a tender sweetness about some of our common phrases of affectionate greeting, simple and unobtrusive as they are, which fall like dew upon the heart. Good-night! The little one lisps it as she tumbles off to bed. Sisters and brothers exchange the wish; parents and children; friends and friends. Familiar use has robbed it of its significance to some of us; we repeat it automatically without much thought. But consider. We are, as voyagers, putting off from time to time upon an unexplored sea. Our barks of life set sail and go onward into darkness; and we, asleep on our pillows, take no such care as we do when awake and journeying by daylight. Of the perils of the night, whatever they may be, we take no heed. An unsleeping vigilance watches over us, but it is the vigilance of one stronger and wiser than we, who is the Eternal Good. Good and God spring from the same root, and are the same in meaning. "Good-bye" is only "God be with you." "Good-night" is really "God-night," or "God guard the night."

It would be a churlish household in which these gentle forms of speech were ignored or did not exist. Alike the happy and the sorrowful, day by day, may say "Good-night."—*Harper's Bazar.*

## RUINED BY WHISKEY.

ONE of the best Greek scholars in New York is a guard on the Sixth Avenue Elevated Road. Not long ago a famous professor in one of our leading universities, published a volume on certain features of the ancient Grecian dialect, of interest only to scholars. The "L" guard referred to above wrote to a New York newspaper, pointing out several errors made by the professor in his book. He signed himself "Sixth Avenue Elevated Guard No. —."

"For a month," writes a correspondent, "I watched the badges of the guards on that road as I made my daily trips back and forth. One morning I was rewarded by finding the learned man that I sought."

"How does it happen," I asked, showing him my card, "that you, a Greek scholar of first rank, should be doing such work as this?"

"He looked at me sadly, and his red face grew more flushed than usual. 'I was the best Hellenist of my year at Dublin,' he said. 'My Greek is still what it used to be, but my career has been ruined by—whiskey.'"

## SAYING GOOD-BYE.

SINCE any good-bye may be for years or may be for ever, should we not always part from our friends tenderly, kindly, lovingly? We should never separate in any angry mood, with bitterness in our heart, with unforgiveness or misunderstanding we may never again have an opportunity to set right. We should never say good-bye carelessly or coldly. We should strive to make every good-bye sweet and kindly enough for a last good-bye should it prove to be the last, as it may be.—*J. R. Miller.*