

AN EASTER SONG

EVERY face is beaming,
Every step is light,
All the world is beautiful
From merry morn till night,
The little streams are dancing
And flashing, just for fun,
And joyfully to meet the sea,
The mighty rivers run.

And twice ten thousand flowers,
And twice ten thousand more,
Are waking in the juncosome woods
And by the cottage door,
To count the Easter lilies
Is more than you or I
Can hope to do the long day
through
How hard so'er we try.

Every face is beaming,
Every step is light,
For o'er the threshold Easter slipped
At waking of the night,
And little birds are singing
Like mad for joy of life,
And all the hours, in sun and showers,
With brimming joy are rife.

Uplift the songs of Easter,
Let none to-day be still,
When this great world is like a cup
That flowers o'erfill,
When blossoms deck the orchard,
And boughs are pink and white,
And winds go by, like wings that fly,
From merry morn till night.

Margaret E. Sangster, in Youth's Companion.

TWO EASTER BONNETS

"H. HENRY," said Mr. Montague's wife, as she came from the dining-room and quietly removed the paper he was reading from his hands "how long have you carried this letter in your pocket?"

"What letter?—that?—why, it only came yesterday. You can see the date that is stamped upon the envelope."

"Well, I didn't know. You are very careless—you know you are. That letter that came from aunt—"

"What about this other?" he skillfully interrupted. "It's from Jack, I see." He reached for his paper with a movement at once diplomatic and tentative.

"That's exactly what I came to tell you about. It's very thoughtful of him, I know, but—well, we'll see what you think. He writes," she said, consulting the letter, "I met your one-time admirer—No, that isn't the part. Here it is, 'Mumbly, dear, I've got a scheme that's top notch. I want you to let me get you an Easter bonnet, here in the city. Some stunners in the shops—knock the spots off anything you can get in Mayfield. It begins to look as if I won't be able to get away from the college, and I'd like to have some sort of a share in the festive season there at home. Leave it to me, won't you, Mumbly?—and I'll rig you out on time in a crystallized dream.'"

"First, what does he mean by knocking off the spots?" she inquired. "I suppose that's just an expression of his, however. Now, what do you think?"

"I think it is," said Henry, who was looking furtively at his paper; "I guess that's it."

"Henry Montague, you haven't heard a word." She took the paper and put it behind her. "I meant what do you think of his plan?"

"Good scheme. Best I've heard of. Let him get the contraption there by all means. There—I refer to the bonnet. Fanny—don't feel hurt. I know they have some—well, some very unusual effects in the city. I think perhaps you'd avoid unpleasant complications, and have something new to Mayfield to wear. Yes, let him do it." And he reached for his paper—and failed to get it.

"I believe I will. Of course, I always like to select, but I said last year that I'd never, never trade at Miss Le Fevre's again. Just to think that her miserable mismanagement should have parted two such friends—but I was surprised at Helen—at Mrs. Kapuletto—to think she'd wear a bonnet that she must have known was mine, or at least not the one she had ordered."

"Did you wear—hers?" said he, with an imitation yawn.

"Why, of course! Now, what a question! I had to wear something—I couldn't order another one then. Henry, you are positively foolish at times. I remember I said to Miss Le Fevre, when I picked it out—"

"Yes, I remember the story," interrupted her husband, consulting his watch and starting to arise.

"Well," said she, as she pushed him back gently to his seat, "you always forget that lavender and pink are positively hideous or, no, and why in the world Helen—Mrs. Kapuletto—couldn't have managed to send my bonnet home when she found the mistake had been made—"

"Did she know it was yours?" asked Henry, beginning to be rather more insidiously sarcastic than enthusiastic about this off-repeated tale; "did she go along when you gave the order?"

ly what anyone with my taste and complexion would be sure to select—and Miss Le Fevre's girl—"

"There—there's Billings out at the gate. Good-by, my dear. Give Jack my love when you write—sorry he can't be up for Easter. Good-by." Mr. Montague clapped his hat on his head, saluted his wife, made a grab for his cane and departed.

