Easter Verse

The Easter Window.

'Twas Eastertide, and Easter gowns
Approached the window space,
Where each was told in accents mild
To occupy her place.

With maiden joy the Organdie
Essayed to take her stand
Just where she thought the morning sun
Could slyly kiss her hand.

And then the Grenadine walked up
With lace and frills galore
And crowded to the foremost place
Upon that showroom floor,

Unmindful of the modest Cloth,
With military braid,
Or dainty Lawn or dotted Swiss
Or natty Tailor-made.

But all her grace began to place
When, with a haughty stride,
The Brocade Silk moved in apace
And bade them all aside.

"I've held the leading place," she said,
"In yonder gay Pahree.
My Louis Fourteenth neck must show
My birth of high degree.

"At every ball I enter first,
At drawing rooms and teas—
Keep off my train, you Linen Miss!
What country bumpkins these!"

With that the Purple Velvet frowned,
The Breakfast Gown turned green,
While one by one the passersby
Looked in upon the scene.

—Margaret S. Tennent in Philadelphia Times.

Bessie's Bonnet.

Bessie hath a dimpled chin,
Mouth with smile upon it,
Eyes of blue to glory in,
But—she hath a bonnet.

That's the only thing I see
When she dares to don it.
Climax of all witchery
Lies in Bessie's bonnet.

Yet, though I have sung the spell
Oft in many a sonnet,
To this day I cannot tell
One thing that is on it.

Were it off her dainty head
Who would care to con it?
She's the charm, when all is said,
Of her dainty bonnet.

—Judge.

The Hats.

See the ladies with the hats—
Stunning hats—
Looming up in battlements and slanting down in flats!
How they flutter, flutter, flutter,
At the corner of the street!
And the ones who wear 'em utter
Words as soft as melted butter
To the friends they chance to meet
As they flash, flash, flash,
In a sort of shiny hash
Till you'd think a flock of blue and green and pink and purple bats
Were the hats, hats, hats,
Hats, hats, hats—
The fearful and the cheerful string of hats!

Melinda's Easter Hat.

Melinda Waters went to town,
And in a miliner's shop
She saw a turban with a plume
Of whiskbroom shape on top.
She bought a frame untrimmed, and home
She hied, and down she sat.
With Jeremiah's shaving brush
She decked that Easter hat.

Melinda Waters set the style.
She went to church, and, lo,
Now every man for miles around
Must let his whiskers grow,
For all her friends beheld her hat
And marked the plume upon it,
And each one took a shaving brush
To trim her Easter bonnet.

Grave and Gay

The Easter Cherub.

She had been to Easter service,
This sweet, grave maiden of four.
The lilies were set in perfumed aisles
From the altar down to the door.
Fragrance and light were about her,
Anthems ecstatic were sung,
While the air was full of the chiming
From bells in the tower hung.

The light from a violet window
Fell over a picture there.
It lit the tall cross beside it
With a glory radiant, fair,
A picture of the Lord Jesus
Coming away from the tomb,
With cherub faces above him
And angels' forms in the gloom.

The children bore away lilies,
Each in a tightly shut hand,
Bore them to homes rich or humble,
A sweet, happy Easter band,
And baby was shown a new sister,
Come on the glad Easter morn,
A child of lilies and chimes and hope,
A child on the Easter day born.

A fond smile came to her features,
A glad light shone in her eyes.
"I's glad for dat baby angel.
'Tain't a very big s'prise.
I prayed when I saw those chillern
Flyin' erroun' so sweet
Dat one'd tum to my house,
An' I tole 'em de number an' street."

Easter Brilliants.

I know the sting of death—its victory—
Since one more dear than mine own life is dead.
And I can nevermore be comforted,
Whatever love may come in years to be,
Till God give back what death has wrenched from me.
Yet ye may slay my hope. Who was it said:
"There is no resurrection for such dead.
What thou hast lost has perished utterly?"

False seer! My dead shall live again, I know.
Those eyes—once, oh, so kind!—shall smile again.
And the dear hands that wrought but good to me
Hold mine in warm, close clasp. I can forego
Life's solace and be patient with its pain
Until the daybreak and the shadows flee.

