PROCESSION OF DEAD REDEEMER

Moonlight Celebration of Easter at Grassina Described by G. A. Lyon, Jr.

EFFIGY OF JESUS CHRIST IS CARRIED UPON A BIER

Singular Observance of Resurrection Survives in Little Tuscan Village. Devotees From Countryside.

Staff Correspondence of The Star.

FLORENCE, April 11.—To be in Rome at Easter is the endeavor of most tourists on the continent at this season of the year. Judging from reports we heard at Paris and Venice, the majority of travelers in Europe this year have concentrated in the Eternal city, intent upon viewing the church ceremonies incident to the great spring festival, so exceptionally elaborate and impressive in all respects.

This was our original intention, as well, but, delays having occurred along the line, the prospect of finding Rome uncomfortably crowded decided us to forego the opportunity and to spend the Easter season instead in Florence. Circumstances have amply justified the decision. We have discovered that while Florence boasts of no such remarkable display of ecclesiastical manifestations at this time as does Rome, it possesses certain exceptional attractions, which have appealed to so many others that we find the city of Florence well filled with visitors. Hotel and pension accommodations are at a premium.

Survival of Ancient Rites.

Certain distinctive Easter ceremonials have survived in and near Florence that are to be found nowhere else in Italy, and in fact are believed to be altogether unique. We witnessed a splendid spectacle yesterday evening at a little village half a dozen miles southeast of the city, which was well worth coming a long distance to see. I had read about it before leaving home, but had forgotten it. When the faithful concierge at our hotel, with an eye for business, no doubt, suggested that we would need a carriage for Grassina on Good Friday to see the "procession of the Dead Redeemer," the recollection came suddenly, and I forthwith arranged to leave Florence at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

The drive to Grassina is for the most part between dust-gray stone walls inclosing villas. Occasionally one gets a glimpse of the Arno on one side, after crossing the ancient Ponto Veccio, with its crowded jewelry shops. Later, here and there, a view is had of an orchard or a vineyard over the top of the wall. Now and again a villa shows on a hill, and frequently the white boughs of the blossoming fruit trees nod over the barriers and send their sweet odors to greet us.

The vines have been trimmed and lie in festoons along the lower branches of the curiously pruned mulberry and willow trees. Children gather along the road to watch us pass. One child deftlow throws a little bunch of flowers into the carriage and keenly spies the responding penny. Villages develop suddenly in unexpected places, the almost continuous walls running into houses, built close together, fronting squarely on the road.

Approach to Grassina.

Before three-quarters of an hour had elapsed since leaving the hotel we noticed on the walls of some of the houses little glass cups hung out on hooks, carrying candles, obviously for an "illumination."

"We must be nearing Grassina," we exclaimed, and lo! an official sign disclosed that this was, in fact, Grassina—the scene of a ceremony scheduled to take place at the rise of the moon.

The sun was still high in the sky. We wondered if our concierge had not beguiled us into carriage hiring unnecessarily, especially as for the greater part of the way from Florence we had been following a trolley track, which now showed in the main—in truth the solitary—street of Grassina. Our driver wheeled into an open space behind another carriage and came to a halt with the horses headed toward the road.

"Grassina?" I inquired of him, waving my hand around the little plaza, on which a few venders of cakes and nuts and toys had set up their stalls.

"Grassina," the driver agreed, with a grin.

We looked at our neighbors in the next carriage—Americans from our hotel—and they looked at us. We forthwith became fast friends in a common but, as it proved, unfounded sense of having been imposed upon by the concierge.

Two Hours Waiting.

It was not yet 5 o'clock. We asked some villagers about the procession and learned that it would not start until more than two hours. Had we come all this dusty way to wait so long for a doubtful result? Our carriage neighbor, with a facility of speech gained through repeated visits to Italy, finally got an official statement of the matter from the village priest, whom he found in the little chapel on the hillside across a brook busily perfecting his arrangements for the procession.

