



More than Agitation Needed.
The question of the improvement of our country roads has been very extensively discussed in recent years. The use of bicycles has contributed greatly to this, but thousands who care nothing for wheels are glad of any pretext for awakening public interest in a matter that they regard as so important. There has been an abundance of agitation, but unfortunately there has been more of that than of anything else.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Railroads and Wagon Roads.
Many of the railroad companies of the land have expressed their friendly interest in the good roads movement by offering to transport materials and machinery for the improvement of highways, at reduced rates.

We should always give the devil his due, and, furthermore, we should not look a gift horse in the mouth. As a rule, railroad corporations are not often troubled with big-heartedness.

This seeming liberality of the railroad companies is merely a display of good sense and good business. But the incentive for their acts, like "the flowers that bloom in the spring, have nothing to do with the case," except it is a hopeful sign that business, and not sympathy, prompts them to do as they are.

It is a well understood fact that the distance to market should be measured largely by the dynamometer rather than by the surveyor's chain. Hence the better the roads the larger the area from which a railroad will derive patronage, and the less likelihood of competing or other lines being asked for and constructed.

Produce that cannot be hauled to the railroad, with profit to the farmer, is so much business lost to the railroads.

On ordinary roads the cost of hauling produce to the local railway station is several times as much as the railroad charges for conveying it to the metropolis or seaboard.

It is clear that bad roads may make the marketing of much produce unprofitable and unwise, whereas, good roads would make it worth transporting, and thus they would greatly increase the railroad's income, and at the same time benefit the farmers.

Under present conditions, railroad traffic in many sections of the country depends on every change of the weather that may affect the wagon roads. In very muddy times no produce is marketed, and a sudden freeze-up may precipitate a rush, which proves inconvenient to the railroad company. Good weather-proof roads would insure a more regular shipment of farm products and a more even market for the same.

All in all a thorough system of good roads would benefit the railroads very greatly. Every wagon road is a feeder to a railroad. The better and more extended the former, the more business will be done by the latter.

It is simply good business for the railroad companies to do all they can to encourage and materially aid in the improvement of highways.

Heroes Never Brag.

The following extract, quoted by an exchange, without hint as to its authorship, is most excellent reading. Whoever wrote it, it would be a pleasure to know the man about whom it is written.

I recall a traveling companion, an English soldier, a sergeant, who wore the colors of the queen with a smartness that became them. He had been all through the Egyptian and the Sudanese wars, and told much of what he had seen, telling it well.

We were in the night express, and the others in the carriage slept, in various stages of dishevelled and discomfort; the rain beat on the windows, and the train roared and rocked and jangled as it rushed southward. But I heard only the strong voice of my neighbor, as he poured out story after story of the two campaigns; and now we laughed, and now we fell to silence for a space, as he turned from the wild jollity of a camp to its queer, sudden pathos, and spoke of the bravery that went unrewarded, and the great deeds that could never be recompensed.

"For it aint the best of us that's decorated," he said; "and after all, if a fellow drops behind in a rush, and has all his wounds in front, what better medal could he have than that?"

But I glanced at his breast, and, smiling, shook my head. He was willing to tell story after story of what his chums had done, and what he had heard of others; but he did not say how he had gained that plain little cross, and only reddened and grew taciturn when I asked about it.

"Twas nothing," he said, awkwardly, and there was no further word to be got from him; 'twas of no consequence. Now if they had given it to me—and he plunged into another story, which ended in such a manner that both of us had to stare hard out of the window.

A Church on Wheels.

The bishop of North Dakota has a church built upon wheels capable of holding seventy people, with which he

travels about his diocese much in the same manner as the showman wanders through the country in his caravan, with the difference that the bishop's structure is moved from place to place by railway. Whenever he wishes to halt for a service on one of his pastoral trips across his prairie diocese, the church is shunted on to a siding, and the news of his arrival having spread a congregation soon gathers. Notices of future services are given, and men will often walk long distances in order to be present, large numbers of miners and railway hands assembling. Naturally the Bishop is very proud of his church car; he conducts the services alone, and is his own pew-opener, verger, cook and housemaid.

ODD MIXTURE OF RACES.

Baltimore's Colony of German-Irishmen Creates Some Curiosity.

