

JACK'S EASTER.

LIKE the domes and pinnacles of a city celestial glittered the icy range of the Sangre de Cristo. The valley was sprinkled with iris and columbine.

The breath of spring softly stirred the pines in the canyon. Brimstone Gulch awoke to Easter morning—awoke with bloodshot eyes and shaky hands.

There had been a hot time the night before at Sandy Pete's saloon. But this morning Sandy Pete, with his cohorts, was busily employed in slicking up, for there were to be Easter services held in the place for the first time in the history of Brimstone Gulch.

This was the way of it: The young wife of the superintendent of the Lone Star mine, whom every man, woman, child and dog in the camp adored, had taken matters into her own pretty hands.

She had imported a gospel sharp from Denver and had formed the children of the camp into a chorus and taught them the songs for the day. She had, moreover, the night before invited the boys, including many of the toughest and most prominent citizens of Brimstone Gulch, "JACK, HUMP YOURSELF!" up to her cottage to hear the rehearsal of the Easter music.

It all came back to Huerfano Jack as he lay under the pines this morning, the scene of the night before—the sweet, dainty lady in her white gown, the sound of the piano, the soft lamplight and the happy voices of the children ringing out in the hymn:

I've found a friend in Jesus,
He's everything to me;
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul,
The Lily of the Valley,
In him alone I see
All I need to cleanse and make me fully whole.

The words were set to swivling music, and all the boys had whistled the tune as they came down the trail from the superintendent's cottage to the saloon.

They rang now in Huerfano Jack's head. Cattle thief, desperado, murderer as he was, he was trying to hum them:

He's the Lily of the Valley,
The bright and morning star,
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul,
The Lily of the Valley—she had the room full of the flowers the night before; she wore them on her breast; she gave a spray to each one of the boys as they came away. Huerfano Jack turned suddenly and pressed his fierce, scarred face against a withered cluster of the tiny white bells plinned on his rough corduroy jacket.

A rustle in the pines; a pallid, terrified face peering down at him. "For God's sake, Jack, hump yourself!" whispered Monte Jim. "Bill Wilcox, the sheriff from Pueblo, and two of his deputies are after you for that business in Trinidad. Get across the gulch if you can and lose yourself on the other side of the range. Run like mad!"

It was just at the moment that the superintendent and his wife walked toward the open door of the saloon, with their clerical guest from Denver, that Bill Wilcox fired at the skulking figure in the pines close by.

Huerfano Jack ran forward a few steps, threw up his hands, turned around and fell at the feet of the lady.

She screamed once and then sank on her knees beside him, taking his head on her arm and trying in vain to staunch the blood from the great hole in his breast with her dainty handkerchief.

"Oh, poor man—poor man!" she sobbed. "Oh, why did you kill him?" she asked as Bill Wilcox came up, his revolver yet smoking and his bulldog face white and stern.

But before the sheriff could answer Huerfano Jack spoke in a singularly clear and far-reaching voice: "Because I am a thief and murderer. But, miserable dog that I am, you, lady, have given me the only happiness I have ever known."

His glazing eyes sought the lovely face filled with divine pity bending over him. Perhaps she read the petition in those dying eyes.

She unfastened the lilies in her gown and gently laid them over his bleeding breast.

The voices of the children rang out from their final Easter rehearsal in the saloon:

He's the Lily of the Valley,
The bright and morning star—
Huerfano Jack smiled. "The Lily-of-the-valley," he murmured.

His hands suddenly closed tensely over the flowers on his heart.

