



Lilies for the Holy Easter Day



PHOTO BY FRANK FOURNIER

O EARTH, upon thy breast,
By the soft winds caress't,
Bring all thy blossoms forth in bright array,
From dusky wood and dell
Sweet herb and lily bell
To ornament his holy Easter Day.

OBSERVANCE OF EASTER SUNDAY

THE observance of Easter Sunday dates back to the founding of the early Christian church, in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus. It is generally believed by all Christians that Jesus was crucified on Friday and buried. The following Sunday certain women of Judea went to the tomb early in the morning to anoint his body. Saturday was the Sabbath day of the Jews. That accounts for the delayed visit to the tomb. Jesus was buried so late Friday the women did not have time to anoint his body. As soon as day dawned that Sunday morning the women went to the tomb, and, according to sacred accounts, found Christ had gone.

The stone which sealed the mouth of the tomb was rolled away. At first they were filled with grief, believing his body was stolen. Then they remembered the words of their Master, that he would rise from the tomb the third day. His reappearance and assurance that all could conquer the grave was the cause of great rejoicing.

From the time of the flight of the children of Israel from Egypt, the Jews had observed the Passover to commemorate the night when the angel of death passed over the houses of the Hebrews and slew the first-born in the houses of the Egyptians. The feast of the Passover was being observed by the citizens of Jerusalem at the time of the crucifixion. The followers of Christ continued to observe the feast of the Passover, but the observance took on a new meaning.

The exact time of the feast was not settled until the council of Nice, called by Emperor Constantine of Rome in the year 325. It was then decided that the feast should be observed the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox. The only great astronomical observatory in the world at that time was at Alexandria, Egypt. It was left to the astronomers there to determine when Easter should come.

The early Christians did not know the feast by the name of Easter. The name is of Saxon origin and came from the feast of the paschal lamb of the early Christian church with the feast of the coming of spring of the Saxons.

Ostara, the goddess of spring of the Saxons, was worshiped in England and Germany before the first missionaries to the north of Europe brought the story of Christ. The Saxons, in accepting Christianity, continued to observe their old feasts just as the Jewish Christians continued to observe the feast of the Passover. The mis-

sionaries persuaded the Saxons to accept the feast of the paschal lamb and simply change the name to that of the feast of Ostara, which later was anglicized to Easter.

The Easter egg also had its origin among non-Christians. The people of northern Europe hunted eggs in the springtime, believing that it was good luck to find them and eat them. Of course wild birds laid eggs only in the spring of the year. The Christian missionaries to our ancestors saw an opportunity to win men to a belief in Christianity by adopting the egg-hunting day and combining it with Easter. The egg was shown to typify life. As the chick lies imprisoned in the egg only to burst forth, so will our bodies lie in the tomb only to be resurrected at the call of God.

The hunting and eating of eggs is observed today in Persia and in other Asiatic lands where there is no Christianity, showing that the custom does not come with Christianity.

EASTER IN HEARTS OF MEN

Chain of Witnesses to the Resurrection Has Been Added to Throughout the Centuries.

CHRISt is risen." The choirs sing about it. The preachers proclaim it. The multitudes believe it. Does it seem strange that because a small group of sad-eyed, discouraged men and women, almost two thousand years ago, suddenly came to believe that a man they had loved had returned to life after being executed on the cross, people should still believe it today? Nineteen centuries is a long time, and Palestine is far away. How is it that the belief of the first Christians has laid hold upon us?

It is not enough to explain it as an old tradition, handed down from generation to generation. If the experience of the apostles and the three Marys and the five hundred brethren to whom he made himself known were the only reason for keeping Easter, it is not probable that Easter would still be kept. Faith that is only handed on does not survive as this faith has survived. There must be another reason.

The other reason is that there never has been an age since the first Christian age until now when there were not among the people of the earth those to whom Christ had become a living person. The healing of the seamless dress has been by beds of pain. In the midst of the storm and the stress of life, despairing men and women have reached out to touch him, and they have touched him and been made whole again. Martyrs, stretched on the agonizing rack, have heard him. Other martyrs, bound among the burning fagots, have seen him in the fire. Tempted men have sought him in the hour of their temptation, and his arm has sustained them. Such as they do not need to be told that long ago, on a Sunday morning in the spring, the grave released him. They know that he is released, for he has become the living power of their lives.

When the eleven, after the tragic death of Judas, chose a twelfth apostle, they did so that he might become a witness with them of the resurrection. Since then, from all nations and tribes, a great company whom God alone can number has been added to the chain of witnesses. Daily their number is increased. Easter is Easter, not because Jesus rose long ago, but because Jesus still lives, and because there are among us those who know that he lives.—Youth's Companion.

The Little French Girl

By Dorothy Blackmore

RAYMONDE ROUSSEAU was a frail, pretty little French artist, who lived in a tiny studio in a great building. She made her living by painting wonderful water-color dance orders, dinner cards, holiday greetings and fanciful conceits for social entertainments of all sorts. Also, she added to her income by singing in the choir of a big church.

Until the European war had broken out Raymonde's brother, Jacques, had lived with her, but when his country entered the conflict he was called to join his colors. Raymonde cried for days after her brother sailed for France, but she knew she would have been ashamed of Jacques had he been unwilling to go.