Many people have been surprised to learn that there are in Baltimore German-Irishmen—that is, persons descended from German parents in Ireland. Such Irishmen of German origin are, however, also to be found elsewhere. Thus, for instance, Bishop Thomas Bonacum, of Omaha, is an Irishman of German descent. To illustrate the reason for this the following facts might be of service: In the year 1769 a great number of Palatinates were induced to emigrate, partly on account of the distress consequent to the French war, but more so on account of the glowing accounts from the first German immigrants to Pennsylvania. They came in great numbers to Rotterdam, depending for assistance on England, whence already in 1708 a great number of Palatinates had been transported to New York. They came, however, in too great numbers, and there were no vessels to convey them from Rotterdam to London. For some time they were cared for in the former city, but when this proved too great a burden England had them transported to London, where they were housed and properly cared for.

But on the 1st of June the number had grown to 10,000, in consequence of which England caused a publication to be made in Holland on June 24, 1769, that no new immigrants would be thenceforth received. Nevertheless, until October, 1769, some 4,000 more crossed over. The expense of supporting these Germans at "Greenwich camp," near London, was defrayed by large collections through a committee, to which the highest persons in the realm belonged. Queen Anne gave \$800 daily. But even for wealthy England this burden soon became too great; therefore efforts were made to send these people to America, and many of them went to Schenectady, in New York. Many of them died, but there still remained a large number, so that 8,900 Palatinates were sent to Ireland, where they settled in the county of Limerick, making splendid progress as skillful farmers and mechanics, such as linen weavers.—Philadelphia Record.

Swallowed His Baton.

A decidedly unique variation of a drum major's usual performance when on review occurs in one of the French regiments of the line—or, rather, did occur—for the colonel of that regiment has now put his foot down and issued a positive fiat that his subordinate shall henceforward confine himself to orthodox tricks.

The musical leader in question had at one period of his life been a mountebank, and evidently a good one, for, after practicing in secret a number of times, he astonished the regiment, drawn up in review one day, by suddenly throwing his stick high in the air, catching it in his mouth upon its descent, and swallowing fully one-half of it. Having accomplished this gastronomic diversion, he stood for a moment while the spectators gazed in awed amazement, and then disgorged the half of the baton which he had swallowed and continued his march down the line.

He repeated this trick a good many times, and the regiment was very proud of him, but it brought it such an unenviable reputation that the colonel finally had to stop him. Now his performance is thoroughly conventional.

Colors.

In medieval times the following significance was given to color: White was emblematic of light, purity, virginity, faith, joy, and life. Carmine red, of Christ's passion and death, of royalty, of the Holy Spirit, and of fire. Blue, of truth, constancy, piety. Dark red, of anger, war, and bloodshed. Gold and bright yellow, of the graces, of brightness, marriage, and fruitfulness. Dingy yellow, of deceit and jealousy. Green of hope, of spring, prosperity, victory, immortality. Violet, of love, truth, humility, passion, and suffering. Black, of death, mourning, humiliation; also of the earth. Blue with gold stars, of heaven. White and red roses, of love and innocence, or love and wisdom.

Will He Remember the Adage?

It used to be said that one who lives in glass houses should not throw stones, though the author of this old adage never dreamed that anyone would ever live in a glass house. But a prominent French manufacturer of glass determined to construct a house entirely of that material for the next French exhibition. The walls will consist of an iron skeleton, on which will be placed slabs of glass in such a manner as to form a double wall, in the interior of which hot air will be circulated, in winter, and in the summer compressed air, which will cool them. The roof will be glass, with a network of iron, the walls, staircase, etc., being similarly constructed.

England Almost Ignorant of 1812. The war of 1812, about which books are written in America, has scarcely got five lines devoted to it in any one of the popular English histories.—London Sketch.

QUEEN OF FESTIVALS.

THE DISTINCTION THAT IS GIVEN EASTER DAY.

Some Customs by Which It Is Observed—Why the Egg Is Symbolical of the Occasion—Legends and Superstitions Connected with It.



ASTER Sunday, which for centuries was observed only by certain churches, is now almost universally kept as a day of days, all evangelical churches symbolizing it as the anniversary commemorative of the resurrection of Christ, a festival which in the early Christian era was distinguished as the Sunday of joy, and which Gregory Nazianzen 1,500 years ago called the "Queen day of days, that excels all others as far as the sun exceeds the other stars, and which is still known in the east as the 'bright day.'" Another typical name for Easter is the "Holiday of Hope."

There is a wonderful charm and fascination in this queen festival of the year, which dominates the whole world with its wonderful lessons of returning life. Not only is the deep religious significance of the occasion illustrated in the most attractive and beautiful form as a lesson to the eye, and through that to the heart, but the joyful features of Easter, the upspringing of hope and the miracle of returning life, inspire a condition of joy and happiness in the lives of young and old, and the most insensible object becomes a part of the carnival of joy.