We decided that there was nothing to do but to wait and make the best of the situation. Hunger was appeased after an invasion of a little shop where hard almond cakes and excellent native chianti were to be had at extraordinarily low prices.

Meanwhile other carriages were arriving. Motor cars began to come, and motor cycles. Each tram car discharged a score or more of passengers, while the diligenzas, or post road coaches, brought in people from the countryside, and others trotted into the square in donkey carts.

By 6 o'clock the little plaza was filled with vehicles parked close together. We, in our position of advantage, realized that our concierge had after all served us wisely and well by starting us so early.

The venders became more and more clamorous as the crowd increased. Fakers selling toy aeroplanes and squawking devices and flowers plied about busily. The village beggars besieged the carriages and showed their deformities. Officially badged collectors of alms went about from vehicle to vehicle, shaking copper coin receptacles and asking for soldi.

ATTRACTIONS FOR TOURISTS AT GRASSINA.

GENERAL VIEW OF GRASSINA, THE PUBLIC SQUARE IN THE CENTER.

THE LITTLE CHURCH AT GRASSINA, THE STARTING POINT OF THE PROCESSION OF THE DEAD REDEEMER.

Unpretentious Chapel.

We walked through the village and crossed a narrow bridge over a brook and climbed a stony path to the chapel, an ugly little structure standing barely and unpicturesquely on a hillside. Within were candles. At the foot of the altar lay the wooden image that was later to be borne in the procession.

Villagers came in and knelt and prayed. Children stood and gazed at the Christ figure in open-mouthed wonder.

It was barren and unlovely—but it was a holy place. We felt that we were intruding, and tip-toed out into the now dimming light.

On the hillsides candle flames began to show as the villagers started their illumination. Back to the square we walked, past two rival butcher shops, whose proprietors, keen in their competition for public favor, had decorated the great carcasses of beef hanging within by sticking all over them red and white paper roses.

As we reached the square it was filled with vehicles. People were swarming in the central street. Now and then a boy or girl, in evident procession costume, went past. Occasionally a lad on horseback, garbed as a Roman soldier, made his way proudly up the street to gain the chapel, where the procession was to form, by the back road, the only practicable approach for an animal.

Fair in Full Blast.

It had been definitely learned that the start would be made from the church at 7:30. The crowd had spread far beyond the square, lining the roads and streets along which the route lay. The "fair" in the plaza was in full blast and a great clamor arose.

The cloudless eastern sky began to pale. Soon the edge of the moon showed over the distant hill. Every house now displayed its burning candles. Far up on the sides of the hills surrounding the village the villas sparkled in groups and rows of lights, many hundreds of flame tributes to the sacred occasion.

As the moon rose I left the carriage and walked quickly through the village to get a view of the procession before it reached the square. The great pale yellow disk surmounted the hill crest and enframed a solitary cypress tree, which took on a human aspect and gave an awesome suggestion of a Presence presiding over the ceremony.

Along the road to the left moving lights were showing, wavering and flickering as they advanced by the winding way. The notes of human voices chanting a dirge wafted to the ears. The music of a band playing in minor strains could be heard.

The chatter of voices was stilled. The hundreds lining the road silently took their positions as the head of the procession came into sight in the steadily growing moonlight.

Roman Soldiers Lead.

First rode two Roman soldiers, none the less impressive because I had seen them a couple of hours before selling flowers in the square. They bestrode their ex-plow horses with dignity and wore their cloaks and coats of mail as proudly as though they were of the rarest stuffs and metals.

Behind them walked the village priest, the preserver of this ancient ceremony, one of the last remaining in Italy of its kind. An earnest young man he was, no longer concerned about the details of the procession he had been organizing for weeks, but enrapt in the spirit of the occasion, his head bent and his lips moving in prayer.