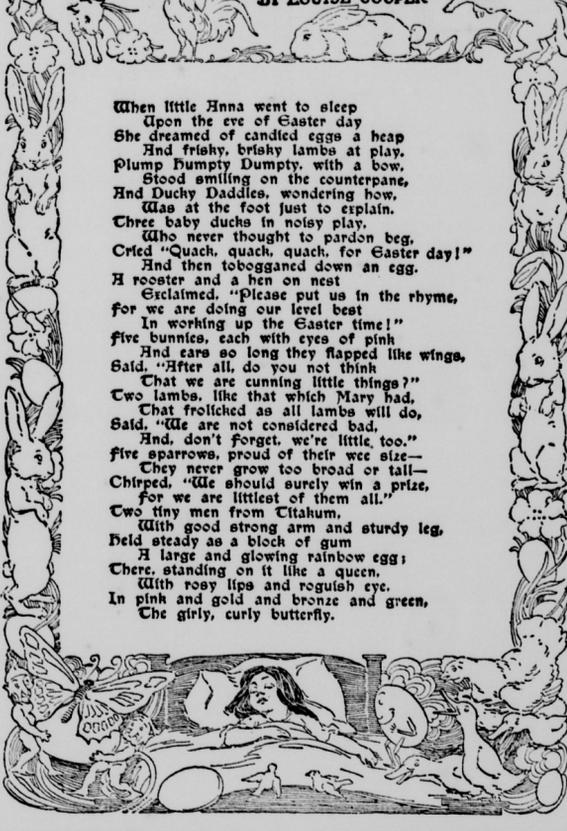
He's the Lily of the Valley,
In him alone I see
All I need to cleanse and make me fully whole,
came the sweet, childish voices from the saloon.

The clergyman from Denver lifted his hat.

"Let us pray," he said solemnly—"let us pray for our departed brother."

ANNA'S EASTER DREAM

BY LOUISE COOPER



When little Anna went to sleep
Upon the eve of Easter day
She dreamed of candied eggs a heap
And frisky, frisky lambs at play.
Plump Pumpty Dumpty, with a bow,
Stood smiling on the counterpane,
And Duchy Daddies, wondering how,
Was at the foot just to explain,
Three baby ducks in noisy play,
Who never thought to pardon beg,
Cried "Quack, quack, quack, for Easter day!"
And then tobogganed down an egg,
A rooster and a hen on nest
Exclaimed, "Please put us in the rhyme,
For we are doing our level best
In working up the Easter time!"
Five bunnies, each with eyes of pink
And ears so long they flapped like wings,
Said, "After all, do you not think
That we are cunning little things?"
Two lambs, like that which Mary had,
That frolicked as all lambs will do,
Said, "We are not considered bad,
And, don't forget, we're little too."
Five sparrows, proud of their wee size—
They never grow too broad or tall—
Chirped, "We should surely win a prize,
For we are littiest of them all."
Two tiny men from Titulum,
With good strong arm and sturdy leg,
Held steady as a block of gum
A large and glowing rainbow egg;
There, standing on it like a queen,
With rosy lips and roguish eye,
In pink and gold and bronze and green,
The girly, curly butterfly.

FIRST COLORED EGGS.

How and Where This Charming Custom Originated.

During the crusades a lady living in a castle along the line of march received some chickens from a man returning from the east. They were of a great curiosity and highly prized by their gentle owner.

The men of her family were crusaders, and their absence was taken advantage of by some lawless neighbors, who commanded her to abandon her home and seek refuge in the Black forest. There she received protection and kind treatment and lived several years among very poor peasants. She had taken her chickens with her and took great pleasure in giving their eggs to her poor neighbors.

She was particularly interested in the children and devoted considerable time to their instruction. She made a rule to give a present to each child at Easter, but each year she had fewer possessions.

This necessity suggested to her the novel idea of decorating some eggs with bright colors, and to make them still more interesting she concealed them among the dry leaves in the forest. The children were sent to hunt them and were greatly astonished and delighted to find the colored eggs.

EASTERTIDE GIFTS.

Some Things to Be Given During the Joyful Season.

The exchange of gifts at Eastertide has become an established custom. Here is a list of inexpensive trifles, most of which have the merit of being either appropriate to the season or extremely simple in design and character:

- A white prayer book.
- Any daintily bound book of poems.
- A pot of blooming flowers.
- An individual saltcellar in the form of a silver egg.
- A photograph of any of the famous Madonnas simply framed.
- A china fernery filled with ferns for the Easter morning breakfast table.
- A dainty bit of neckwear for each of the girls of the family.
- A white silk Ascot tie for each of the boys of the family.
- A light pair of kid gloves for mother to wear to church.
- A bonbonniere in the form of an Easter egg for each of the little folks.
- A basket of new laid eggs from the country cousin to the city cousin.
- A basket of chocolate and sugar eggs from the city cousin to the country cousin.
- A bit of silver for one's toilet table.
- A bottle of fine extract or cologne.

WHY BUNNIES BRING THE EASTER EGGS

There was once a naughty bunny who was always being funny and kept the land about him in a constant state of awe. His father and his mother these pranks would try to cover to keep him out of prison and the clutches of the law.