Easter was not kept as a festival until the fifth or sixth century, but previous to that the question of establishing it as a feast day came before the council of Nice, when it was decided authoritatively that Easter was henceforth to be the Sunday following the 14th day of the calendar moon which happened upon or next after the 21st of March, so that if this 14th day be a Sunday, Easter was not to be on that date but on the next following Sunday. Easter day, therefore, may be any day within five weeks inclusive of March 22 and April 25. It cannot happen earlier nor later than those two dates. In 1883, Easter occurred on March 25, and again in 1894, which will be twice in the present century. In 1931 it will occur again on March 25.

It has often been asked why an egg is the symbol of Easter. The use of eggs for Easter can be traced to the theology and philosophy of Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, among all of whom an egg was a symbol of the universe, the work of the Supreme Divinity. The Persians gave presents of eggs at the feast of the vernal equinox—in honor of the renewal of all things. The Jews adapted it to suit the circumstances of their history as a type of their departure from Egypt, and it was used in the feast of the passover as part of the furnishing of the table with the Paschal lamb. The early Druids also used the egg in their ceremonies.

The custom of coloring Easter eggs seems to be as old as the use of the egg as a symbol. In Germany sometimes instead of eggs at Easter, a curious print illustrative of their use is presented. An Easter custom brought from Mesopotamia is that of egg-rolling or egg-pitting. The manner of this sport is to strike the eggs one against the other, until one is broken, which is the spoil of the owner of the egg which remains whole. Another egg is then pitted against the winning one, and so on until the last one is victorious.

Every year at Washington the children of all classes of people meet in the grounds of the White House, and with the President and his family looking on, and great crowds of spectators in attendance, proceed to roll eggs of all the colors known to humanity, and in such quantities that it would seem as if the hens of all the world had contributed. It is one of the sights of Washington on Easter Monday. In this country eggs of all colors are used for the rolling sport, but in Mesopotamia they are red only, in remembrance of the crucifixion.

In France it was once customary at the approach of Easter to seek the largest egg as a tribute to the king, and when the Easter high mass was finished, in the chapel of the Louvre, to take them into the royal presence, handsomely gilded and carried in pyramids. Then the chaplain blessed them, after which they were distributed to the people.

Easter Superstitions.

There are many superstitions connected with Easter Sunday which are significant of the season, and are almost as imperative as laws. One of these is the necessity of having something new to wear on this day in order to insure happiness for the coming year. Hence the Easter bonnet. Another one is that on that day the sun dances. This is an old legend, and the lines from Sir John Suckling are well known:

"But oh, she dances such a way—
No sun upon an Easter day
Is half so fair a sight."

It is also claimed in heathen countries, of the superstition originated, that the lambs frisk and dance in the light of the rising sun on Ostro, the name of a heathen divinity who was also represented as dancing and who gave to our Easter its name.

The Easter Rabbit.

The rabbits enter largely into Easter amusements, especially among the Germans, who hide eggs in nests for the children to find, attributing the deed to the Easter rabbit.

Eggs—Actly the Easter Style.



AN EASTER DAY.

Shall it be a song or sonnet?
South! it must be something gay;
Bess has got a stunning bonnet
She will don on Easter day.
I can see her in my fancy
As she marches up the aisle,
With a nameless nectary
In the sunshine of her smile.
She's the loveliest of lassies
Ever winged a Cupid-dart;
Every gallant when she passes
Will have failure of the heart.
Every belle—my word upon it—
Will with jealousy grow gray,
When sweet Bessie in her bonnet
Treads the aisle on Easter Day.
I would give a feudal castle—
(All my castles are in Spain)—
And the wealth of lord and vassal—
(All my wealth is in my brain)—
If I might to think upon it,
Fairly takes my breath away!
March with Bessie in her bonnet
Up the aisle on Easter Day.



HER clothes were certainly very ragged; no one could dispute that. Her toes were rebellious and objected to staying in her boots. "Lisbeth looked at them despairingly. She was only nine, yet she could reason. "If I was as cold as my feet are," she mused, "and had my place to go, I just wouldn't stay out in the cold."
Nearly all that day she had wandered up and down the city street looking for a home. Her father had left her three days before on a drunken spree, with no place in particular to lay her head. During those three days she had eaten nothing but a piece of bread an old Irish woman had given her. Suddenly she made up her mind she would go up where the rich people lived and see if they didn't want a little girl. "So much money to spare," said "Lisbeth, "somebody'll surely take me." Poor little trusting soul!
She turned her steps and went toward the west. The short winter twilight had already commenced to deepen as she climbed a flight of long stone steps and timidly rang the bell. How warm it looked inside, she thought. A servant came to the door and regarded the ragged mite before her curiously. "What do you wish for?" she asked, not unkindly.
"Please, marm, a home," said "Lisbeth. The girl laughed. "There is none here for you," she answered, and closed the door.

