

SOME EASTER CUSTOMS.

A DAY CELEBRATED ALL OVER THE CHRISTIAN WORLD.

Flower-Decorations, Nest-Hunting, and Other Easter Diversions—A Pretty Poem and an Entertaining Story.

Forget-Me-Not: An Easter Poem.

Christ is risen, good Friday is past,
And joy has come after forty days' fast;
The resurrection is for rich and poor,
For young and old, for evermore.

To enjoy springtime's beaming hours,
To gather nature's lovely flowers,
The people go forth at early morn;
The church with garlands to adorn;
Each one brings a gift on the altar to lay,
For this is the holy Easter Day.

But see! a little child with tearful eyes,
Her little heart breaking with pitiful cries;
"My little one, why are your eyes full of tears?
Come, darling, and tell me all your fears."

Oh, father! I, too, sought my offering; but
I found not a single forget-me-not.
"There, be quiet! the Lord helps in need,
He knows thy heart and takes the will for the deed!"

"Thy pure love, my little tot,
Is the dear Lord's forget-me-not."

Thus speaks the father, but the child weeps
still more,
And pleading, draws him once more to the door.
They seek again up and down the lake,
But spring is only partly awake.

Now, as they return at the close of day,
They meet an old beggar hard by the way,
Wringing his hand and begging for his loaf,
"Take pity, my child, and forget me not."

The child looks up with a smile and a tear,
As the flower's true meaning comes to her ear;
She clasps from her neck a chain of gold,
And gives it to him with joys untold.

The chain was of tiny, golden buds,
Each holding in its calyx the forget-me-nots.
"They taught me," she says, "what I had forgot,
That the poor man is the Lord's forget-me-not."

The child became queen of great renown,
And forget-me-nots still adorn her crown,
For to hundreds she gave their daily food,
Marie Theresa, the great and good.

Easter Customs.

HE sacred festival of the Resurrection has been appropriately called the "queen of festivals." It has been observed from the foundation of the Christian religion, and is celebrated in every part of the Christian world with great solemnity and devotion.

The flower decorations of the homes of the English, and of the American churches on Easter Day excel those of any other nation; but the home amusement of preparing the Easter egg has not yet become universal and is not nearly as pretty as the nest-hunting as described in our Easter story. Again, the gathering of wild flowers for an Easter offering, which is practiced everywhere in the southern part of Europe, and which our poem "Forget-me-not" so beautifully describes, is certainly an admirable idea.

A few years ago the writer had the pleasure of preparing an Easter egg hunt at a young ladies' academy on the Hudson. It was a bright cold day, and all that nature could afford for decoration were branches of holly and a few holly leaves. These were quickly woven over fine wire into delicate little nests, then eggs were blown out by the dozen and on each a pretty Eastergreeting was written and was tied into the nest with white satin ribbon, to which was attached a prettily decorated Easter card in the form of a cross. After the nests had been well concealed in every nook and corner of the building, the young ladies were invited to begin their hunt. While they were rummaging a rustic table was laid, that is, instead of a cloth it was spread with green branches. On these were placed eggs, prepared in every conceivable manner. There were boiled, scrambled, fried, broiled, poached, steamed, baked, pruned, scalloped, curried, and pickled eggs. In the center was a huge log cabin built of Easter cake cut in strips. At each plate was a cordial invitation that the one who had been fortunate enough to find a nest was entitled to a seat.

Now the fun began. Many had found two or three, others had not found any; the latter were not entitled to seats at the table, and the former were not willing to give them the prizes demanded. Finally they agreed that the unsuccessful Diana should pay a dime for her nest; thus the nests were equally distributed and about one dollar and fifty cents was collected for the poor. After the refreshments the young ladies danced the German and had a general good time, and they unanimously declared that they had never known Easter joys before. We will close this description by giving our readers a few hints for coloring Easter eggs: For bright red, boil them in cranberry juice; for bright yellow, boil them with onion skin; for blue or purple, use the juice of preserved plums or black cherries; for bright green, wrap them in spinach leaves. The old-fashioned method of boiling them wrapped in bright calico is very satisfactory.