Then Mrs. Montague sat down to think of the trials of that time, a little less than a year before. There never had been in the world, she thought, such a long and beautiful friendship as that between herself and Helen Kapuletto. To think that after having gone to the same identical school together—the best of chums—they were married the very same day—to travel in separate directions later, to be sure—and both had moved to Mayfield at last to live. Mrs. Montague recalled every detail of her order for that fatal Easter bonnet; exactly that delicate shade of yellow, and what the trimmings were—and everything. Then the changes she had ordered; the exasperating slowness and stupidity of Miss Le Fevre; the crazed despair, when, that Saturday night she returned so late from calling with Helen, to find that her bonnet had not yet arrived. And then that awful time on Easter morning, before the girl came weakly up the steps and handed in—the wrong bonnet—a bonnet she had never seen before—a horrid nightmare of a thing in lavender and pink, which she had to wear or stay at home—new blue silk and all.

She wouldn't have believed that Helen could have worn her own very bonnet—and with veiling over the yellow at that—and then be so hateful. She wondered vaguely if they ever would speak to each other again. No, she didn't believe they would; she didn't believe that Helen was half so ready to forget and forgive as she. Well, she would just let Jack get the bonnet in the city this year, and let the people of Mayfield stare if they wished.

So at length she arose and went to her desk to write to her grown-up "boy." In the course of time, and several days before Easter, the bonnet from the great metropolis arrived along with a note from Jack deploring the fact that he could not have carried it home in person. It was really a jewel, a dainty creation of airy, graceful feathers on a moss-green frame and subdued with violets that were poised with an exquisite grace, where they nodded and smiled and seemed to be tossing the sweetest of perfume kisses to all who were gracious enough to behold.

But Easter morning! Ah, how it brightly outjeweled all others of the

net on parade—but her undercurrent of thought was still of Helen, though she parried the questions of her husband with the lightest digressions.

Up the steps of the miniature cathedral the brilliant throng of Mayfield was swarming, faces turned—amid the gayety of dancing plumes and blooms that courted from bonnet to bonnet—to note what their neighbors had found or created to grace the happy occasion.

Within, as Mr. and Mrs. Montague walked calmly up the aisle, the organ was pealing exultantly, pouring forth its thousand voices of praise in an exuberant and swelling river of harmony, as if itself were the fountain of melodies divine.

They took their seats, and reached, like children, each for the hand of the other, to exchange a gentle pressure. No sooner had Mrs. Montague commenced a rapid survey of the congregation—in which her glance went flitting from one exotic to another, like a butterfly in clover—than she found herself, abruptly, looking in the face and at the bonnet of Mrs. Kapuletto. And Helen in return was looking at her and hers, and the gaze of each was suddenly held transfixed.

Well might the old-time friends open eyes of amazement—their bonnets were counterparts—precise reproductions—each of the other; the same moss green, the same spray of feathers, airy and filmy, the same mass of violets, nodding and smiling and tossing their perfume kisses across the aisle and seats of the chancel.

Both in confusion at last were glad to divert their eyes to the hymn books, held below the pews; but neither was reading, nor praying, nor seeing a thing but the twin of her bonnet, and wondering with might and main how this singular duplication had been made possible.

Mrs. Kapuletto was guilty of stealing a "peck" from the sides of her eyes. Mrs. Montague was timidly attempting a similar sortie. The glances met and fell again to the books. The service commenced, but nothing was heard or observed, except in a dim, uncertain, mechanical manner, by the two. They were quite enough engrossed with attempts to flank the enemy.

In the midst of the battle of glances, which had gone so far that each was now feeling singularly humorous and amused, their gaze was focused on a striking pair of tall young people gliding silently by and up the aisle side by side.