Following the priest walked little girls in red, two by two, carrying banners with mottoes of faith and reverence. Then came a score or more of small boys, dark robed, with bent heads, each bearing some symbol of the crucifixion, one the nails, another the crown of thorns, another the hammer, one with a plate with the dice with which the Roman soldiers gambled for the Savior's clothes. Others carried garments and palms, and one held before him a miniature ladder.

These children were not mere puppets acting in a rehearsed performance. They evidently felt the significance of the ceremony and marched in dignity.

After them came boys and girls carrying lighted candles—torch bearers were scattered all along the line to illuminate the path—and then older girls wearing long veils. Roman soldiers rode alongside the line at frequent intervals.

Effigy of Dead Christ.

The soft murmur of the crowd in its comments upon the various features of the procession was suddenly hushed. Around a bend in the road appeared a swaying black bulk. A large group of men came into sight, six holding aloft a canopy covering a bier held on the shoulders of four others. On it lay the Body!

Every head was uncovered as it passed. Women sobbed and men wiped their eyes.

Close behind the canopy marched a score of man singers, robed in white, chanting. After them were women with candles, and then a statue of the weeping Virgin borne by four men. Again all heads were bared.

The procession was closed by the village band, followed by two or three score of men and boys marching in orderly ranks. It wound down the road to the south end of the village. I hastened back to the square, to find the crowd dessely gathered in the main street, with a narrow lane preserved for the marchers.

Crush at Close of Parade.

There was a tremendous crush at the close, the narrow road being blocked by the scores of motors and hundreds of carriages. But all moved off in time, without injury, leaving Grassina triumphant in one more presentation of the ancient procession of the dead Redeemer.

On the drive homeward in the white moonlight, away from the candle-lighted hills, I felt that these peasant people possessed a great power of expression. They had presented a pageant which for its effectiveness could not have been exceeded had it cost a hundred times the expense, and for sincerity and deep religious significance was remarkable.

Grassina should be noted in the journals of all intending travelers, to be visited at the Easter season without fail, even if more famous and elaborate ceremonials are missed. For nothing can more eloquently express the spirit of the Supreme Passion than the march over the hills of the boys and girls, the men and women of this little Tuscan village, headed by their priest.

G. A. LYON, Jr.

TALKS AT JONADAB RALLY.

Preacher Says Churches Should Support Temperance Movement.

That but few church members know of the conditions existing in hundreds of homes where intoxicating drinks are used was asserted by Rev. Paul Hickok in a sermon at the temperance rally conducted at the Metropolitan Presbyterian Church last evening under the auspices of the Independent Order Sons of Jonadab.

The pastor declared that all churches should support the temperance movement as outlined by the organization. He also told of the obedience shown by the sons of Jonadab of old and said that the members of the present organization of that name followed the teachings of Jonadab in that regard at least.

Solos were sung by William H. Evans, the mission evangelist. Speeches were made by Grand Vice Chief S. D. Tennyson, Grand Secretary John C. Moore, Grand Chaplain J. M. Jordan, Special Deputy Donald E. Leslie, Vice Chief James F. Peake, Past Chief William J. Haner, Past Chief John T. Mockabee, Worthy Chief Frank D. Clement and T. E. Leftwich.

New Trial in Damage Suit.

James C. Fontaine will be given a new trial of his suit for damages against the Washington Railway and Electric Company because certain impeaching testimony was erroneously admitted in a former trial which resulted in favor of the company. Justice Van Orsdel for the Court of Appeals today reversed the judgment of the lower court and directed that another trial be held.

The twentieth annual convention of the Virginia Christian Endeavor Union will be held at First Methodist Protestant Church, Lynchburg, Va., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

PRESIDENT'S SISTER AIDS ART SOCIETY

Mrs. Annie Wilson Howe Identified With Movement in Paris.

PROF. BERGONIE URGES NEW HOURS FOR EATING

Declares Principal Meal of the Day Should Be Early in the Morning.

PARIS, April 22.—Mrs. Annie Wilson Howe, President Wilson's sister, has become an earnest promoter of the Fresh Air Art Society, an international organization now about ten months old, whose purpose is to stimulate healthy and rational ideas in every variety of art, literature, music, painting and sculpture.