—Katherine E. Conway.

Rejoice, happy Judah! Thy sorrow is done.
Thy King is ascended and victory won.
His kingdom is love; he is waiting to save.
And life is victorious o'er death and the grave.

Look up and rejoice, all ye children of men.
Beyond the night shade shines the morning again.
With saints, priests and prophets our voices we raise
In the blessing of hope and the beauty of praise.

No ear may hear his coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

—Phillips Brooks.

And with the morn those angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long since and lost awhile.

—John Henry Newman.

Therefore dread I not to go
O'er the silent river.
Death, thy hastening oar I know.
Bear me, thou life giver,
Through the waters to the shore
Where mine own have gone before.

—Lucy Larcom.

The while my pulses faintly beat
My faith doth so abound
I feel grow firm beneath my feet
The green immortal ground.

—Last Words of Alice Cary.

A... Committee Of Three

An Easter Story

By CLARISSA MACKIE

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THE Rev. Barnabas Crane removed his gold eyeglasses and peered nearsightedly over the heads of his congregation.

He was a tall man with thin straw colored hair and mustache and mild blue eyes, which had innocently enough been the cause of disturbing the peace of mind of several of the ladies of his parish.

The three ladies in question blushed and tingled with various degrees of delight when Mr. Crane gave out the following notice:

"It is now the 1st of January, and, as is customary at this season, I shall appoint three ladies of the parish to serve upon the flower committee. This committee will have entire charge of the decorations of the church on Easter Sunday, and in their capable hands I feel we may safely leave the embellishment of the house of God on that most significant day.

"The three members of the committee for this purpose are Miss Emily Burton, Miss Harriet Ames and Miss Lucy Grant."

Mr. Crane resumed his eyeglasses and gave out the closing hymn.

When the service was over the three newly appointed members of the flower committee gravitated toward one another as by common consent.

All were flushed with excitement and perhaps disposed to be a trifle jealous of the other, but save for rather critical surveys of one another's bonnets and gowns there was no outward indication that personal feelings might dominate the faithful performance of their service on this important committee.

"Come over to my house tomorrow night," suggested Harriet Ames with her usual air of leadership. "Come over and stay to tea, and we will talk over the plans."

Miss Burton and Miss Grant nodded assent, and the three parted to meet again the following night around Miss Ames' tea table.

When the dishes of pink tinted ham and light biscuit and damson preserves had gone the rounds, and Miss Ames had poured great cups of fragrant tea, and when the delicious poundcake was still in anticipation, the committee got down to business.

"Now," said Harriet briskly, "we must decide what decorations we shall have and act accordingly. We want it to outshine anything that any other committee ever did!"

"Yes, indeed," murmured Lucy mildly.

"Perhaps you've got a plan all laid out, Harriet; you're so forehanded," remarked Emily Burton, with a touch of asperity.

"Well, I have," returned Miss Ames frankly. "The fact is I laid it all out on a piece of paper last night. There's three places to plan for."

"What are they?" questioned Lucy mildly.

"The back of the chancel and the railing around the choir and the baptismal font." She paused and looked defiantly at her colleagues.

Lucy Grant fluttered over her teacup. "Ain't you forgotten something, Harriet?" she asked nervously.

"You've forgotten the minister's desk," said Emily bluntly. She stared at Harriet Ames with cold, gray eyes.

Lucy Grant flushed crimson and hurriedly helped herself to two slices of pound cake.

Miss Ames was not at all perturbed. "I knew you and Lucy would be thinking of Mr. Crane's desk," she said sarcastically; "there wasn't any need for me to remember that! Now you've mentioned it, my idea is to wait till the last minute and then buy something appropriate for that."

She turned to the other members of the committee.

They brightened visibly. "Yes, indeed," they agreed enthusiastically. "We will wait till the last minute and then buy something very nice!"

"Now, I've got an oleander tree and a rubber plant and sights of geraniums that will be grand by Easter," appended Emily Burton amiably.

"WE WILL WAIT TILL THE LAST MINUTE AND THEN BUY SOMETHING NICE."