They were Julia Kapuletto, the daughter of Helen, and John Henry Montague, the son of Fanny. And they sat in



PRECISE REPRODUCTIONS—EACH OF THE OTHER.

year. The sun shone warmly from a flawless sky of turquoise hue; the trees wore freshest, fairest emerald leaves, and pearl and ruby blossoms; the grass was asparkle with diamond dew, and the birds were chorusing in anthems as clear and sweet as the crystal tinkle, tinkle rung from pebbles by the brook.

Mr. and Mrs. Montague not only were in harmony with all the scene, but were really a part and parcel of it, as, with faces gay with smiles, they slowly walked the way to church. The bells had never sounded half so musical and liquid bright—that is, except on one occasion, to wit, indeed, Mr. Montague was moved now to aflood.

"Just such a morning as this," said he, with a buoyancy in his voice, "that we went to the chapel—so many, and yet it seems so very few years ago. What a day that was! And what a lot of sunshine we have had ever since!"

"Oh, yes! And didn't the girls look pretty—and Helen—Mrs.—Mrs. Kapuletto?"

"I'd call her Helen—wouldn't you, Fanny—to-day? Wasn't it odd that Helen should have been the one to introduce us? What a lively pair you used to make—you two!"

A glow had come in the cheek of Mrs. Montague and an extra brightness in her eyes. She felt a yearning toward the girl who had been her chum—the tall young lady who had found her mate—the matronly woman whom long she had loved.

"I wish I could see the way," she mused aloud; "but I know she wouldn't meet—"

"What way, my dear?" said her husband, when she paused. "What do you know—about whom? Who wouldn't meet what?"

"It was just thinking what a lovely bonnet that is on that lady ahead!" She chattered along admiringly—as well she might, having really the prettiest bon-

net together and sang from a single book.

Now began, in the breasts of two indulgent and admiring mothers, a conflict of emotions and a struggle so intense that music, sermon, songs and prayers, and all the people but themselves, were merged in a shadowy dream of unreality, to say no word of the puzzle in their brains. Then, to add to their fantasy of thought and to set them whirling in a wider field of conjecture, those "youngsters," making a show of arranging the overcoat of Jack, in their seat, at the end of a hymn, turned coyly about and smiled the grayest, most knowing of smiles in the wondering faces of their parents, doing first the honor to one and then with utter impartiality to the other.

The mothers were more than ever amazed; but not to say that each began to entertain suspicions of something unusual between their "children" would certainly be to do no justice at all to that other sense in woman-kind, which is duly acknowledged under the explanation that all possess an intuitive faculty of "finding things out."

Slowly, very slowly, the face of Mrs. Montague came squarely around, unabashed, un-everything but quizzical. Likewise the countenance of Mrs. Kapuletto, innocent of everything but dumb though eloquent inquiry, turned deliberately about to that of her friend. Their glances met without a quiver; they scanned each other's expression for light on the mystery; then, playing through the eyes of each, came gleams of old-time merriment and sparks of mischief, and over the face of each a flush of color from the heart. In a second they were smiling in spite of all they could do, while the blossoms on their bonnets insisted on nodding and bobbing across the space intervening in a way that was nothing short of the

veriest fellowship and sweet familiarity.

For Helen and Fanny the Easter service was a dream of music, smiling faces and weddings of the past and the future, but the whole was far too long. They would fain awake and span the gulf between—and yet were vaguely in doubt to think of what they would say.

When at last, to the peals of a glorious postludium, the congregation turned to move to the door in calm procession, young Jack and the blushing Julia came tripping down the aisle in time to take their respective mothers by the arm and halt them face to face in the vestibule.

"We came from town to surprise you both," said Jack, "and—ahem—to—to ask you for each other. I want Julia and Julia went me, and it was for that reason we sent the bonnets."

And the bonnets, being twins, resisting each other no longer, came nearer and nearer together, till at length the nodding violets on either one leaned forward and commingled lovingly with those upon the other.—Ella Stirling Cummins, in American Queen.

