

in the time of Claudius, 41. The Dutch landed in Ceylon in 1602; they captured the capital, Colombo, in 1603. Intercourse with the British began in 1713. A large portion of the country was taken by them in 1782, but was restored in 1783. The Dutch settlements were seized by the British, 1795. Ceylon was ceded to the British by the peace of Amiens in 1802. The British troops were treacherously massacred or imprisoned by the Adigar of Candy, at Colombo, June 26, 1803. The complete sovereignty of the island was assumed by England in 1815.

Easter Carol.

BY DEAN ALFORD.

THE calm of blessed night
Is on Judea's hills;
The full-orbed moon with cloudless light
Is sparkling on their hills:
One spot above the rest
Is still and tranquil seen,
The chamber as of something blest,
Amidst its bowers of green.

Around that spot each way
The figures ye may trace
Of men-at-arms in grim array,
Girding the solemn place:
But other hands are there—
And, glistening through the gloom,
Legions of angels bright and fair
Throng to that wondrous tomb.

"Praise be to God on high!
The triumph hour is near;
The Lord hath won the victory,
The foe is vanquished here!
Dark grave, yield up the dead;
Give up thy prey, thou earth;
In death He bowed His sacred head,—
He springs anew to birth!"

"Sharp was the wreath of thorns
Around His suffering brow;
But glory rich His head adorns,
And angels crown Him now.
Roll yonder rock away
That bars the marble gate;
And gather we in bright array
To swell the Victor's state!"

"Hail, hail, hail,
The Lord is risen, indeed!
The curse is made of none avail!
The sons of men are freed!"

An Easter Talk with the Children.

BY A. CLEVELAND COXE, BISHOP OF
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THEY used to say that the sun dances on Easter morning. Of course, it is a mere expression, that means only this: when we are glad, everything in nature seems to rejoice with us. When one is swiftly sailing in a boat, the shore appears to move, you know. Trees, houses, churches, whatever we see on the land looks as if it were in motion, and we ourselves hardly feel that it is we that are going so rapidly forward. So, on a bright Easter morning, we seem to lend our delight to the shining sun. The sun leaps up the morning sky, and seems a faint emblem, in all his glory, of the glorious Redeemer, breaking from the tomb, and rising to give light to the world. Well may we rejoice in his light. It is the only light upon the dark, dismal grave. Take away the knowledge of Christ and of his resurrection, and nothing is left to us but mortality. Death has the victory. But if we know, and love to know, that Christ is risen from the dead, then there is no great terror about the tomb. The Lord is the Master of death, and those who belong to him are promised a share in that mas-

tery. If the Head has risen, the members of his body shall rise; and we are his body, if we truly belong to Christ. He has put a new song into our mouths, a perpetual Easter song,—*"O grave, where is thy victory! O death, where is thy sting!"*

Our dear Lord himself reminds us that if a corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies, then only does it live again and bring forth fruit. Thus he teaches us one of the parables of nature, just as when he says "consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." We are to observe that the death and corruption of the wheat is the process of restoration, renewal and harvest. All this his blessed apostle St. Paul more fully unfolds, when he teaches us about the resurrection body; it is not quickened, or made to live, "except it die." The miracles of nature, then, teach us how easy it is for the God of Nature to raise us up from the dead; to give us a new body, in the resurrection, even as he gives to every seed its own body, and brings forth a beautiful flower out of a seed that seems as nothing, until it is "sown in corruption and raised in glory."

All nature is full of such parables but I will only mention one or two, because just at this season we begin to see what I shall speak of, and because even poor heathens saw in such things a parable of life, and learned from it the probability of life after death.

You know the butterfly. How beautiful it is, as it lights upon the flowers in a garden! It seems like a flower springing to a better life than plant-life: no more rooted in the ground, but soaring to the skies. Now we all know that the butterfly is at first a mere worm. He wraps himself up in a sort of shroud and seems to sleep the sleep of death. But up he springs again: no more a worm, but a winged thing; so beautiful and so different from what it was; yet, after all, the same worm. Now, if our God does all this for so poor a creature, need we doubt that he can do more for his dear children, who sleep in Jesus?

I think there is a parable in every bird's-nest of the same sort. That's why children have Easter-eggs given them. Who would think those little pebbles, for such they seem, were full of life? But, after a while, they break open, and forth comes the singing bird that very soon flies up toward heaven, and fills the air with his Easter song. Think of it, dear children, for in the song of the birds we have another parable that teaches us a far better song than theirs. And we may be sure that he who made the birds to fly in the bright skies and to fill them with sweet music, will not less delight in the Easter carols of his dear children, when they rejoice in him who is their strength and their salvation. It is expressly said that children shall come again "from the hand of the enemy;" children, if they are called to die in their infancy, shall have a glorious part in the resurrection of the dead.

Let all children, then, learn to triumph over death, and not to fear him. Let them love their dear Saviour, and think often of "the firstfruits," and then of the harvest. And, as if waving the wheat-sheaves of the ancient people of God, let them exult and sing:—

"Soar we now where Christ has led,
Following our exalted Head;
Made like him, like him we rise,
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies."

Songs in the Night.

"Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs
in the night."

