

EASTER TIME.

A PILGRIMAGE to Jerusalem and the Holy Land, must ever hold somewhat of the same place in the hopes and aspirations of a true Christian, as the one to Mecca does even nowadays, in the mind of a Mahomedan. If, in this instance, we suppose the pilgrim an inhabitant of what may be called "highly civilized Western Europe," how numerous and how vivid must be the many thoughts which flash through his mind, on his first setting foot on Eastern shores! Manners, customs, laws, language, each and every one of them differs from what he has previously been accustomed to, each in itself is sufficient to form the subject matter of a book, or the study of a lifetime. Let us suppose that he has overcome his fancy, and has made his weary way through desert and plain, till at last he finds himself on the hills of Palestine, and that a few short miles passed, he will be in the village of Bethlehem.

Standing in the cave, within a few feet of the manger, he views it, and presently his thoughts have wandered back some eighteen centuries, and he is deep in contemplation of the mighty mystery of his religion, which was there worked out. In thought he sees the little babe shivering with cold, swathed in swaddling clothes, or laid to rest in that very manger. An hour passes, and still he stands thinking. Hours pass, and were it not for nature's urgent demands, still would he remain thinking, and yet thinking still.

The pilgrim journeys on, and a few days more see him safely quartered within the walls of Jerusalem the Holy. He, like most pilgrims, has arrived a short time previous to the feast of Easter. North, south, east, and west have contributed to the crowd of Christians that on Easter Sunday fills every nook and corner of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. There, on bended knees, those Christian representatives of all nations, join in prayer and praise to Him who, by rising triumphant from out of that sepulchre, worked out the last act in that divine tragedy. The day declines, but ere its departure, those wayworn pilgrims join their voices in

one unison of prayer—"That as He arose triumphant from death to life, so they on the last day may arise over death, triumphant, unto the eternal."

EASTER DAY.

CHRIST from the dead is risen—dieth no more.
Sing out, glad Earth, rejoice from shore to shore.

First fruits of them that slept! O Life in death!

Fair garden lilies, with their odorous breath,
Salute with grace the world at Easter dawn—
The tomb is oped, the captive loosed and gone,

CHRIST from the dead is risen—dieth no more.
Sing out, O Earth, rejoice from shore to shore.

O wondrous mystery of Love! through Lenten hours

What penitential tears have dimmed these eyes of ours;

What anguished sighs have breathed from tortured, quivering hearts.

Pierced through by all the Tempter's sore envenomed darts.

Yet, glorious mystery of Love, the Lenten Fast

Ends with an angel-ministered; divine repast.
Joy out of Sorrow blooms; Passion's black, cheerless night

Grows fair with glowing rays of Easter Day, alight.

Hail! glorious morn; Hail! blessed Day of days.

Glad o'er a sorrowing world shine forth thy healing rays.

Hark! in the ambient glow of Easter morning fair,

Lo! conqueror's psalms triumphant sound thro' all the air;

"Jesus, our risen Lord, hath vanquished Death and Hell,

Through the grave's pathway passed where angels dwell,

Deliverance wrought, Death's sharpness done away,

And oped the Kingdom wide, on Easter Day."

This world is not merely a rugged spot on which we are to struggle for a foothold on life—to toil for daily bread; but a bright member of the starry brotherhood that range the fields of space, raising from every corner of the universe the harmonious anthem of praise; a region of still water and cooling shades, and bright birds, and blessed things for the comfort of God's weary children. This world is a poem written in letters of light on the walls of the azure firmament.