AN EASTER LESSON.

The Spirit of Love, Hope, Cheer and Faith.

It is ever the same, yet never the same. This Easter, as all the Easter days before, will set the bells a-swinging, and will pile all the altars high with blossoms.

Think for one moment of the chorus of praise that will go up on Easter morning from all the churches in all the lands of all the Christian world. And that thought alone is enough to make your own heart echo with the Easter joy and praise. Think again of the myriads and myriads of flowers about the church altars and in the homes of the high and the low. And remember, how all through this beautiful spring-time they have been getting ready for this festive day.

Look at the Easter from the universal standpoint. Ask yourselves how much of all the great world's work and life are due to love and hope and cheer and faith.

We shall find leaning down upon these qualities all that spirit which makes our homes lovely. All that spirit which has built our hospitals and our churches. All that spirit which has made our nation worth living and dying for. And then let us remember that these blessed things, love and hope and faith, come to us through that triumphant life that swung wide the gates of Easter and let the King of Glory in.

If we begin by looking into the significance of all that Easter means universally we are far more apt to get what it means individually to every soul. Or, if individually, our hearts are not yet in perfect attune with Easter music and Easter praise, we have the better joy of being glad that upon all the rest of this weary world the Sun of Righteousness has risen. Whether to us it is or is not the holy day, our hearts cannot fail to respond joyfully to the fact that, since He is risen, it is the world's great holiday.—Washington Home Magazine.

THE DATE OF EASTER.

Why It Is Sometimes Early and at Other Times Late.

The date of Easter is determined by the ecclesiastical calendar of the Catholic church. It is a very complicated and laborious affair invented by Lilius, a Neapolitan astronomer and sage, under Pope Gregory XIII, at the close of the sixteenth century. It would be preposterous to tax the brains of modern readers with the abstruse calculations by which the date of Easter is determined, but a few general rules might be given for their enlightenment.

The regulations of the council of Nice are four: First, Easter must be celebrated on a Sunday; second, this Sunday must follow the fourteenth day of the paschal moon; third, the paschal moon is that moon whose fourteenth day falls on or next follows the day of the vernal equinox; fourth, the equinox is fixed invariably in the calendar on the 21st day of March.

This calendar moon, it should be remembered, is not the moon of the heavens nor yet the moon of the astronomers, but it is an imaginary moon created for ecclesiastical convenience. From these conditions it follows that Easter Sunday cannot happen earlier than the 22d of March or later than the 25th of April.—Detroit Free Press.

AFTERMATH.



Mrs. Cobwigger—I never think of visiting my milliner's for a month or so after Easter.

Mrs. Dorans—Why so, my dear?

Mrs. Cobwigger—It really isn't a fit place for a woman, because the men are there swearing about their wives' bills.—N. Y. World.

A Mind Discussed.

"My wife gave me a terrible shock last night."

"What was it?"

"I offered her money for an Easter bonnet, and she said she believed she would spend it on a new saddle for her wheel."—Detroit Free Press.

SPAIN'S ANSWER.

It Arrives at Washington, but Is Not Made Public.

Congress Will Wait Until Monday Before Any Action Is Taken—The President Has Asked Delay Until That Time.

Washington, April 1.—Thursday was a day of anxious waiting for Spain's reply to the demands of the United States contemplating the termination of the war in Cuba and the independence of the island. On that reply, it was universally believed, the issue between peace or war would be decided, unless some new and unexpected considerations arose to postpone the issue further. The gravity of the situation was felt in all official quarters. It was not a day of rapid development, as when war preparations were following in rapid succession, but the tension was even greater from the uncertainty that prevailed, and the feeling that Spain would not concede the complete independence of Cuba.

The White House continued to be thronged with congressional leaders, anxious to learn from the president what his course was to be. The general view conveyed by these leaders, after they had been with the president, was that he expected to have definite replies from Spain in time to present the entire subject to congress by next Monday.