BY HARRIET ANNIE W.

THE hours of midnight had swept past,
The city bell to lead thee,
The moon had sunk behind the clouds,
No rustling in the tree;
All, all was silent as the grave,
And memories of the tomb
Had banished sweet sleep far away:
All spoke of tears and gloom.

When suddenly upon the air
Rang out a sweet bird's song;
No feeble, weak, uncertain note,
No plaint of grief or wrong,
No "Miserere Domine,"
No "Dies Iræ" sad,
But "Gloria in Excelsis" rang
In accents wild and glad.

How could he sing? A birdling caged,
And in the dark alone,
And then methought perhaps he saw
Some vision from the throne.
The little birdling's eyes were bright,
While mine with sleep were dim.
Had some bright watcher passed me by
And spoke of joy to him?

Then I remembered what Christ said,
The God of Love's dear Son,
"Not one of these small birds forgot,
Beneath the glorious sun."
They have no load of grief to bear,
Of sin no deep dark stain,
And yet in patience take their share
Of storm and frost and rain."

Ah! can it be, unknown to us,
Without a human word
The Universal Father soothes
The death-bed of each bird?
"The whole creation roareth," yet
These pure things of the sky,
Are they not "nearer to the Gates,"
Than mortals such as I?

Yet while I mused, it seemed some form,
Ere yet I was aware,
Bent o'er my pillow, dried my tears,
And turned to song my prayer:
Some subtle presence unrevealed,
Seemed to repeat the words
"Fear not, for you are dearer far
Than many little birds."

I do not ask what seemed to speak,
Whether the angel blest,
Who hath been my appointed guard
In calm or wild unrest;
Or whether some sweet voice I love,
But hushed to me awhile,
Came down, on gentle mission sent,
To give for tears, a smile.

It matters not! God knows Faith's wings
Droop sometimes in the dust,
While hands grow numb and lose their hold
On Hope's firm anchor trust;
And so while sending dew and rain
And glowing sunbeams bright,
God giveth unto all who hear,
Songs in the darkest night.

HAMILTON, ONT.

Dying a Thousand an Hour.

THERE are no new methods of missionary work; no recent discovery in that line. What is the problem before the Church to-day? It is this: There are more than 800,000,000 souls in the darkness of heathenism, still unevangelized, not even nominal Christians: China's 400,000,000; India's 252,000,000; Africa's 200,000,000; Japan's 35,000,000. What of the islands of the Indian Archipelago, where, as in the case of Java, a single island has over 18,000,000 inhabitants? What of Central Asia; of the needy parts of Europe; of South America; of the still needy islands of the Pacific? Making allowances for the sprinkling of Christians over these lands, it is nearly within the truth to say there are still 800,000,000 beyond the pale of Christendom. How can these be reached and saved?

Can we honestly say, in any fair and reasonable use of words, that the

work is being accomplished? Ontario, with a million and three quarters of people, has from twelve to fifteen hundred Protestant Christian ministers. The North India Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church has within its bounds about nineteen or twenty millions of people, and its force of American missionaries is but nineteen or twenty. A missionary to a million! There are spots in India where a single missionary has many millions in his cure. How would Ontario fare if in all her borders she had but a couple of itinerants to attend to the spiritual wants of the people? Yet this is the proportion of men allowed to India.

For more than a century in India, consecrated cobblers and other consecrated servants of Christ have been pegging away at this work. The missionaries have made grammars and dictionaries and translations of the strange languages of that land. The Bible, in twenty-five of the great languages of India, is an everlasting monument to the energy, patience, and honest toil of the missionaries of the regular missionary societies of the church. Five hundred thousand converts organized into churches are no less a monument to their work and proof of God's seal to their labors. There are no new methods of missionary work. As far as India is concerned, it is all siege work. Some one must dig the mine and lay the powder; to fire it is the work of an hour; to prepare for the day of final victory is the work of perhaps centuries. Missions to nominal Christians are or are likely to be self-supporting from the first. Missions to the heathen are sure to be self-supporting when they have passed out of the evangelistic into the pastoral period of their history. In proportion as the transition occurs, we fully demonstrate the truth of this to-day.

There is not in all the history of missions a single example of a man giving his whole time to regular mission work and meeting with support from a heathen people like the Brahmins of India. He is tearing down their religion: will they feed him under such circumstances? He may divide his time between an English congregation and the heathen, he may divide his time between an indigo plantation or a carpenter shop and the heathen, and thus be supported on the field. He may give all his time to an English congregation and carefully train them to go out as missionaries; and this is all right. But the Church must not be misled into the idea that this is either a new discovery in method or the directest kind of mission work. If a generation pass away in thirty-three years, then the unevangelized heathen are dying at the rate of sixty-six thousand a day. If the infants are left out we have still over thirty thousand souls perishing every twenty-four hours, or more than a thousand every hour; and no method of work can change this appalling fact. None, so far, come up to the demands of the case. More men, more women, more means, more prayer, more faith, more appreciation of the value of a soul,—more for Christ, less for self,—and then we expect to see daylight through this question.

THE years write their record on human hearts, as they do on trees, in hidden, inner circles of growth which no eye can see.—*Sane Holm.*