

The Home Department

Conducted by Helen Watts McKee

Hyacinths and Easter Lilies

Hyacinths and Easter Lilies,
As the breeze your censers swings,
Through the dawn's cathedral arches
Rise the thoughts of holy things!

Goes the story—mythic, olden—
That Apollo, unaware,
Slew the lovely Hyacinthus,
Youth of beauty, wondrous, rare;
As a token of his sorrow
Caused he hyacinths to grow,
And upon their trembling petals
Wrote the story of his woe.

Legends tells us that at Easter,
When the blessed Son of God
Left His tomb, that snow-white lilies
Sprang to life where'er He trod.
Thus they weave for us the story
Of the Easter Lily's birth—
By His touches waked to gladden
All the gardens of the earth!

Hyacinth, thou fragrant symbol
Of an earth-love's hopeless pain;
Easter Lily, sign supernal
Of a love that rose again—
To my heart you both are precious
At this holy Eastertide;
Earth's fulfillment, Heaven's promise,
By your beauty typified!

—Selected

The Eastertide

With the air full of flying gold and sweetest perfumes, it is easy enough to believe in the lesson the Easter season is supposed to teach us; but when chill winds discourage spring's advances, and the sunshine is shut away by snow-flakes, we are apt to grow disheartened, and to lose faith in all promises. But should we? I think not. Easter Sunday falls so late this year that we shall have flowers enough to attest to the truthfulness of its lessons, not only the hardy, sturdy little out-door harbingers, but indoors, as well. And nothing is so beautiful as the decorations of the church and home with the waxen ascension lilies, the rich, green of palms, the delicate petals of the scented hyacinths. Flowers do not bloom alone on plants at this season, but shop windows, bonnets and headwear blossom out wonderfully. Here is a bit of "ancient" tradition, handed down to us to emphasize the fact that women were not alone in their love of finery, or the fostering of their vanity:

"Last Eastre I put on my blue
Frock coat, the vust time, vier new;
Wl' yaller buttons aal o' brass
That glittered in the zun lik glass:
Bekaise 'twer Easter Zunday."

Easter Sunday is not a time of rejoicing solely from its religious significance; it is the time of renewal in more ways than one, and everybody is expected to have "new things"—at least one really new garment to wear, on that day. I am afraid there is more thought and consideration given to the getting up the new clothes than to the important lesson the day itself should teach us. But we do get so tired of the rubbishy old things we have worn all the comfort out of, that, really, one is not so much to blame, after all. One can worship so much more heartily in spirit when not crucified in the flesh with the thought that we are not looking as well as we might, if we were prettily dressed. Another thought gives us exceeding comfort, in connection with the Easter

season: If we have not already "cleaned house," it is warm enough to begin the work without delay, and the stoves may usually be taken out of most parts of the house, by this time; so we are happy, and feel like praising because we hope to, ourselves, arise out of the dirt and dust and grime that the close confinement of the winter months has forced upon us. So, looked at from whatever standpoint, the Easter season is a happy season, and both physically and spiritually, we are constrained to "rejoice and be glad."

"Telling Lies to Children"

Not so very long ago, a little lassie spent an Easter Sunday with us. There were a basket of eggs and a package of assorted dyes provided, and invitations given to a few little mates to help her color Easter eggs, and we anticipated for her only a pleasant day. There was to be feasting and flowers, also, in her honor. Early Easter morning the little maid was up and dressed, and I noticed that she was critically examining many nooks and hiding places. I asked: "What are you hunting for, Dottie?" "O," she giggled, bashfully, "I am hunting the nests." Not having been accustomed to the idea of rabbits' eggs through experience, I did not think of the object of her search, and said, "But, dear, we do not keep hens." She smiled, and continued her search, stopping only when summoned to breakfast, to which meal she brought a very rueful looking little face. After awhile, during which her eyes had been busy searching the room, she asked, "Auntie, don't you have any rabbits on this farm?" "Plenty of them. Why?" "Because, I can not find their nests, and where do they lay their eggs?"

"Well," I said, hardly knowing how to meet her question, "our rabbits are not used to children, and I don't think they lay any; but here is a big basketful of them which the hens have given us." Her eyes brightened wonderfully, but her thoughts were still with the rabbits.

There are many who object strongly to the Santa Claus story which has been rehearsed for the children's faith, time without end, and insist upon cutting it out of the curriculum of child teaching, but there is vastly more sense in this belief, foolish as it may seem, than in teaching the little ones the impossible story that the Easter eggs are laid by the bunnies. I do not advocate encouraging in children the belief in the miserable street representatives of their cherished idol of the holidays, for, at the best, they are miserable failures, and fool none of them long, but there is a Christmas spirit—a spirit of kindly giving and good cheer, which the growing child will gradually credit with the wonderful deeds once attributed to the cherished Santa Claus with no ill-feeling; but the rabbit-laying idea is so absurd and untruthful, that I can not see any good to come of it. The true reason for Easter Sunday is so beautiful, why not teach them to know that perfectly? And teach them to find for themselves the symbols of the Risen Savior, as they lie on every hand.

