

THE EASTER FLOWER TRADE

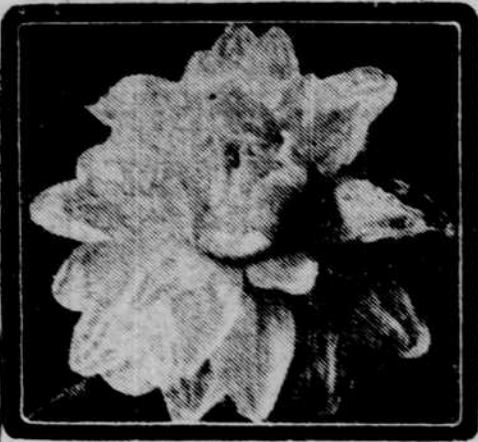
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It is perhaps the best evidence of American prosperity that the United States has become the greatest flower buying nation on the globe. The flower trade reaches its supreme climax at Easter and during the week preceding the joyous holiday millions of dollars are expended for potted luxuries which at this season of the year are regarded as necessities by a large proportion of our population. As in other lines of activity, there is a disposition to make Uncle Sam independent of all the rest of the world in the matter of flowers. For instance, take the case of Easter lilies. Some years ago nearly all our Easter lilies were imported in either bulb or bud form from Holland. Now a considerable portion of the bulbs of purity which go into the market each Easter are raised on English soil.

Although the city of Chicago is generally recognized the chief rose and carnation market, owing to the great rose and carnation farms near the Windy City, there is no reason to dispute the claim that New York is now the world's greatest flower market. The flower

trade in the wholesale mart for potted plants is principally between the growers and the small retailers—the proprietors of large retail establishments have their own private sources of supply—and at Easter time the market is crowded with what might be termed transient dealers—persons who handle flowers as a "side line" at this season of the year only.

The market for cut flowers is at the Easter season even busier than that where potted plants are handled exclusively. It is not connected with the floral headquarters described above. Indeed, in New York it is located in a wholly different part of the city. The growers and sellers have their regular stalls in the cut flower market, which they rent annually, but many of



A UNIQUE LILY

side of the picture is afforded by the operations of the fashionable florists throughout Uncle Sam's domains. It is estimated that the fittings of the smart flower shops on Broadway and Fifth Avenue in New York cost in the aggregate more than \$1,000,000 and there are a number of retail establishments each of which does a business of several hundred thousand dollars annually. Whereas the fashionable florists, each of whom maintains one or more large retail stores—and perhaps numerous booths in office buildings and growing establishments, upon whose yield they have a monopoly, they seldom require the entire output of such a flower manufactory. Oftentimes there is a surplus and almost invariably there are many flowers which do not come up to the standard of perfection demanded by the fashionable trade. This surplus is sent to flower commission merchants who sell to the small retail florists and ship extensively to the out-of-town florists, particularly those located in adjacent cities. In the establishments of these commission merchants flowers are stored for days in great ice-cooled chambers, where glass roofs and marble walls keep the flowers for days by reason of the cold and dampness. Incidentally it may be noted that there is no foundation for the common impression that flowers which are to be shipped some distance must be fresh picked. On the contrary, the most expert handlers of flowers allow the blossoms to stand for several hours in water ere they are dispatched to their destination.



GROWING FLOWERS ON A LARGE SCALE

trade of the metropolis aggregates up to \$25,000,000 annually. This trade is virtually the product of the past decade. As in all other lines of business which have been characterized by sudden growth fortunes have been made by many of the pioneers in the trade. One retailer who in new north several million dollars was less than 15 years ago a street peddler of violets at five cents a bunch.

A picturesque phase of the flower trade may be seen at its best about four or five o'clock on any morning just before Easter in the vicinity of Spring and Canal streets in New York. Here is located the wholesale market for growing plants, and like its counterpart in other large cities it is open for business only in the early morning before the hour when the retail flower merchants must open their shops. The supply of growing plants comes from flower growers and farmers who live some distance from the city—in the case of New York they are scattered through New Jersey and along Long Island—and these growers must leave home in the middle of the night in order to reach the wholesale mart in time for the opening at 4:00 or 4:20 o'clock. In every city the



FAVORITE OF AMERICAN FLOWER LOVERS

pers of varying size. The cut flower market does not enter into the calculations of the proprietor of the fashionable retail establishment. As has been noted above, he derives his supply from his own floral farms or from growers who supply



UP-TO-DATE TYPE OF GREENHOUSE

them increase their space at Easter time if they can do so. The floral harvest begins to arrive at this distributing center about 5:30 o'clock in the morning, most of the posies coming in baskets and ham-

THE FLOWERS OF EASTER

HERE are certain churches in Rome which are built entirely from the fragments of ancient pagan temples. There are rows of columns around which the worshippers of Jove and Diana once thronged. There are marble saints that have been chiseled from the statues of old gods and goddesses. There is even a Madonna that, before she was converted by the powerful arguments of the Christian sculptor, is said to have been a Venus playing with Cupid.

