



REAL live bunnies, plaster of paris bunnies, candy bunnies and bunnies cunningly stuffed! Every one with gay ribbons tied round their necks and all come to town in honor of Easter!

What have bunnies to do with Easter, anyway?

Well, it's a story that reaches a long way back. Centuries and centuries ago, authorities tell us, when the world was a great deal younger than it is today, and when its primitive dwellers reveled in myth and fable, the untutored peoples of the tiny British Isle worshiped the goddess Eostre, who seemed to have been nearly allied in character to the Aurora of Roman mythology. Just as Aurora, sometimes portrayed seated in a rosy chariot drawn by two horses, was believed to be the "forerunner of the sun," so in very truth Eostre, fabled goddess, proved to be forerunner of that true Sun of Christianity which has so enlightened the earth. Belief in her paved the way for belief in the story of the resurrection.

The Teutons worshiped the same goddess

under the slightly different name of Ostran. Writing of her, Jacob Grimm defines the meaning of her name as "the divinity of the radiant dawn, of upspringing light, a spectacle that brings joy and blessing, and whose meaning would be easily adapted to the resurrection day of the Christian God."

The German Mythology of Holtzmann refers to the goddess Ostara, and contains this passage:

"The Easter hare is unintelligible to me, but probably the hare was the sacred animal of Ostara."

Four other authorities concur in this opinion, practically establishing it, and making it clear that the hare and not the rabbit was at first associated with Eoster. The two animals, of the same family and so closely resembling each other in every particular except in size, have doubtless become confused with each other in the minds of many succeeding generations.

We all know that the mistletoe and Yule log, which we consider indispensable to proper celebration of the birth of Christ, are in truth but the lingering remains of

the superstitious ceremonies of the Druids. What more natural than that the worshippers of the goddess Ostara, or Eostre, blended the thought of her radiant personality with the new conception of the resurrection dawn? What more likely than that in ignorant but sincere fashion they sought to worship the Christ after the same manner as they had worshiped the goddess? This is considered, at all events, to be the explanation of how the hare or rabbit, erstwhile sacred to the heathen goddess, came to be so closely associated with our sublime Christian festival.

Bede, the historian of the seventh century, gives it as his opinion that the name Easter is derived from that of Eostre, and also explains after the same manner that April, in the language of the Britains, was "Esturmonath," or the "Month of Eostre."

The hare, of which the rabbit has undoubtedly in many cases been made the representative, has been held sacred, or at least accredited with supernatural characteristics in many lands and times. From China to Peru it has been given honor. There is a myth of the Great Hare of the

Algonquins, which has been generally believed in through the North American continent. Hottentots, Greenlanders, Welsh and the natives of Finland, so opposite in racial characteristics, had this in common that they abstained from partaking of the hare's flesh as food, because of its sacredness. The black broth of the Spartans was brewed from "the blood and bowels" of a hare. The Irish kings who occupied the throne of Tara were supposed to derive peculiar benefit from eating the "hares of Naas," which was a privilege accorded only to them as royal.

Both Orient and Occident make the hare the central figure of spring festivals. Thus the Chinese observe a Moon Festival. They claim that the spots on the face of the moon delineate the figure of a hare, and annually keep the fast of Yue Ping (loaves of the moon), a custom dating back to extreme antiquity. The day is one of general merry-making. Little cakes, on each of which is stamped the figure of a hare couched among trees, symbolic of the moon, are exchanged among acquaintances. This custom seems directly akin to ours of exchanging gifts in the form of rabbits.

Costly and Effective Decorations Used by Modern Merchants



BEAUTIFUL EASTER DISPLAY IN THE WINDOWS OF THE NEBRASKA CLOTHING COMPANY.

THE MOST unappreciative and prosaic individual is always impressed with the good cheer of the Eastertide, when nature and humanity emerge from the gloomy habiliments of winter into those of the young spring time, with its beauty of flowers and freshness, the joyous carols of the returning birds and good nature is rampant. The eye loves to feast on nature's prodigality of beauty, and art impressed with its example outvies itself to give to human, and especially feminine, adornment that quality which thrills and enthuses. Hence the Easter displays are always watched with eager eyes and artists of costumery are at their best, and nowhere has these efforts found a greater perfection than in the display windows of the Nebraska Clothing company, at the corner of Farnam and Fifteenth streets. At the background of the display windows are numerous mirrors framed in harmonious coloring with the general artistic effect of the charming costumes, and other window adornments, thus reflecting and re-reflecting them into a confusion of bewildering beauty that is indescribable other than to see and admire. Beautiful and symmetrical

wax figures of women in artistic and graceful poses are costumed with royal elegance, and stand in front of an exceedingly pretty and artistic series of framework in white, delicate and graceful, over which is entwined roses, lilies and apple blossoms, with a sufficient coloring of fresh green leaves to make the general effect a most delightful one.

The costumes are imported ones and are the acme of the modiste's art. One, a black French voile, trimmed with cluny lace, with French blouse, postillion back, is a most charming creation. Another is a tunic skirt of French voile, blouse jacket with coat and skirt trimmed with cluny lace.

Another beautiful fancy in ladies' costumery is a black lace costume over white silk, which is extremely rich and elegant in its conception and design. All of these costumes are imported sample garments and are not excelled in their elegant beauty by any ever shown in the west, and certainly not in Omaha. Then there are other costumes of equal beauty, but less expensive elaboration that are most attractive and are in receipt of constant admiration. There is also an extremely fine display

of imported samples of waists of crepe de chine that are unequalled by any shown in the city.

The display is in all respects a most charming one and reflects the highest credit upon the Nebraska Clothing company, and especially to Mr. H. H. Hawley, the trimmer of the Nebraska Clothing company, under whose direction and artistic supervision the work of decoration was accomplished.

Ireland's Forgeries

I hear that a millionaire in this city is negotiating for a copy of the Ireland forgeries, those famous documents, alleged to be the writings of Shakespeare, put forth by a youth of 19 of the name of W. H. Ireland. The chief forgery was entitled "Miscellaneous Papers and Instruments, under the hand and seal of William Shakespeare," including the "Tragedy of King Lear," and a small fragment of "Hamlet," from the original. His play, "Vortigern and Rowena," was palmed off as Shakespeare's, and actually produced at the Drury Lane theater in 1796. The fraud was

at length detected and acknowledged. Only in recent years has it been learned that the pronoun "its" occurs but two or three times in the acknowledged works of Shakespeare. Had this fact been known in Ireland's time his frequent use of "he" word would have exposed him.—New York Press.

Out of His Sphere

A lonely male stood on the floor of a great dry goods bazaar when a female crowd came surging up, gathered from near and far. These fair ones gazed at him scornfully with looks that wither and sting, till the poor male despised himself for a base, superfluous thing. He was called wise by other men and reckoned among the great; homage they had laid at his feet as governor of the state. But there alone in that female crowd he stood like a trembling slave—a focus for eyes that pierced the soul—and longed for the peaceful grave. Oh, a male may acquire great renown and such honors as men can give, but if caught in a female shopping crowd he will feel too small to live.—Chicago News.