"And I have three big maidenhair ferns and lots of begonias and other small plants," added Lucy eagerly.

"I've Boston ferns and ivy and—well, just look at that window—you'll see we can make quite a showing without calling on any outsiders for help," said Harriet Ames proudly.

With one accord they turned toward the south bow window of the dining room where [illegible] a magnificent showing of [illegible] plants in various stages of growth, but all promising a luxuriant yield by the forthcoming Easter Sunday.

Lucy Grant went straight home from the tea party, and, evading the curious questions of the bedridden aunt with whom she lived, she made her way to the cellar and from a dim corner brought forth five flowerpots.

These pots contained five Easter lily bulbs which Lucy had been surreptitiously forcing for the decoration of Mr. Crane's reading desk. Planted and watered in secrecy, she had not known how she was to attain the pleasure of having her plants grace the pulpit on Easter Sunday. Now all was clear. As a member of the flower committee she would come forward at the last minute with her offering—Easter lilies were rare in Montbank village.

The same thought had taken root in the minds of Harriet Ames and Emily Burton.

Secretly the three members of the committee each tended a few carefully nurtured pots of Easter lilies for the admired minister's desk.

During the long winter days that followed each one dreamed of the triumph of producing great pots of pure white blooms at the last moment.

The friendship which bound the three spinsters together before the advent of the good looking bachelor minister became more strained as each day passed by until open rupture was imminent.

Happily Easter sped on apace, and all too soon came the Saturday before the sacred day, to the real meaning of which neither of the three women had given much thought.

Not once after that tea party at Harriet Ames' house was the subject of the minister's desk mentioned. They avoided it as by tacit agreement.

The day before Easter Sunday the flower committee worked feverishly in the church. Behind closed doors they decorated chancel, choir rail and baptismal font. Their houses were denuded of green growing things to beautify the old church.

"I MUST TELL YOU A LITTLE SECRET, LADIES."

At last they paused and looked at one another, smoldering resentment and covert fear in their eyes.

"About Mr. Crane's desk," said Harriet Ames, hesitating for once in her life.

"The desk"—assented Emily.

Lucy Grant merely nodded weakly.

"I have some Easter lilies"—began Harriet, with eagerness.

"So have I," interrupted Emily Burton irritably.

"Mine are lovely," almost wailed Lucy Grant.

With one accord they vanished from the church in the direction of their several homes.

Fifteen minutes later three small boys with as many small wagons carted pots of stately Easter lilies into the church.

Three indignant spinsters gathered about the minister's desk.

"It was my idea," asserted Harriet.

"No such thing," objected Emily Burton.

"Mine were all up when the committee was appointed," sobbed Lucy despairingly.

A footstep sounded in the carpeted aisle. With one accord they turned to face the Rev. Barnabas Crane, beaming, mild eyed and enthusiastic.

"It is exquisite, exquisite, ladies," he said softly, rubbing his hands. "And the lilies—how pure and sweet they are, emblematic of the pure souls which grew them for the house of the Lord!"

He paused for an instant, and the members of the flower committee dropped shamed, repentant eyes to the floor, and not one of them trusted herself to speak.

"I must tell you a little secret, ladies," went on the minister happily. "Tomorrow you will see in the pew with my mother a young lady, a stranger to you, from the west. I hope you will learn to love her, as I do, for she is to be my wife very soon."

He held out his hand, and silently they grasped it and congratulated him warmly.

When he had departed the flower committee sighed in unison.

"Let's put all of them on his desk," said Harriet sturdily.

"Some about the base of it on the floor," qualified Emily.

"And some in the minister's pew," suggested Lucy softly.

And they all understood.

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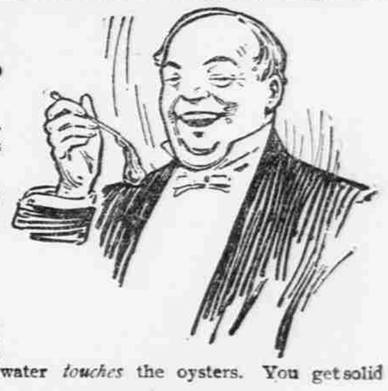

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