Mrs. Howe is one of four honorary members, the others being the Princess Alexandrine Windisch-Graetz of Austria, the Earl of Plymouth and Lord Windsor. Among the thirty members are Auguste Rodin, the sculptor; Camille Fiammarion, the philosopher-astronomer; Countess Hartenau, widow of the Battenburg prince of Bulgaria, and Lady Phyllis Windsor-Olive, who is reputed to do the most beautiful embroidery and decorative work in England.

Some notable American members are Grace King, the Louisiana novelist; Warrington Dawson, the novelist of Charleston, S. C.; John Powell, the composer, and Alice Stopford Green, the historian. Dawson and Powell are the founders of the society.

Principles of Society.

Mrs. Howe, who has been living here for a year, assisted in organizing interest in France in the principles of the society, which are as follows:

We believe in the oneness of life.

We believe in the oneness of art.

We believe in the fraternity of art as standing for life.

Wherefore art is a means, not an end.

Before the end can be conceived, life must be understood.

Before life can be understood, its responsibilities must be acknowledged.

That the end pursued by art's means may be true, the life which art represents must be true.

Wherefore life and art must alike be founded upon conditions of sound body, nerves, heart and mind.

But such a foundation must itself rest upon the great laws which have promoted the evolution of life.

That art may be controlled, it must contain qualities of reason and of construction beneath all forces or subtleties of appeal.

That art may not only exist, but may wax strong in the harmony which is infinity, it must like life itself obey the laws of health which combat decay.

The great facts of human history have been those which bespoke the culminating spirit of race; the great works of human art have been those which expressed the highest spirit of their own age.

To acknowledge that exploiters of superficial emotions or seekers after sheer eccentricity represent the spirit of our age is to pronounce this age unworthy to be a link between the past as we know it and the future as we have the right to desire it.

Wherefore we declare ourselves for the art as for the life which rests upon a respect for nature's laws in the fresh air of health and the clear light of truth.

Unsuitable Hours for Meals.

Prof. Bergonie of Bordeaux, the eminent authority on dietetics, declares that the least suitable hours for meals are between noon and 1 p.m. and between 7 and 8 p.m.—precisely those hours which modern usage has set apart for meals.

According to the professor the meal hours that a rational hygiene would prescribe would be as follows:

The principal meal of the day should be taken at 7:30 a.m., or as soon after as possible, so as to obtain all necessary energy for the day's work and to restore the liver, emptied by the night's abstinence. A second meal, a light luncheon of milk, sugar and cakes should be taken about 4 p.m. Finally a third light repast at 8:30 or 9 p.m. would complete the alimentary regime.

The professor adds that in a family which has accepted his views this regime has been followed for six years, furnishing excellent results as regards the general health of all the members.

Prof. Bergonie has also given much attention to the application of electricity in various disorders of digestion. He has invented an electric bed in which the passage of the current through the body of the subject sets up organic combustions similar to those brought on by muscular exercise and leads to reduction of obesity. He claims that this will do as much good as the rowing and riding machines used on ships without any exertion on the part of the patient.

Kaiser's Visits to Paris.

The visit of King George and Queen Mary of England, for which exceptionally elaborate preparations were made, brings to notice the fact that of all the crowned heads of Europe, Emperor William of Germany alone has never been officially received in Paris. He has, however, been to Paris twice. The first time he was only five years old. He accompanied his royal parents on a visit to Napoleon III. and played with the prince imperial in the Park of Begatelle. The second time was June, 1878, when nineteen.

Incognito he came with his tutor, Baron Frederick Orden. The first place he then visited was the Invalides and Napoleon's tomb. Then he went to see the Palace of Versailles, where the German empire was proclaimed seven years before. He also attended performances at the Comedie Francaise and the opera, and made an ascent in a captive balloon installed in the Tuileries. He has never been back since he became emperor, although stories of secret visits are not lacking.