The Living Easter Egg.

BY MRS. A. L. WALLACE.

ALL of you run, now, and seek to your hearts' content, under the gooseberry bushes, behind the large trees, in the arbor, and away out on the meadow. Run, children! but keep peace. Whoever finds an egg may eat it, but he who with another seeks in the same place, and then begins to quarrel over the found egg, will be punished, and goes empty, and, above all, he will not receive his Easter cake."

It was a noble peasant woman who spoke thus, of about the age of 7 and 10 and two little boys, one 12 and the other 4 years old.

When the last syllable had passed her lips, the little crowd, which had been kept in the house all winter, rushed out-doors and rummaged under the branches of all the bushes and in the tall grasses.

Easter that year had fallen unusually late; therefore the gardens and fields displayed the colors of spring.

The leaves of the gooseberry and currant bushes began to peep out and warm themselves in the rays of the April sun. Apple and plum trees were arrayed in their white and rosy bloom. The lilies of the valley opened by thousands their tender white calyx and the lark thrilled a joyful resurrection song.

"I found it," triumphantly called a voice from the corner of the garden, and the youngest girl, with beaming countenance, crept from under the gooseberry bush, in the thick branches of which she had discovered a bright, speckled Easter egg. Her older brother, whose search had been rewarded only by an empty bird's nest, called, "Yes, yes, I have found two, no, three; yes, one under the bush, and, hurray! there I see two behind the dog house."

Then the other little girl cried: "See this beautiful blue egg. I found it in the elder arbor."

Only the youngest of the boys stood with a sad face, just ready to cry; his large black eyes staring into the sky, his little empty hands folded behind him. He said plaintively: "Hans finds nothing and can see nothing."

"Because Hans does not seek earnestly," said the youngest girl, taking him gently by the hand. "Come with me; I will help you hunt."

She led him away back of the garden, where the old willow trees bounded the meadow. Meanwhile the peasant woman, taking her knitting, seated herself on the old log before the house, watching the merry play of her children.

Her husband, a muscular-built man in the prime of life, his meerschaum pipe in his mouth, dressed in his Sunday coat with gilt buttons, made a fine appearance as he stepped out of the front door, seating himself at his wife's side, who greeted him with a hearty "Well, you have come just right. It does our hearts good to see the merriment of our children; they seem to complete the scene of nature on this beautiful Easter day."

"Yes," he responded, "nature is wonderful and mysterious! It is incomprehensible to me how the sunbeams can bring forth the buds and flowers and clothe the fields in living green." And after a pause he added: "And yet there are many people who never admire nature and quarrel with fate, even when all around them is bright and joyous."

"You must have met Claudius, and he has vexed you," remarked his wife.

The man nodded. "It always seems as if somebody stabbed me whenever I meet that man, with his gloomy countenance and his eyes cast down. He just came sneaking along like a shriveled-up mole that can not endure the light."

"Well, every one has his troubles, and perhaps his burden is unusually heavy," said she.

The peasant, puffing his pipe, replied: "No doubt, but he owes the most of his misfortune to his own imprudence, and he has to blame himself for having to live a lonely and embittered life."

"Do you know, Anton, I think you might tell me a little more about the history of this man. How did it happen that he turned his own son out of doors? You know I was sick at that time and have never heard the story minutely. What made the old man send his only child out into the wide world, and forbid him ever to cross his threshold again?"

