

The Omaha Sunday Bee

Sunday April 5th 1908

EASTER

BEFORE the dawn of history, when man's budding intellect was finding expression in poetic imagery, and the world above as well as the world beneath was peopled with fanciful creations of brains that felt but did not understand, the divisions of the year were recognized, and with the Vernal Equinox came a season of rejoicing. It was a new birth, and man felt the inspiration of the season, and rejoiced that spring had come again. And as his intelligence advanced, and his knowledge of natural conditions increased, he gave still more of reverential awe to the great mystery of the Spring time. Those old astronomers, who watched the stars from housetops, and in the desert, and whose unaided eyes pierced the veil that Nature hangs over the night, giving names to stars that still serve to designate them, revered the forces they could not comprehend, and in their wonderment at the inscrutable ways of the great mechanism of the universe, ascribed to the beneficence of the deity they worshiped the same wisdom and provident watchfulness as that believed in by the most devout of enlightened Christians. Some of them went even further, and with a fine faith that takes on most poetic expression, made the Vernal Equinox the supreme event of the year, and arranged their calendars to coincide, so that the new year begins with the sun's crossing the line in the Spring time. Today the Persians continue in this, and celebrate the day of the Equinox in March as the New Year. Science has done little for man in this matter, save to enable him to more closely calculate the passage of the sun and the consequent procession of the seasons. The fact itself is as old as Time, and the feast that accompanies it is as old as man's understanding. The value of Easter to the Christian church lies in its symbolism. Just as the return of Spring time promises to the world a new birth and another season of bud and blossom and fruitage, so does Easter foretell to the devout the fulfillment of a glorious promise of the resurrection and the life everlasting. Its association with the agony and the persecution, death and burial of the Nazarene, and his triumph over the tomb is fraught with all the tender mystery that surrounds the whole question of Life, and holds the hope that has been uppermost in man's mind at all times. It is the support of the faith that looks beyond the grave, and the bulwark of the trust that leads mankind through the Valley of the Shadow. Therefore, the Church of Christ glories in its Easter festival as in no other. It is the evidence of that on which the foundation of the Church rests, and without which all is "become as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals." And in the Spring time of the year Nature takes on a new garb. The browns of Autumn and the grays of Winter give way to the softer tints of green, and in the earlier days of the season all creation comes forth with new and brighter garb. The Easter festival is a proper time for the display of appropriate raiment, and to be well dressed is not only to pay due deference to the opinion of one's fellowmen, but it is also a duty one owes to oneself.

1908