The approach of Easter brought much work to Raymonde, and the lights in her studio burned late every night as she sat over her desk making water colors. She looked very much like a French print herself in the quaint costumes she always designed for her own wear. Her straight, black

ing interest in the little French girl and knew something of her life, picked up the paper she had dropped from her hand.

"It's her brother—his among those reported dead in battle. Poor little girl!" Trenton Knox had always felt a sort of indefinable sympathy for the little soprano.

Raymonde opened her eyes. "It—it can't be true—can it?" she asked, searching the faces of those about her, pitifully.

Trenton Knox bent over her. "This paper is two weeks old—it should never have reached you," he said, kindly.

"But why?" she asked, in agonized tones and pushing back the straight wisps of hair.

"The reports haven't been confirmed, or you would have heard," he said.

The girls helped her to become calm and comfortable again, and though she sat through the rehearsal she was unable to bring a note from her throat, for the lump that seemed to be choking her.

"You'll let me walk home with you tonight, please?" asked Trenton Knox gently.

Raymonde smiled a wan little smile, and there was none of the usual sparkle in her brown eyes. "It would be so good of you—I have been foolish and weak to faint, but I—"

"You have been overdoing it and you look as if you hadn't taken time to rest and eat," the big tenor said, as he guided her from the church.

On the way home they stopped and had a bite of supper in a quiet restaurant near Raymonde's studio, and there, out of sheer weariness, she permitted her veil of reserve to drop before the man who had always been so kind to her.

As they walked around the corner to the studio building she leaned on his arm and he felt as if he could never leave her alone again.

The elevator boy handed her a message. She took it with trembling hands. Gently but firmly Trenton took it from her. He saw that it was a transatlantic cable. "When we get upstairs we'll open it," he said.

And it was he, not Raymonde, who tore it open and read the words:

"Jacques wounded, but safe at home. Love." It was unsigned, but Raymonde knew it was from her family, and she knew, too, that they realized that she might have received the paper with the awful mistake printed in it.

"I—I felt as if I could not open it," she said to Trenton as she sank into a studio chair by the small hard-coal fire she always kept burning. "You—are so good to me."

"Good? Good?" he said. And then after a minute in which he seemed to be pondering his subject, "Raymonde, won't you let me take care of you? I see tonight how much you need someone, and I—love you? I have loved you for long, but you never let me tell you so till now."

Tears streamed down the little French girl's pale cheeks. The night's gamut of emotions had been too much

EASTERTIDE

By Jean Erickson

*Nature voices all her gladness,
Lays aside her gloom and sadness,
All is peace and joy and gladness,
At Eastertide.*

*So let every heart of sorrow
Neither trouble keep nor borrow;
All is peace upon the morrow,
At Eastertide.*

*Tell the resurrection story,
Tell of him, the King of Glory,
Every tongue repeat the story
At Eastertide.*

*Ring, ye, Easter lilies, ring,
In the breezes gently swing;
Every heart for joy shall sing,
At Eastertide.*

for her overwrought nerves. "I've felt so—so different from you all," she managed to say. "So—so alone!" Trenton leaned over her. "Don't say alone again, Raymonde—if you love me."

"Oh," she breathed, "I do—I do."

"And you'll marry me after Easter and we'll have the whole blessed choir



Tore It Open and Read the Words.

here in your studio to wish us joy after we come back from the Little Church Around the Corner, won't we, dear?"

And Raymonde nodded even while she sobbed. (Copyright by the McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)



Easter Brought Much Work.

hair and her ivory skin and scarlet lips made her a conspicuous beauty anywhere. Added to this, her unique taste in dress made her more than attractive.

Perhaps it was her continental manner, perhaps merely her natural diffidence, that made her difficult of approach. But she was admired by everyone who came in contact with her, and in the choir where she sang she had many friends even though she did not perhaps realize it.

Choir rehearsals for Easter music made her attendance necessary, and she found herself hurrying from her studio to the church without taking proper time to eat nourishing meals. Raymonde was very conscientious and she did not want to neglect either her painting or her choir work.

It was the week before Palm Sunday and Easter day that found the little French girl nearly exhausted. A boat had arrived bringing her letters and papers from her home in the suburbs of Paris. She picked up her mail and went to church for a rehearsal without so much as getting a bite of dinner. She feared being late and conspicuous in entering the choir stalls.

Instead of being late, Raymonde found herself there before any of the others, and she was glad of a few quiet moments in which to read her mail. She looked at her home letters, and then opened up a newspaper from the suburb in which she lived. Her face suddenly became as set as the face of an ivory image—she had seen her brother's name among the list of soldiers who had failed to return with their regiments.

"Jacques! Jacques!" she breathed, just as a merry group of choristers came upon her in the dimly lighted church.

"Why—it's little Miss Rousseau!"

"She's fainted!"

One of the girls bent over her and, as they laid her on the broad church seat and administered restoratives, a man, who had taken more than a pas-

Now Spring Is Here



PHOTO BY FRANK FOURNIER

*THE winter's ice and snow are gone,
Flowers bloom, soft breezes blow;
The waking earth laughs in the sun
And all the world's aglow.*

Easter

GOT me flowers to strew thy way,
I got me boughs off many a tree;
But thou wast up by break of day,
And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

Yet though my flowers be lost, they say
A heart can never come too late;
Teach it to sing thy praise this day,
And then this day my life shall date.

—Author Unknown.