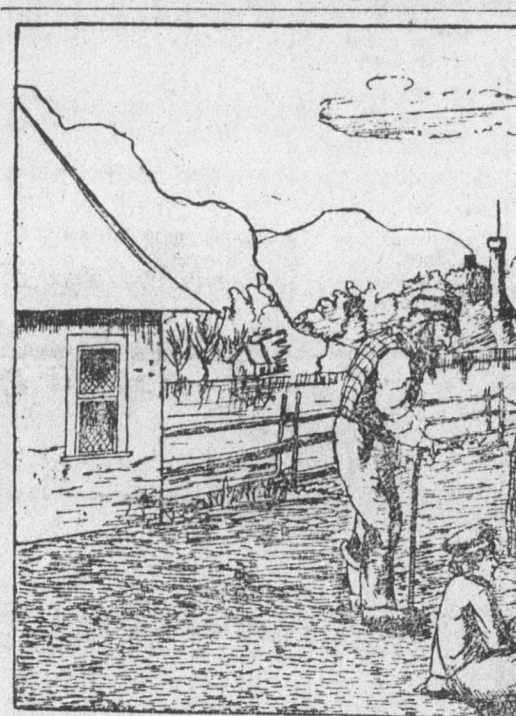
"Yes; you see, Gertrude, this is the way it came about."

The peasant scratched himself a little behind the ear, watching the thick clouds of smoke as they arose from his pipe into the clear spring air, and, laying the pipe down beside him, he began as follows:

"You must still remember how matters stood in our house last October."

"Alas! I shall never forget the 2d of October even if I live to the day of the Resurrection," replied the wife with a deep sigh.

"I think the fall of 1813 will be remembered by every citizen of Leipzig, and especially by our poor community and all the other villages. The terrible shooting still sounds



"GOOD OLD FATHER CLAUDIUS HAS FOUND A LIVING EASTER EGG."

in my ear, and I still seem to hear the lamentations of the wounded and the groans of the dying. It was the miseries we had to endure that threw me on my sick bed. Yes, and the worst of it all was that Napoleon Bonaparte forced our soldiers to fight on the French side. But on the 18th of October they perceived that the United German States were likely to become victorious, and they went over to them in large numbers."

The peasant woman nodded, and after a short pause the man continued:

"Claudius was known to be a sworn enemy to the French and their frivolous Emperor; but his son Frederic, contrary to his father's wishes, followed the hair-capped felons and their avaricious captain. They had had many a hot dispute on the subject; but never a real falling out until the command came that Frederic, who was a soldier, should again join the army. Instead of choosing his own country he joined the French, and even with a light heart. The old man almost died with grief, but he could not help himself, and had to submit."

Well, as the day of the rebellion drew nigh, and the fortunes of the French began to waver, the old man rejoiced with us; but alas! his joy soon came to grief. On the evening of October the 19th a little troop of fugitive Frenchmen passed through our village, and among them was Frederic. He had refused the opportunity to go over to the United German army and had remained with the many wounded. He, being hardly able to keep on his feet, came to his father's. So a neighbor relates, who saw and heard everything. The old man turned him away with the bitterest curses, threatening even to expose him if he ever showed his face again."

"O, bad, hard-hearted old man!" exclaimed the peasant woman.

"Yes, it was outrageous to expose his own flesh and blood to destruction, and yet he had just cause to be indignant."

"The woman glanced one side, and said: 'Hush! there he comes up the road. See how his poor, bent figure creeps along.'"

"Yes, there he is again, the old grumbler."

"But say, do they not know what became of Frederic?—whether he perished or is still alive?"

"I have not heard the particulars. Some say he died, others think that they saw him in this country several weeks after that cruel treatment."

"Just look," said the wife, "our little Anna Maria has ventured to coax the cross-looking old man into the garden. She always tries to cheer him up; she can't bear to see anyone unhappy. I do believe she will succeed. See how eagerly she pulls him along! There—there he goes with her; and now you can continue your story."

"Isn't she a cunning little girl? The old man is actually helping her to hunt eggs."

Every nook and corner in the garden had been rummaged through, when she drew him to a high pile of dry leaves under the elm trees.

"What can be the matter?" exclaimed the peasant woman.

