

Christ's Risen

Easter Day! The young year pauses on the threshold of the spring, Stops a moment there, and crosses to a world of blossoming.

Easter Day! The breezes vagrant wander from the South, and set Loose a flood of odors fragrant—hyacinth and violet.

Easter Day! The Lord is risen—and, with sunlight overpoured, Nature, bursting from her prison, rises with her risen Lord!

Or, the round of years eternal! It is worth a winter's pain Just to listen to the vernal wind among the trees again!

It is worth a life of sorrow, just to know, when it is past, That a glorious To-morrow dawns upon the heart at last.

It is worth the three days' lying in the Sepulchre alone, Just to hear the angel flying down to roll away the stone!

For the hope of future laughter gives to tears their one excuse— Just the crown that followed after made the cross of any use.

Lenten sackcloth, Lenten ashes—what have we to do with them, Only that in contrast flashes brighter Easter's diadem?

It is not the blood of Jesus that releases you and me But his risen soul, that frees us from the dread of Calvary.

Easter Day! The world expects it—waits the larger Easter dawn When the "Christus Resurrexit" tells of wrongs forever gone;

When America, victorious o'er a world-old, worn-out lie, Comes at last, serene and glorious, to her greater destiny—

Turns her back upon the whining cry that gold alone is good, Turns her eyes up to the shining mountain peaks of Brotherhood!

Hope and trust of all the nations! Thou must burst this gilded shell, Ere unnumbered generations hail thee as Emmanuel;

Thou must kill the curst condition where the many feed the few, Crucify the Superstition that the Old must needs be true;

Then, when thou hast trampled under foot the ghosts of gold and greed, Thou mayst burst the tomb asunder—then shall Christ be risen indeed!

The Marvel, The Meaning and The Power of the Resurrection

By William Crosswell Doane
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WHEN the modern mind staggers before the story of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead it fails to realize what its only actual difficulty is. St. Paul's question: "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" still has but one answer—namely, that there is no reason why it should be thought incredible; because raising the dead, as the Apostle illustrates it in his Epistle to the Corinthians, is the most natural and usual thing in the world under certain conditions. "That which men sow is not quickened except it die."

Life not only after, but through and by means of death, is the universal law and the universal event. Only there must come first the undoing by decay of the bondage within which the principle of the seed is held. So long as it is imprisoned in the shell it is "bare grain," but when its outer covering is shed in the cocoon, or broken in the egg, or rotted in the grain, then the latent life comes forth and God gives it a body, and "to every seed its own body." So after death and burial, when the wrappings of this earthly flesh are dissolved and done away, "the body that shall be," "the body of glory," shall emerge in the fullness of time.

The miracle or marvel of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, like other miracles, lies in the fact that it disregarded the element of time and also did away with the conditions of decay. "He saw no corruption."

So much for the marvel of it. Now for the meaning of it.

First of all, of course, it means that all the dead shall rise and live again. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so they that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." The corollary to the article in the creed, "the third day He rose again," is the article "I believe in the resurrection of the body, I look for the resurrection of the dead or from the dead." One does not need, one would not dare, to draw away the hearts and hopes of men from this great and blessed revelation of Holy Scripture, this strong and positive assertion of the Christian faith. But it is wrong to postpone the meaning of our Lord's resurrection to this final point of human history. It has a clear and more immediate application of what the Apostle calls "the power of His resurrection," "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." This must be recognized and realized as the immediate practical purpose and result of the great fact of Easter Day.

What is its message to men and women?

It is easy to dream a dream of hope and delight about the future; easy to have a sentiment and emotion that enable us to face physical death with an outlook beyond the grave and console us in the hour of bereavement. God forbid that there should be any shadowing of this hope. But the practical question concerns our daily life now.

Humanity stands to-day, as it has stood for all these centuries, facing the fact of the wonderful life that our Lord lived here on earth, with the strange and inexplicable combination of fleshly reality without the restraints and hindrances of the flesh. And that means, in the first place, the pattern set, and in the next place, the power given to us to live our lives on higher lines.

Translated into plain English, the great Easter thought is that we may not be absorbed and immersed in merely earthly, temporal, carnal thoughts and things. Life, never more than in our day, is crowded with business, with pleasure, even where it is not choked with indulgence and success.