"Lisbeth sank down on the doorstep, stunned and sobbing. The door behind her opened softly once more, and a little boy looked out. He had heard the servant's description of the little waif, and his childish heart was touched.
"I've brought you somefin'," he said, putting a large napkin into her hands, filled with hastily snatched goodies from the dining room. "Eat it quick, before Nurse buds me! No, wait a minute, and I'll get you a present." And he ran into the house. His little heart was filled with pity for this poor little girl whose mamma was dead, and whose papa was drunk—most alive. He came back in a moment and pressed a flower pot into "Lisbeth's hands.
"Keep it where it's warm and sunny," he said hurriedly. "By and by it'll be pretty. It's an Easter lily. I must go now. Nurse is calling me. Good-by, little girl."
He stooped and touched his childish lips to hers, then shut the door, leaving "Lisbeth alone once more, this time thoroughly dazed. No one had ever kissed her since her mother died, and the unfamiliar

curses burned deep into her warm little heart and comforted it.
Down the avenue, past the beautiful houses she went, knowing now they were not for her. It snowed faster and faster, and "Lisbeth's tired little feet just managed to drag themselves over the ground. By and by she crawled under the shelter of a friendly porch and wrapped her precious plant tight in her skirts to keep it warm. All around her that night people lay in soft, warm beds, and shivering said how cold it was. "Lisbeth said nothing. She only waited. God must have made a mistake, she thought, that would come right in time. Perhaps her prayers hadn't reached him yet. It was a long way to heaven.

When she opened her eyes again, it was to find herself in a clean, white bed, with sunlight streaming in at the window opposite, and a pleasant warmth in the air. On a little stand beside her bed was her pet companion, the Easter lily.
"Is this heaven?" said "Lisbeth. "Has God got my prayer? Do you help God take care of folks?"
"No, dear," answered a woman. "This is only the hospital, and I am your nurse. I am going to take care of you and get you nice and strong."

February passed, March came and went and April dawned. "Lisbeth still lay in her bed, making no complaint, but wasting day by day. The wonderful lily had a wonderful bud, and "Lisbeth watched it grow and swell with eager eyes. "It will be open for Easter, dear," one of the nurses said to her one day.

"What's Easter?" asked "Lisbeth, wonderingly.
"So Nurse Mary told her of the Lord of the children, pointing Him out in the picture that hung on the wall, among the little throng. Told of how He died, and how on the third day the angels rolled the stone away from the tomb, and the living Lord came out, "and that is Easter," said Nurse Mary.

"Lisbeth pondered and her eyes turned wistfully toward the lily bud, but she said nothing. Easter morning dawned clear and beautiful, the lily had opened. "Lisbeth eagerly stretched out her lean little arms towards it.
"Will you break it off for me?" she asked, and looked at it attentively for a moment. "I think it is very pretty," she said, "but I don't know about the Lord. I mean to give it to him. Is it good enough, do you think?"
"Darling," said the nurse, "to-day you

shall go to the Lord and take him your lily. He will like it, I know."
She heaved a contented little sigh. "It'll be a long ways," she whispered. "I guess I'll go to sleep and rest a bit."

The nurse bent over the dying child with eyes filled with tears, and watched the



THE BOY TOUCHED HIS LIPS TO HERS.

breath flutter between the pale lips. It was only a slight flutter, fainter and fainter!
Then it went out, and "Lisbeth gave her Easter lily to the Lord on Easter morn.—Ladies' Home Journal.

An Easter Legend.

"Will the sun really dance on Easter?" questioned the Leuten devotes.
On Easter morn she rose betimes
To hear the merry ringing chimes,
The spectacle of joy to see.
Dame Fashion from her thrall released her
To watch the dancing sun at Easter.
Did the sun dance for her at Easter?
She saw its rays of glory shine
In greeting at the break of day;
Young Cupid met her by the way,
Love cast o'er her his glancing eye.
All nature offered joys to feast her
Her heart danced with the sun at Easter.

A German Custom.

A German Easter custom is to light fires on the hillside of the Harz, obtaining the holy water from the streams at midnight, when the good spirit moves the waters, and the presentation of cakes, shaped in the form of the rising sun, are made special features of the occasion.

When the heart is light with hope all pleasures, nothing comes amiss.

A JOYOUS EASTER.