When one turns from these buildings of stone to the no less strong, though intangible, walls of custom in which we have housed Christianity, there is found evidence of the same process there. The apostles and the early fathers no more appointed seasons for religious festivals than they gave us ready-made church buildings, or even directions for planning such structures. Every day was to them a holy festival and any cave or hotel where two or three were gathered together in his name was a temple. The basilicas and the festivals grew together and in building up forms and customs, as in building the churches of Rome, our fathers quarried almost exclusively from the ruined religions their faith had superseded.

Take the Easter festival, for instance. It has many sources. In the ground plan, so to speak, it is merely the old Pascha, or Passover feast of the Hebrews, as is witnessed by the name it bears among the Latin nations—Pasques in France, Pasqua in Italy, Pascua in Spain.

The twelfth chapter of Exodus gives an account of the institution of the feast, in commemoration of that night when the angel of the Lord passed over the houses of the children of Israel and slew the first born of the

Egyptians. It was but natural that in the Paschal lamb the Christians should see the prototype of the Lamb of God whose blood should save his people on whom his mark was set, and this was doubly so since Jesus himself, when celebrating with his disciples his last Passover feast, had said:

"This bread is my body; take and eat: this cup is the new testament in my blood. This do in remembrance of me." So was the feast instituted, but as a commemoration of redemption rather than of resurrection. The latter signification grew up around it in later times and was largely adapted to this special festival from the old pagan customs. A hint of it may be found, however, in that same twelfth chapter of Exodus, where the Lord says:

"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you."

In the new born year there is always a hint of the doctrine of resurrection, particularly when it comes, as it once did with many nations, at the season of the vernal equinox, when

The New Year, reviving old deities. The thoughtful soul to solitude retreats. Where the white hand of Moses on the Rough puts out, and Jesus from the Ground awakes.

It is the time of renewal, of hope and of rejoicing. All things that have in them earth life are echoing the prayer of the poet:

Make me over, Mother April, When the sap begins to stir.

All the pagan religions—Greek, Roman or Gothic—were alike disguised nature worship. And in all of them, whether as a New Year celebration or not, there came this festival of flowers, this season of rejoicing in the resurrection of the earth from winter's death, of the springing anew of grass and grain from its grave. This is the old pantheistic meaning that underlies all the spring festivals, and who will say that the Easter feast of the resurrection would strike the spirit with the same force if it came at the time of the falling leaf

rather than at the season of the new birth of spring?

Our own name for the day, Easter, and the German Ostern give a hint of this other great quarry from which we drew the material to build the festival as we know it. Both words are derived from the name of the old Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring, Ostara. To the mind of the pagan convert it seemed his old familiar festival, but with its meaning broadened and deepened, and he clung to his custom of the profuse use of flowers at the feast. All were for him flowers of Ostara, but certain ones, from the time of their blossoming, or from their symbolism, came to be considered more appropriate than others. The hyacinth, the crocus and the violet are among the blooms of Easter and each wears a legend about its name. Hyacinth was a youth beloved of Apollo, who was slain by jealous Zephyrus, the west wind. The crocus, also, was a beautiful boy, who had been transformed into a flower.

Only the daffodil, or Lent lily, and the Easter lily have acquired a truly Christian significance. The daffodil, coming as it did during Lent, was considered as a sort of John Baptist among flowers, the herald of joy and hope. Some trace the derivation of its name to "affodile," from the old English, meaning "to come early." Others find the name only a corruption of "dis" lily, given it because it was supposed to be the flower that dropped from Pluto's chariot as he was carrying off Proserpine. Shakespeare says:

Oh Proserpine, For the flowers now that fringed thy t'ist fall From this wagon—daffodils That come before the swallow dares, and take The wings of March with beauteous feet.

The lily is, however, the flower of all flowers that we associate with Easter, and to get at the root of the reason, we shall have to delve back as far as the foundations of the pyramids. The lotus was the first sacred lily. Rooted in the earth, growing through the water and called into being by the sun, it represented to the ancient Egyptian the union of

The Easter festival is the florist's golden harvest. The supply of flowers at this season is never equal to the demand, but this only helps to swell the profits, for not only higher prices be asked, but there is little danger of overstocking with the attendant loss and waste that under ordinary circumstances eat up much of the profits of the florist's business. One New York florist sells each year more than 50,000 Easter lilies and his profits may be imagined when one remembers that Easter lilies are purchased wholesale at from \$10 to \$12 per hundred and sold at prices ranging from \$1 to \$2 each.