The idlers and loungers, with no thought but amazement, are far too many. The craze for accumulation of material wealth is wearing out the strength and dulling all the finer faculties of men and women. And the carelessness and idleness of people who, with opportunities of service to society and the demands of home duties, waste daylight hours and turn night into day with games of chance, accentuated too often with the covetousness of gambling, are a reproach to the best inheritances and instincts of Americans.

"You have no leisure class in America," an Englishman said once to an American girl.

"Yes," she said, "we have, but we call them tramps. Leisure there ought to be. Men and women there must be who are free from the strain and strenuousness of incessant occupation, but it ought to be a leisure for intellectual cultivation, for philanthropic interest, for the storing of energy, physical, mental and spiritual, which shall benefit mankind.

"Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead!" This is the Easter call, the Easter cry.

Hiding even one talent in the napkin of refined indolence or self-indulgence or burying it in the dirt of sensuality and sin, either one makes an "unprofitable servant" and lays up against the second coming of the Lord an account of wasted powers and lost opportunities which will then be beyond recall.

Coloring Easter Eggs.

There still exist plenty of old-fashioned mothers who spend the day before Easter coloring eggs and staining them with printed calico. If the children are permitted to participate it is a really gloriously mussy event, in which they revel and scream with delight. There is no pastime so charming to the youthful heart as those particularly delicious kinds of plays that cause all sorts of havoc to one's garments and one's countenance. Ink bottles and coal pails have ever been the favored playthings of infancy. These may possibly be considered miserable makeshifts for the delights of digging in mother earth. Anyway the Easter egg dyeing process has qualifications not unlike those of the ink well and the coal bin. After the dyeing there is sure to be a cleaning. But what matters that? The fun is the main thing. The results are nothing.

Symbol of Christianity.

We dare not forget to-day that we venerate an empty Cross; it is empty forever of that Burden which once hung there, tortured, dying, dead; and banished, too, is that blankness of despair, that sad dismay and disillusion with which it was veiled until the first Easter morning. The Cross—not the Crucifix—is the symbol of Christianity.—Walter Lowrie.

"Feast of Caps."

Good Friday is often called the "Feast of Caps" from an old-time custom which required every lady to appear in a new house cap, while Easter Sunday was known as the "Feast of Hats" for a similar reason.



A LESSON

How, by God's Way,
Which Is Not Our Way,
Easter Spoke Its Old
Message of New
Life

IT was a sad Easter for Mrs. Farnham. Three times since the lilies last blossomed had death come to her house. Her mother, her husband and her boy had filled her heart. Lacking them, it was empty, and it ached with a strange perplexed grief, a confused question as to the purpose of her life, which now seemed to her a shrunk and withered thing.

She went to church on Easter morning because her beautiful house was intolerable to her, rather than because she expected to find comfort. The masses of white flowers, with the suggestiveness of their heavy fragrance, carried her back to the funerals of the last year. The familiar words of the service sounded like mockery to her.

"Let us keep the feast;" "Even so in Christ shall all be made alive;" "Set your affection on things above, not on things on earth." One by one she caught at the phrases, only to find each was powerless to help her.

The hymn was no better:
The strife is o'er, the battle done;
The victory of life is won!

For her strife was just beginning, and defeat instead of victory seemed her fate. She could not lift herself out of her personal woe far enough to apply the words to anything but herself.

She left the church, avoiding speech with any one, and, with her heart like ice in her bosom, she took an electric car toward her desolate home.

A half block before her house was reached the car stopped with a suddenness which startled the passengers. Mrs. Farnham got off, thinking that she would walk the few remaining steps; but she saw the motorman with a white face raising a small boy in his arms from under the fender of the car. The little fellow was unconscious, and there was an ugly bruise on his temple and a deep cut on his neck. Before Mrs. Farnham realized what she was doing the child was carried into her house, and she was enlisted with the doctors in a fight for his life.

For a week the issue was doubtful. Consciousness flickered and wavered, but would not come back. Meantime Mrs. Farnham had learned that the boy was nobody's child. He had sold papers since he was hardly more than a baby. He had lived wherever he could find a shelter, and had eaten whatever he could get. The fact of home was something he had never experienced. The grieving woman forgot her grief in her devotion to the wail who had been cast at her door by the strange decree of what we call accident.

The day came when the boy's heavy eyelids lifted and his childish curiosity at his surroundings unloosed his tongue. To open to him the doors of new life was the most wonderful of joys for his foster-mother. After his long silence it was as if he had come back from the dead. That he could talk and laugh and eat and love seemed like a proof of the power of life over death. Somehow Mrs. Farnham came to believe that it was such a proof, and that it was sent to her in her desolation.