The state department was the center of interest throughout the day, as it was there that Minister Woodford's dispatch announcing Spain's attitude was to be received. The officials shared in the general anxiety, but throughout the business hours of the day no word was received from the United States minister.

The attitude of European powers continued to be seriously discussed in official quarters, as it was felt that an offer of European mediation was almost certain to follow a war crisis.

Congress will wait until Monday before any action is taken. The president has asked delay until that time, and assurances have been given by those in charge of affairs that there will be nothing done until Monday.

A message from Minister Woodford was received at midnight at the White House. Secretary Porter announced that the message was in cipher and would not be translated last night and that no information regarding it would be made known until Friday morning.

Both committees of congress dealing with foreign affairs were in session yesterday. The senate committee continued its examination of the report on the Maine, and the house committee by a party vote refused to take any action on Cuba until Monday.

The senate committee agreed to and Senator Lodge reported a bill appropriating \$5,000,000 to purchase one or more of the Danish West India islands, to be used for naval purposes.

The senate committee had before it Capt. Sigbee, of the ill-fated Maine, and Capt. Barker, Secretary Laine's naval aid. What these officers told the committee is treated confidentially.

The committee from the republican conference reported to that conference a recommendation that no action be taken until Monday, and its report was approved, the conference adjourning until that date. When this committee returned from its consultation, the chairman commended the course of the president.

The most important action taken by the navy department yesterday was the determination to have the naval militia of the several states prepared for immediate service should this be found necessary. This conclusion was the outcome of a conference of the members of the naval strategic board during the afternoon. Letters will be sent to the governors and to the adjutant generals of all states where there are naval militia or organizations asking them to set in motion the machinery for drilling and equipping the state organizations promptly so they may be ready within a very few hours' notice of a call to arms.

IT IS TIME TO ACT.

Hon. W. J. Bryan Says the United States Should Intervene in Cuban Affairs.

Lincoln, Neb., April 1.—Hon. W. J. Bryan last night made the following statement for the Associated Press in answer to the question whether, in his judgment, the time had arrived for the United States to intervene in behalf of Cuba and bring the war to an end.

"Yes, the time for intervention has arrived. Humanity demands that we shall act. Cuba lies almost within sight of our shores and the sufferings of her people cannot be ignored unless we, as a nation, have become so engrossed in money making to be indifferent to distress. Intervention may be accompanied by danger and expense, but existence cannot be separated from responsibility and responsibility sometimes leads a nation as well as an individual into danger.

"War is a terrible thing and cannot be defended except as a means to an end, and yet it is sometimes the only means by which a necessary end can be secured. War is the final arbiter between nations when reason and diplomacy are of no avail. Spain might not resist intervention; it is to be hoped that she would recognize the right of the United States to act and immediately withdraw from Cuba, but whether she resents intervention or not the United States must perform a plain duty."

Ready for Active Service.

Washington, April 1.—The work of overhauling the dynamite cruiser Vesuvius, completing the work on her guns and fitting her up for active service, is now almost finished and she probably will be ordered to leave the Washington navy yard within the next two days. Her officers do not know as yet where she will be ordered, though it is thought that she will go first to Norfolk and then proceed to southern waters. The men are busily employed at present in giving her a coat of black paint, preparatory to painting her a dark green.

HEATED DEBATE.

It Occurs in Both Houses of Congress Over the President's Attitude on the Cuban Question.

Washington, April 1.—An apparent simple request made of the senate yesterday by Mr. Frye on behalf of the foreign relations committee unexpectedly precipitated a discussion on the Cuban question. It finally led to a passage at arms between Mr. Chandler and Mr. Frye in which the former made some sarcastic references to the conduct of the foreign relations committee and to the attitude of the president. Concerning the latter Mr. Chandler said: "I have confidence that the president intends to pursue a patriotic and righteous course in the present emergency and I shall thank God when he reaches a conclusion of some sort or another. Therefore I am not in rebellion as yet against the powers that be."