"Father! mother! do come here! O, come and see!" called little Anna Maria, and an instant later all the children circled around

the pile of leaves, their faces expressing the greatest astonishment. "Come, let us see what it is," urged the wife.

"O, bosh! It can be nothing very much; a dead mole, a hedge-hog, or something of that sort," replied the peasant, slowly rising and preparing to follow her.

A few moments later they had reached the spot. The sight which here presented itself threw them into consternation. In the center of the pile lay a lovely little child, perhaps nine months old, wrapped in an old gray woolen shawl. The old man's face looked like marble as he gazed at the child, and Anna Maria was on her knees kissing and stroking the little thing, while the oldest boy in his childish way called, "Oh, good! good old father Claudius has found a living Easter egg—a nice living Easter egg!"

"Very true," said the peasant; "and now the question is, who found it?"

"For shame!" said his wife. "The first thing is to revive the little frozen body."

And taking the little thing into her arms, she bade them all follow her into the house. There she quickly undressed it and began to rub the little limbs with coarse flannel, and from time to time she wet the dainty lips with some spirits. Soon the little fingers began to move, it opened its eyes, and before the children had time to express their joy by "It lives! it lives!" it joined the chorus by a loud cry.

"Get me some warm milk, quick!" said the mother.

Anna Maria was the first to obey the command, while old Claudius stood like a petrified skeleton. A few minutes' music and then the voice was hushed by long draughts of warm milk.

"Husband, will you go to the attic and fetch the box packed with our baby's garments?"

No sooner said than done. There was everything needed to clothe the little foundling, even to the little socks. After it had had its warm bath and was dressed, it went sound asleep again.

"Johnny, will you lead baby your crib to sleep in?"

"Es—es," stammered the little boy.

"But, mamma, the baby does not belong to us; Father Claudius found it and ought to take it home," remarked the eldest.

"You are right, my boy," said the father. "Father Claudius, you will take the child and care for it well."

"The dickens! What can I do with the thing? I have no woman to take care of it."

"What difference does that make? You have nothing to occupy your time; you need some employment; it will do you good."

"O fudge! I have plenty to do without taking care of babies. Your girl teased me into the garden, and you have as much right to it as I. I say, add it to your stock; I'll let you have it for nothing."

The impudence of this speech aroused the wife's temper. Like a flash she jumped to her feet, and with the child in her arms, confronted the old man, saying:

"Now, see here, Father Claudius! you know very well that we have our hands full, and can hardly make both ends meet. You have ample means, and, being the finder, the law will force you to take care of the child."

"The law force me? Gracious! who ever heard of such a thing? I won't take care

"Take it up this instant, and walk with it!" He silently obeyed, for he felt it was as much to oppose her; but he took the child up in such an awkward manner that she was obliged to adjust it properly in his arms. Then she made him trot up and down.

"Where is the milk I gave you?"

"What milk?"

"The milk I put into your pocket."

Then, for the first time, he saw how he had sprinkled the floor with the contents of the smashed bottle.

"Well, to be sure! What an awkward, stupid man you are! Fortunately, I brought another portion, for that which I gave you is wasted."

Then she gave him a lesson in nursing the child. She repeated her visits every day, and trained him so well that he not only became attached to his ward but also to his business.

As the child grew to the cunning age when it could say "Grandpa, grandpa," it brought back to him all the sorrows of his married life, and it was only then that he realized that blessings often come in disguise, and that God does not always punish according to our transgressions.

He could not bear the child out of his sight a moment. As she grew up to girlhood he begrudged even the hours she had to spend at school. But against his own wish he was destined to become grandfather and great-grandfather, and had the pleasure of seeing his name established for generations to come.

Frost-Proof Flowers.

It is possible, even in our northern tier of States, to have out-of-door blossoms from April to November, by a proper selection of varieties; but how few there are among the multitude of flower-lovers in them that can attain such a desirable condition of things. There are so many that must and will have flowers of some kind, that have to do the best they can with the varieties that drift into their possession; and after they have nursed their petted darlings into blossoming freely, how often they sigh, some early fall morning, to find them all blackened by the frosty breath of a single night, in spite of the most careful covering.