Evolves a New Mushroom.

Prof. Matruchot, the eminent French botanist, has succeeded in evolving a new and delicious edible mushroom. It has been cultivated from the wild fungi which grow in the woods and only appear in the late autumn months. A number were planted in the vast cellars of the Paris observatory, and by careful treatment a mushroom was created which grows all the year round.

The stem is eight inches high and the head four to six inches in diameter. The new variety has been given the name of "tricholoma nudum." Its flavor is most delicate and captivating, and the color of the stems of the first specimens obtained was a purplish blue, but this is gradually disappearing under extended cultivation. The head is of a silky white, the inside a delicate cream.

"BLINDNESS TO SIN."

Taken as Subject of Sermon by Rev. Edward K. Hardin.

"Blindness and Indifference to Sin" was the topic of the sermon preached by Rev. Edward K. Hardin at Mount Vernon Place Methodist Church last night, the speaker dwelling on the folly of laying elaborate plans for any undertaking without making them a subject of prayer. As an illustration of the point Rev. Hardin told of a Chicago meat packer who, when the "beef trust" was in process of formation, held off from a decision in regard to joining the other packers until he consulted with his wife.

"Ask God about it," was the wife's suggestion, which the packer followed. The result was that he refused to join the trust, and when that organization was under investigation, this packer was the only one who could say truthfully that he had never accepted a penny of rebate from railroads or others.

WINS DIVORCE DECREE.

Court of Appeals Decides in Favor of C. A. Bateman.

Clarence A. Bateman is to have a decree for absolute divorce from Evangeline L. Bateman, according to a decision of the District Court of Appeals today. The appellate tribunal, in an opinion by Justice Van Orsdel, reversed the decision of the District Supreme Court, which had denied the husband's petition. Mr. Bateman is to be given the custody of his children.

The Court of Appeals assessed the costs not only of the appeal but of the proceeding in the lower court against the co-respondent.

The husband was represented by Attorneys E. L. Gies and E. B. Frey.

Charged With Theft of Auto.

Jefferson Wilkerson was held for the action of the grand jury in $500 bond today by Judge Mullowny in the Police Court on a charge of taking an automobile from the Vermont garage. He was also charged with embezzling $24 from the garage company, for which he was sentenced to pay a fine of $50 or serve sixty days in jail.

Forty Hours' Devotion Begins.

With high mass and procession, forty hours' devotion was begun yesterday at St. Anthony's Church, Brookland, Rev. Thomas D. Williams officiating. Father Otterbein, assistant pastor at St. Mary's German Catholic Church, preached at the evening service. Mass of peace was sung this morning and devotions will continue until evening.

Beach Accidentally Drowned.

Coroner Nevitt yesterday gave a certificate of accidental death in the case of Frederick Beach, sixty-seven years old, who fell into the canal Saturday night and was drowned. Funeral services for the drowned man were conducted this afternoon at his late home in Virginia. Interment was at Walker's Chapel.

CLASSES CONFIRMED BY BISHOP HARDING

Preparations Being Made for Diocesan Convention Which Opens Wednesday.

Classes at St. Alban's, St. Patrick's Chapel, in Foxhall road, and at St. Columba's Chapel were confirmed yesterday by Bishop Harding. The bishop officiated at the 11 o'clock service at St. Alban's, delivering the sermon and confirming the large class which was introduced by Rev. Charles T. Warner. The service at St. Patrick's Chapel was at 4 p.m., while the confirmation at St. Columba's was at 8 o'clock last night. Bishop Harding preached at each of the services.

The Bishop of Washington is to preside at the diocesan convention which is to open Wednesday morning in St. Margaret's Church, Columbia road and Bancroft place. An attendance of more than 200 is anticipated at the convention, including more than 100 clerical and 100 lay delegates. Twelve dioceses are to be represented at the convention, the delegates coming from Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. After the formal opening Bishop Harding is to deliver his annual address. Business meetings will occupy the afternoons. A missionary service will be conducted in the evening, when the chief speaker will be the Rev. Patrick Murphy, city missionary, stationed at St. Michael and All Angels' Church.