Mr. Allen made the request of Mr. Frye the occasion of a speech upon the general Cuban question, in the course of which he reviewed his own record on the subject and declared that he stood now just where he has always stood, in favor of the absolute independence of the Cuban people from that "hideous monster among nations"—Spain.

House.—For three hours the packed galleries and excited members of the house listened to a passionate outburst of oratory on the Cuban question during which the intensity of feeling was alternately manifested by cheers, jeers and hisses. The three speeches which stirred the assemblage to its depths were made by Mr. Gosvenor, who it was assumed, spoke for the administration; Mr. Bailey (Texas), who announced the democratic position as for free Cuba without war if it could be avoided, but with war if necessary, and Mr. Johnson (Ind.) who spoke for peace.

A CRITICAL STAGE.

Spaniards Realize that It Has Arrived—The Conference at Madrid.

Madrid, April 1.—The conference yesterday with Gen. Woodford lasted an hour. The ministers submitted fresh proposals, which Gen. Woodford telegraphed to Washington. Their nature was not disclosed.

El Liberal says: "The moment of the denouement (solution of the crisis) has drawn much nearer. There may yet be found means to delay matters, but we doubt it. We ought to apply ourselves to obtain a gain of time, or heartily devote ourselves to the contrary. In our opinion it would be acceptable, even preferable, to accept any extreme measure which would cut the knot if we failed to untie it. The situation is such that by avoiding external struggle we may fall into a still graver one."

The Imparcial (independent) says: "Despite the hopes of the last few days, it is now believed that a conflict is near. We are confronted with a danger which, whatever may be thought, President McKinley cannot change. The nerves of Spaniards are being hardened to resist coolly the consequences of this danger. We are all Spaniards; our mission is to save the national honor, and it rests with the government to take energetic resolutions."

BADLY SHAKEN UP.

California Experiences a Severe Earthquake Shock—Much Damage Reported, but No Loss of Life.

San Francisco, April 1.—At about midnight Wednesday this city and state were shaken by one of the most severe earthquakes ever experienced in California. In San Francisco buildings were swayed violently for fully ten seconds, though reports from other places state that the vibrations continued for from 40 seconds to a minute. A tenement house on Clementina street between Fifth and Sixth streets collapsed, but no one was injured. Nearly every window of the Strathmore apartment house on Larkin street opposite the new city hall was broken.

No person was injured so far as the hospital authorities know. The shock was felt throughout the state, but very meagre reports have as yet been received, owing to the demoralized state of the wires.

Mare Island, Cal., April 1.—The earthquake was very severe here, doing damage estimated at \$25,000. The sawmill was prostrated and is a complete wreck. The government hospital and several shops were badly damaged.

A BIG APPROPRIATION.

The New York Legislature Will Vote \$1,000,000 to Put the State on a War Footing.

Albany, N. Y., April 1.—The state legislature will make an appropriation of \$1,000,000 for the use of the national guard if it should be called into active service in the near future. This extraordinary appropriation will be made in response to an emergency message from Gov. Black on its necessity. The proposition to make this appropriation has been under the consideration of Gov. Black and the financial heads of the state government for several days past. The appropriation will be a contingent one, to be used for the guard, under the direction of the governor, only in case of war.

It was the sense of the conference that the appropriation was not to be made with the idea that war was inevitable or would be declared, but that it was to be made simply to place the guard on an immediate war footing if war was declared.

War Hangs in the Balance.

London, April 1.—The Times says editorially: It is evident peace and war hang in the balance, and that the world has not long to wait for definite information. It cannot be supposed that America's terms have yet been published in their completeness, but they may be guessed to include complete freedom for Cuba. The Spanish government will make a fatal mistake if it fails to understand the terms now offered, which are the best it is ever likely to obtain, and if they are not promptly accepted it is to be feared that the next presentation of American demands will be in a harsher shape.