Physical Religion. To keep up a nice balance of work and wear, and to come out a little ahead each day, is a good religion. No man has any right to wear himself out.—Dr. Kellogg.

the three elements which, in his belief, made up the universe—fire, water and earth. Dying with winter, reviving with spring, it typified the eternal renewal of life from death, the resurrection, which was one of the chief tenets of the religion of Egypt. Throughout the east the lotus is sacred.

Early in the history of the church the lily became sacred to the Virgin and in every picture of the annunciation, the visitation or other events in the life of Mary the lily appears, usually bearing three blossoms to symbolize the trinity. As Mary usurped in popular tradition the place occupied by Flora, by Freyja and by Ostara, giving her name to the month of May, which had been theirs, so she claimed the flower which from ages past had been the symbol of life and the renewing of spring and made it essentially the flower of the church. The "lady chapels," erected to the Virgin in such numbers during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, are decorated with carved lilies of various kinds. They were not all of the type we know as Easter lilies. The lily of the valley, so often referred to in the Bible, was an early favorite. The lotus was even used, in some of the earliest work. But whatever the lily might be, around it gathered all the symbolism that had been associated with the name since the beginning of history.

Christ, too, had used the lily to point a moral. "Consider the lilies, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

So that when we celebrate the feast of the resurrection which we have built up from the quarry of the Hebrew Passover, the old New Year festivities and rites in honor of the goddesses of spring, from Flora to Ostara, it is only fair that above all other flowers of the season we should rank the lily, heir to the symbolism of the lotus of Egypt, flower of the temple of Solomon, sanctified by the words of Christ and carved and painted in our churches for centuries as the flower of Mary.

WIFEY HAD SHREWD SCHEME

Only Those Addicted to Pipe Smoking Will Understand Why It Didn't Work.

William H. Wood, a theatrical manager says it took him a long time to learn to smoke a pipe, and came near causing domestic trouble. It was right after his wedding that Mr. Wood decided to smoke a pipe instead of cigars, for economical rea-

sons. Mrs. Wood was a very attentive bride, who thought of nothing else but the happiness of her little lord. At night after dinner Mr. Wood, according to his own story, would sit down by the open fireplace and puff contentedly at a sweetbrier pipe. He thought it strange that the biting sensation that clings to each pipe until it is broken in remained so long with his "smokers."

One night the biting sensation was more than he could stand.

"Mary, do you know whether any one has been tampering with my pipes?" he inquired. "No," came a soft answer. "But what is the matter with them, dearie?" she continued, solicitously. "Oh, nothing," he replied, "only it seems as if all my pipes are new and I never can get one broke in right," he added, growlfully. "Well, that's easily explained," she began. "You see, it's like this. Wil-

liam, I thought the best way to keep your pipes clean was to get new ones, so I have been buying you a new one every day."

Wood says she gave that up a long time ago.

The Broken Vase. "Ah! That's lucky. It's broken only in three pieces." "Well, you must be mad to call that luck." "You don't have to pick up the pieces, ma'am."

Russian Proverbs on Wives.

"Love your wife like your soul, and beat her like your carpet." This is a Russian proverb. Another of the same spirit: "Not long hurt the bumps from a loved one's thumps." Wives have undoubtedly been subjected to much ill-treatment in Russia, where most husbands have always held to the opinion that "Liberty spalls a good wife." Some Russian proverbs are cynical as to the delights of matrimony, and most married men know how to say "Wed once, wall always."

Easter Morning



"He is risen, to the Sun Floods the world with living light; Christ the victory hath won, He hath conquered in the fight!"

Many Ways In Which The World Observes Easter

WHETHER the sun shines forth in splendor or the skies be leaden, the spiritual and material seem to combine on Easter day, the festival of spring. The church has other sacred days, there are other whisperings of renewed nature, but Easter Sunday stands forth unique from all other religious feasts.

Many and strange are the observances of Easter Sunday, whose very name has come down to us from the Goddess of the east, she who in Saxon mythology was Ostara, or Easter. In the never-changing east and the mutable west there are strange customs connected with this day, and no matter how indifferent the Christian he cannot ignore it. Though it was not until the year 325, at the Council of Nice, that arrangements were inaugurated to determine what day in every year Easter should fall on, and it was decided that Easter day should be the first Sunday after the fourteenth day of the calendar moon, which happens on or after March 21, this did not alter the inner meaning of the day.