Rufus Choate once said, speaking of New England's climatic variations, "that they were sure of ninety days' corn weather;" so we of the Northern States are of our blooming season; but most flower cultivators find it all too brief, for without special advantages but few can get their annuals and bedding-plants to blossoming freely before the middle of July; and we all know to our sorrow how often there are frosty nights in the middle of September.

"Experience is a good teacher," if a dear one; it often takes many failures and hard knocks to get any kind of an idea into our heads; this occurred to me this fall, after all the hard frosts and flirts of snow way into October, while looking at my flower-beds. For the pink and purple verbenas, petunias, red catch-fly, sweet alyssum, pansies, and double chamonille were blooming as brightly as if they had not been frozen stiff so many times; and even the first of November, one of the neighbors had a bed of purple ten weeks' stocks as brilliant as if summer skies were smiling over them. While looking at them the idea struck me very forcibly that by planting such hardy varieties the blooming season might be extended a month or more, which would be quite a consideration to flower-lovers. We should find it hard to give up all our tender beauties, and do not grudge them their care; but the varieties named are beautiful enough at any season to satisfy most people; proven frost-proof qualities are a strong item in their favor.

Of course, to have a nice-looking bed in the fall all the varieties in it should be frost-proof, and to keep them in a blooming condition the withered flowers may be clipped during summer; but a few minutes' use of the scissors once a week will be sufficient for that.—*Portland Transcript.*

Like to Be Humbugged.

The Chinese themselves do not believe in dissection and there is no body-snatching here. They believe that the heart is the seat of thought, that the soul exists in the liver, and that the gall bladder is the seat of courage. For this reason the gall bladders of tigers are eaten by soldiers to inspire them with courage. The Chinese doctor ranks no higher than the ordinary skilled workman. He gets from 15 to 20 cents a visit, and he often takes patients on condition that he will cure them within a certain time or no pay. He never sees his female patients except behind a screen, and he does not pay a second visit unless invited. His pay is called "golden thanks," and the orthodox way of sending it to him is wrapped in red paper. The dentists look upon pulled teeth as trophies, and they go about with necklaces of decayed teeth about their necks or with them strung upon strings or tied to sticks. Toothache is supposed to come from a worm in the tooth, and there are a set of female doctors who make a business of extracting these worms. When the nerve is exposed they take this out and call it the worm, and when not they use a slight-of-hand by which they make their patients believe certain worms, which they show them, came from their teeth. I have heard persons tell of Chinamen who claimed to have had ten worms taken from their mouths in a single day, and I saw a woman actually at work upon a patient in the street here. China is as full of superstition as the West India islands, and the people like to be humbugged quite as well here as we do in America.—*Frank G. Carpenter's letter from Shanghai.*

JUDICIAL astrology was cultivated by the Chaldeans and transmitted to the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. It was much in vogue in France in the time of Catherine de Medicis, who was married to Francis I. of France in 1533.

The first printing press in America was set up at Cambridge by Stephen Day, in 1639.

SELECTED PIGOTTISMS.

VENETIAN blinds—Italian counts. An actor works hardest in "play" time.

A SYMPHONY to a comic song naturally does symfunny.

WHEN the pantry door's unlocked the small boy gets his desserts.

BLOBSON—I understand that Borer has gone South for the rest of the winter. Popinjay—Yes, and for the rest of the community too.

SHE (looking up from paper)—Well, truth is stanger than fiction. He (throwing paper on ground)—Yes! and a darned sight rarer.

RACING man (meeting sporting prophet)—I say, old man, you'd make a fine prize one for a billiard handicap. Sporting prophet (rather pleased)—How so? Racing man—Because your tip never comes off.