An important feature of the convention will be the election Thursday of four clerical and four lay delegates to the provincial synod, which will be in this city next October, and presided over by Bishop Randolph of Virginia. Among those mentioned for election are the Rev. Dr. Robert Talbot, the Rev. Dr. C. R. Stetson, the Rev. Dr. McGrew and the Rev. W. J. D. Thomas. Laymen spoken of for the places are James H. Taylor, Henry R. Rust, John L. Weaver and G. S. Whitmore.

The convention will close Thursday evening.

D. C. Underwriters to Meet.

At a meeting of the District of Columbia Underwriters' Association at 7 o'clock this evening at the Raleigh Hotel the guests will include Charles F. Nesbit, superintendent of insurance of the District of Columbia; Ernest J. Clark of Baltimore, president, and Edward A. Woods of Pittsburgh, vice president, of the National Association of Underwriters; Senator Sherman of Illinois, and Representatives Goulden of New York, Kettner of California and Campbell of Kansas, and Clement W. Huske, president of the District Underwriters' Association, will preside.

Church Observes Feast Day.

St. Mary's German Catholic Church, 5th street near G street, celebrated the feast of St. Joseph yesterday. Members of St. Joseph's Society received holy communion at the 7:30 o'clock mass. Solemn high mass was celebrated at 11 o'clock by Father Otterbein. The panegyric of St. Joseph was delivered by Father Roth.

LAMAR MUST APPEAL TO THE HIGHEST COURT

Decision of Late Justice Clabaugh Is Upheld in Opinion of Appellate Tribunal.

David Lamar, called the "Wolf of Wall Street," will have to look to the Supreme Court of the United States to prevent his return to New York city to answer an indictment for impersonating in a telephone conversation a member of the House of Representatives of the United States. The District Court of Appeals today sustained the decision of the late Chief Justice Clabaugh, who had ordered Lamar into custody, to be transferred to New York to answer the indictment.

Attorney Henry E. Davis, representing Mr. Lamar, stated today that an application would be made to the highest court in the land to review the decision of the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia. The opinion of the appellate tribunal was rendered by Chief Justice Shepard. Lamar is at liberty on a bond of $3,000.

In denying the appeal of Lamar, the Court of Appeals holds that a member of the House of Representatives is an officer of the United States in the general sense. A member, though not holding an office under the government of the United States, the court finds, is an officer of that government. "His office is not created by the government," says Chief Justice Shepard, "but is an integral part of that government."

Opinion of Chief Justice Shepard.

Concluding his opinion, Chief Justice Shepard states:

"Section 32 (under which Lamar is indicted) punishes one who falsely assumes or pretends to be an officer of the United States, and its object would seem to apply equally as well to a legislative officer of the United States as to one holding an office under the government thereof. Be that as it may, it is not plain that it does not so apply and for that reason its interpretation is peculiarly the province of the court in which the indictment was presented. We find no error in the judgment and it is affirmed."

The indictment charged that Lamar impersonated A. Mitchell Palmer of Pennsylvania with the "intent then and there to defraud certain named persons."

Assistant United States Attorney Harper of New York assisted United States Attorney Wilson in opposing the appeal of Lamar.

Capt. Byrnes' Funeral.

Funeral services for Capt. Michael Byrnes, who was in command of the sixth police precinct for a number of years, were held at the Church of the Immaculate Conception this morning at 8:30 o'clock. Interment was at Mount Olivet cemetery.

Army Chaplain Conducts Mass.

Rev. Ignatius Fealy, chaplain at Fort Myer, celebrated high mass at 11 o'clock yesterday morning in St. Paul's Church, 15th and V streets northwest. Later he visited his mother. He is to remain at Fort Myer until July 16.

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