Out of the boy's almost fatal accident there was wrought for him the miracle of home and love, and the opportunity for an educated and useful manhood, and for the grieving woman the springtime brought new hope as the lonely winter passed. By God's way, which is not our way, Easter spoke its old message of new life.—Youth's Companion.

The Eastertide's Lesson.

Since our existence is divided into two sections, the one under the temptations and sufferings of this present life, and the other that which is attained in the security and joy of eternity through Christ, so the circle of the Easter festival is divided into two sections, the time before and after Easter. The time before Easter points us to the conflict of this present life, the time after Easter to the blessedness which we can obtain through Christ. The Lord's passion shows us the present life of suffering. The resurrection and glorification of the Lord shows the life which we shall receive.

Custom Not Christian Alone.

The giving of eggs at Easter is derived from the old nature worship, and is not confined to the Christian nations. The Parsees of Persia and India distribute eggs at the opening of spring, and in many other nations the giving of eggs at the commencement of spring is as common as New Year's gifts with us. In Hungary the boys sprinkle the girls with rose water and receive eggs in return.



Now, while the dawn with tints of rose
Smiles through the gray skies, every-
where,
Softly about her morning care
The Easter mother goes.

The little rooms we call the hours
For where she gladdeneth for all our sakes;
And in their cradles gently wakes
The earliest Spring flowers.

The dark hath somehow fallen away,
The first birds welcome to her door,
The snow-white curtains, we behold
The dawn of Easter Day.

And with a cheerful song she gives
The first birds welcome to her door,
While all the Easter world once more
Rejoices that it lives.
—Frank Walcott Hutt.

Legends of the Beautiful Forget-Me-Not

"The sweet forget-me-not that blooms for happy lovers," has more beautiful legends clinging to its name than any other flower. They begin "In the beginning," with the creation. According to one beautiful tale, the Lord called the plants in the Garden of Eden before him to give them their names and color. As he spoke to one after another, a tiny flower thought itself unnoticed and, fearful of being quite overlooked, it timidly pleaded: "Dear Lord, forget me not." The Creator turned sternly toward the little plant that dared to interrupt him, then, seeing how sorely afraid it was he gently smiled upon it, gave it for its color the heavens' own blue, and called it Forget-me-not as a reminder that it had once been so foolish as to doubt him.

It is the Persians who have fashioned a beautiful legend to tell how it is that those flowers are scattered over the earth as the stars are spread over the sky. According to them, one morning of glory when the world was new an angel stood weeping outside the closed gate of Paradise. He had fallen, in that he had loved a fair



"He had fallen, in that he loved a fair daughter of earth. Together they entered in, for the angel's great love had lifted the woman to Paradise."

daughter of earth. When his eyes had rested on her as she sat on a river's bank weaving forget-me-nots in her hair, heaven and his mission to earth were alike forgotten. Now he might no more enter in until his beloved had sown all over the earth the forget-me-nots. He returned to her and, hand in hand, they wandered, planting everywhere the sweet azure flowers. When, at last, there remained on earth no spot barren of these blossoms, they turned again to the gate and found it open. Together they entered in, for the angel's great love had lifted the woman to Paradise.

Names for Good Friday.

Good Friday is called by some nations Black Friday, by others Still Friday. Denmark calls it Long Friday, in recognition of the long fast. This fast was undoubtedly the origin of eating "cross buns." In the thirty-sixth year of Henry VIII., an enactment was passed prohibiting any baker printing the sign of the cross, the Agnus Dei, or the name of God, upon any bun or loaf of bread.

Marvelous Easter Egg.

A very precious Easter egg was once presented to the late pope by an English lady of high rank. The shell was made of finest ivory, and the white matter of the ordinary egg was represented by beautiful white satin. The yolk was a golden case wherein was a ruby set in diamonds.

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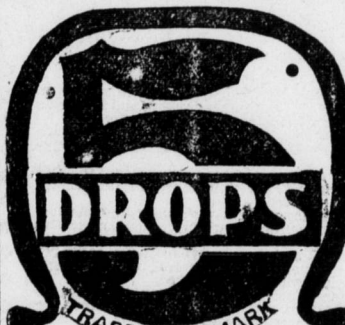
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