It is a mistake to paint sin too alluring and attractive. It makes young people want some. As a matter of fact sin is ugly and full of misery and pain, no matter how it may be colored or sugar-coated.—*New Orleans Picayune.*

His Lordship—It was jolly enough; but—er—but what a beastly crowd. The scum of Europe I should say. Mrs. F.—The scum of Europe! They are the elite of New York! His Lordship—What's the difference if you only go back a little?

CUSTOMER (in confectionery store)—Have you any kisses? Busy dealer—Yes, sir. Which kind, Baltimore or Boston? "Give me two dozen Boston." "Yes, sir. William, two dozen Boston kisses. Don't forget, William, to close the refrigerator."

MISS JONES—How good of you, Doctor, to come to talk with me! Doctor—O, not at all. I have listened to so much clever talk this evening that it will be quite a relief and a rest to listen to you, Miss Jones, I assure you.—*Harper's Bazar.*

BURKE—Tim Deasey's goin' to marry that Dutch ger-rl he met comin' over. Dempsey—Is that so? How th' devil did he ax her, phin she don't speak his language? Burke—Sure he just made believe 'tump her over th' head wid a bit av a cudgel, an' she understood him at wanst.

DOCTOR—What, drinking beer again, contrary to my strict orders? Didn't I tell you that every glass was a nail in your coffin? "I can't give it up, Doctor, that's a fact, and so I have been saying to myself: 'What does it matter when you are dead and gone if your coffin looks like a hedgehog?'"

"You had a good time in Chicago, Samantha?" "Did I? I should say so! We stopped at the Commercial Hotel, and went down on the cultivator to every meal." "And did you see the theaters?" "I ingested that to Absalom, but he insisted on driving me instead in a spanking team." "Where did you go?" "Oh! all around the beauregards."—*Chicago Ledger.*

"I say," said Berkey to his wife yesterday at dinner, "you didn't say anything to any one about what I was telling you the night before last, did you? That's a secret." "A secret! Why, I didn't know it was a secret," she replied, regretfully. "Well, did you tell it? I want to know." "Why, no, I never thought of it since. I didn't know it was a secret."—*Boston Globe.*

HE IS COMING. He is coming, brother journalists, a hundred thousand strong. We hear his dithyrambic tread the vernal coast along. We hear him spatter countless odes against our office door. And well we know we've wrestled with his viras oft before. Get out the mammoth "Balaam-bag," forewarn the garbage man. Load up the blunderbuss and fill the gallon powder can. For list the large iambic feet of him, the fiend of song. The vernal poet's coming, gents, one hundred thousand strong.

A BUSINESS-looking woman came into a lawyer's office and announced to the disciple of Gambrianus—beg pardon, Blackstone: "I want to get a divorce. How long will it take?" "If you have good grounds, I can have you fixed up in about twenty minutes, I guess," answered the lawyer. "What is your plea?" "Desertion. I sent him down town this morning." "This morning?" "Yes. To match some ribbon. He went away mad, and swore he wouldn't come back until he matched it, so I know I'll never see him again."—*Terre Haute Express.*

Found After a Century.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* reports a strange tale of the sea from the Baltic. More than a hundred years ago two vessels went to the bottom of the Gulf of Finland, the cargo of one of which consisted of glittering silver. Two diving companies at Revel have lately begun to explore the submarine regions near Jussaro, where the vessels sank, and the divers have now really come upon them. But, like the castle in which the "Sleeping Beauty" lay, the hulls have all been overgrown by a century's growth of sea-weeds and tang. Now a way has been cut through this wet wall of weeds, but as yet the interior of the vessel has not been explored, as the divers fear that the deck is too rotten to carry them. Of the treasures of silver nothing has so far come to hand, but the remains of apples, cucumbers, buckles, coffee-pots, and shoes with pointed toes have been brought to the light of day, together with some well-corked bottles, all of which, however, burst as soon as the "air of heaven" touched them. The second vessel lies further out to sea; on its deck lies a great heavy stone, which is evidently part of the cargo.