Query Box

Fannie L.—My dear child, a girl of your age should not dabble with cosmetics. The beauty of your young years is the loveliest thing in this world.

Essie F.—A faithful old recipe for the removal of freckles is grated horse-

radish in milk, applied with a bit of cloth and allowed to dry on the face at night.

Agness D.—Have you tried brushing the hat with a strong dye of the desired shade, made of some one of the popular ten cent dyes? Ask your milliner.

Sadie L.—Blondes can wear reds, greens, and some shades of yellow; red-haired girls look well in browns, rich greens and blacks.

Mrs. C. A. B.—For information regarding cheese-making, write to Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., for bulletin on the subject which I think the Department has published. Any publication devoted to the interests of dairying can aid you.

Sufferer.—When the cough is hard and dry, rub the chest and over the spine with equal parts of lard and turpentine and cover with a hot flannel. Repeat every two hours until relief is obtained. Keep the parts well covered.

Anna.—Anything that nourishes the skin—warmth, care, food—will, to a certain extent, nourish the hair also; if there is a tendency to excessive growth, this will stimulate it. The remedy I sent you, some time ago is the least expensive, most harmless and generally satisfactory I know.

Mrs. Thomas T.—Walnut stain is a popular and harmless dye for the hair, if you must dye it, but, like other dyes, must be constantly renewed as the roots of the hair grow out. The dried bark can be had of most any druggist, but fresh bark is better. I think an ounce will cost you about ten cents. Steep one ounce of the bark in a pint of water, kept just at the boiling point, for an hour or more; strain, and add a lump of alum the size of a small hickory nut to set the color. A little alcohol or bay rum may be added, but the alum will keep it from souring. Apply with a bit of sponge tied to a small stick to save the hands; or, an old soft tooth brush may be used. Repeat the application as it becomes necessary. Do not use it if it should sour; make it fresh.

Easter Reading

We are told that neither in the New Testament, nor in the writings of the apostolic fathers do we find any trace of the celebration of Easter as a church festival. Origin urges that the Christian who dwells on the truth of Christ as our Passover, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, is every day keeping an Easter and pentecostal feast. It is doubtless true that the first Christians continued to observe the Jewish festivals as commemorative of events of which these had been the shadows, and thus the Passover, made even more sacred by the thought of Christ, the true paschal lamb, the first fruits of the dead, continued to be celebrated and became the Christian Easter. The word "Easter," like the names of the days of the week, is derived from the old Teutonic mythology. Bede tells us it is derived from Eostre, or Ostara, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring, to whom the fourth month, April (or answering to our month of that name), was dedicated, and that this month was the same as the Mensis Paschalis, when the "old festival was observed with the gladness of a new solemnity."

Easter Observances

The Catholic and Episcopal churches hold Easter in especial esteem, and it is becoming the custom of nearly all Protestant churches to have special services and decorations commemora-

tive of the resurrection. The miracle of the resurrection of the body is appropriately symbolized in the re-appearance of flowers, the budding of bare trees, and the soft carpeting with verdure of the brown fields. Green and white are the Easter colors, the one emblematic of life and growth in nature, and, by a simple transition of ideas, of the quickening of spiritual life after death; the other, is the emblem of purity. In the church and in the home, Easter is a feast of flowers, and wherever possible all things may be decorated with these beautiful emblems. In many countries, a number of different cakes, or other dishes are prepared specially for Easter. In England, according to tradition, the early Christians invested the hotcross buns with much sacredness, and, it is said, to this day, in some of the remote English counties, a small loaf of bread, marked with a cross, is baked every Good Friday morning and carefully preserved until the annual return of the day. This is to be used only medicinally, and many grievous disorders are supposed to be cured by a small portion of the sacred loaf grated and made into a sort of panada with a little water. It would be considered a sacrilege to use it as food. It is claimed that the same buns were used as early as 1500 B. C., in the worship of idolaters, and were considered by the pagans as a safe-guard against disease and danger when used in their idolatrous rites.

Other Observances

Among the Jews it was customary to build a great fire in the open air on Easter eve, into which to cast all leavened bread. Although this fire has fallen largely into disuse, there is said to be enacted at the present day in Jerusalem a ceremony called the Miracle of Easter Fire. For centuries the Latin churches refused to take part in this, the Roman Catholic church opposed it, and now its only participants are said to be the Greek and other Oriental churches. The Greeks claim that the ceremony comes down the long ages from the apostles, and that their candles are actually lighted by a fire sent from heaven. It is also claimed that this holy fire ap-

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