In the same way its customs have lingered until even their origin has been lost in obscurity. For instance, many unique explanations have been made regarding Easter eggs, some authorities claiming that eggs were used long before the existence of Easter. Among Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, the egg was the sign of the universe, and for centuries the church itself has considered eggs the symbol of the resurrection, and at first they were dyed red as symbolical of the blood of Christ. Just why this is so, no one can tell authoritatively, though many contend that all spiritual significance was lost in the thought that after 40 days of fasting the early Christians were allowed to eat eggs, and hence valued them as Easter remembrances. But these are not the only countries where eggs have figured in a spring festival. The people of Peru believe that three eggs fell from heaven, thus bringing priest, king and common people on earth. The Japanese and Orientals look upon them as a type of the whole human soul, and Teutonic children are told the story of the turning of Ostara into a hare, who appeared as a messenger of spring and left eggs. Italy's songers of spring and left eggs. Italy's children think that if they find an egg

laid by a white hen in a new nest, good luck will attend them.

In one place in our country Easter is observed with peculiar ceremonies. This is in the quaint Moravian village of Bethlehem, which was founded in 1740. Here a Passion week anniversary is held that is unequalled for solemnity. Pilgrims flock to this little town, for from the eve of Palm Sunday through Easter there are many services each coincident with the life of Christ. Thus, Palm Sunday commemorates the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem. Monday tells of the healing in the temple; Tuesday suggests the giving of the parables, and Thursday brings its sad associations of the Lord's supper. When the sayings of Christ upon the cross are read and the bells toll on Good Friday the whole passion and death seem very real. It is a relief when Easter morning comes and the tuneful trombone choir awakens the people that they may arise and hasten to the little church, and from that to the cemetery nearby. Here the people stand in a hollow square, and as the dawn slowly reddens the sky, and the rising sun touches the tree tops, the birds begin their morning anthems and seem to join in the chants of praise which go up from the devout congregation.

There have been few such spectacles since the pope gave up blessing the world on Easter morn from the loggia of St. Peter's. To-day Rome lacks this ceremony, but the devout can go to the Church of the Passionates, where are the holy staircase and chapel filled with relics of the Passion, among them the title of the crucifixion, which no one but the pope is allowed to see. In France the archbishop has for years given his benediction on Easter morn from Montmartre, and in London there are rich parishes where there is still a sort of penitentiary alms giving among the people, relics of a time when the Paschal feast was celebrated in arts of grace and charity.

The American Indians take kindly to any observance which can find expression in forms and ceremonies, and for this reason Easter and Passion week appeal forcibly to those who have embraced Christianity. A remarkable Passion play has been enacted for years at Amecameca, near Mexico City, which is a sort of Oberammergau in the new world. Shortly after the Conquest Pope Adrian VI. sent 12 missionaries to convert the Aztecs. One of them, Fra Martin, was a kind man, who lived in a cave on a mountain near Tenochtitlan, or Mexico City. After his death his body was placed in a chapel built over the cave, and the mountain became a sacred spot. Thousands of pilgrims come here in Lent and on Ash Wednesday the body of the priest is placed in the village church. For 300 years this ceremony has been enacted, and has been followed by a Passion play on Good Friday, which is witnessed by people from all over the country. The performance, which is under the auspices of the priest, begins early in the morning and ends at midnight when the peasant who is selected to impersonate Jesus is taken from the cross and the penes who have been in attendance escort the body of Fra Martin back to the chapel over the grave. Thousands of Mexican poems attend these ceremonies, and it is this class of people who take the various parts.

MOTHER'S EASTER PRAYER

Now winter's chill and blast is passed away,
The earth no more is hard and brown and bare;
How fair the fields and meadows seem to-day
Warm in the new and tender green they wear!

Chilled was the old world's heart with sin years gone,
And youth weary and sad for its dear lost dreams;
But now repentant tears anoint the face of morn,
Each hill new-sprinkled with fresh beauty gleams.

Mercy divine with pity spared and blessed;
Nature forgiven to her day of innocence wakes,
Chastened and contrite men keep a tender track,
And flowers upspringing smile for their dear sakes.

With thankfulness, O Lord, I kneel and reach
To take this new best gift of thine, my child!
And for this springtime fair maid tenderly beseech
Thy care and light for the long years untried.

And as I hope to last to win thy grace,
When her two eyes thro' heaven's holy light seek mine,
O may she never gaze upon a downcast face,
But clear with duty done meet eyes that shine!