On one morning bright and early, when the cops were getting surly, he started to discover what sad mischief he could do. Soon he saw a blackbird's nest. And he could not eat or rest until he'd dyed the eggs therein a lovely dark sea blue.

He was so pleased at his joking that he said, "I'll round go poking So, much rather than get caught. These bold robbers straightway sought And put them by, in store. Till all the nests were empty and the birds were threatening gore.

Then a burly bunny "copper" said he'd quickly put a stopper to such dire depreddations as were never heard before. So, much rather than get caught. These bold robbers straightway sought A man who took the eggs to town and sold them in a store.

Now, this raised an awful clatter, All their kin began to chatter And said to steal such pretty eggs a great and mighty sin. But the bandits made it seem There was money in the scheme. So for wealth and sordid profit all rabbits now join in.

So all this explains the habit Why eggs are brought by rabbit And given little boys and girls on Easter every year. It was all a case of "dough," Yet eggs and little bunnies white have found their proper sphere.

—New York Herald.



THE EASTER LILY

THE lily is regarded as a saint among flowers, and the reason lilies are so largely used in the decoration of churches is not only because they are the most perfect of floral types, but because of their symbolic meaning.

One beautiful old belief about the lily relates that the candidates for the Virgin Mary's hand after having sought the Lord's blessing each left his own staff in the temple in the evening. The next morning the dry rod of Joseph was found green and blossomed with lily flowers.

Another pretty legend is that Mary on her way to the temple plucked a lily, and upon pressing it to her breast it became white. "Lily of the Virgin," "Madonna flower" and several other mystical names were given to the lily and have reference to this legend.

A German belief points to the Harz mountains as the birthplace of the white lily. A beautiful girl named Alice was carried off by a wicked lord. Just as he reached his castle the guardian spirit of the place wrested the girl from his arms. On the place touched by the feet of this innocent maid sprang the white lily. This story is believed by the peasants of the Harz mountains, and every year hundreds of them make a pilgrimage to the castle to behold the dazzling beauty of the flower that flourishes there.

Another German legend runs this way and relates to the "red" lily: Once the garden of Gethsemane was full of flowers of all kinds and among them none so lovely as the splendid lily, with her clustering bells proudly upright. It was evening, and the Lord came to walk in his garden. As he passed along each flower bowed before him, but when he came to the lily her haughty head remained erect, defiant in her conscious beauty. The Lord paused and looked at her for a second. She braved the mild eye of reproof, then slowly bent her head, while blushes swept over her. Still the Lord's gaze rested on her. Lower sank her head, deeper burned her crimson, then tear after tear welled up in her lily cups. At this the Lord passed on. When morning came all the flowers lifted their heads—all but the lily, that once was white queen among them. Her head remained bowed in shame. To this day she blushes over her sin of vanity, and the clear crystal tears of repentance still sway in the cups of the flower that refused to bend before the Lord.

An Easter Miracle.

It was in the year 1793, when the armies of Napoleon were passing over the continent of Europe and conquering all that came in their way. It was Easter morning, and the sun shone brightly on Feldkirch, a little town situated on the Ill river, just within the borders of Austria. The Ill flows into the Rhine.

Quite early on this morning there suddenly appeared on the heights above the town to the west the glittering weapons of 18,000 French soldiers, the division under the command of General Massena.

There was a hasty assembling of the town council, and it was decided that a deputation be sent to Massena with the keys of the town and a petition for mercy.

In the midst of all the confusion of the hurrying to and fro and the anxious consultation the old dean of the church stood up serene as was the morning, with no thought of fear in his brave Christian heart.

"It is Easter day," he said. "We have been reckoning on our own strength, and it is but weakness. Let us ring the bells and have service as usual. We will leave our troubles in the hands of the Higher Power."

Soon from all the church spires of Feldkirch the bells rang out joyously. The streets became thronged with worshippers on their way to church. Londer and more triumphant pealed the bells as they rang out the glad message, and the hills, putting on their new green, echoed back: "Christ is risen. He is risen from the dead."

The French army heard the sounds of rejoicing, and Massena concluded there could be but one reason for it. He was sure that the Austrian army had arrived in the night.

He ordered his men to break up camp, and almost before the bells had ceased ringing—long before Easter services were over—the French army was in orderly retreat.

By noon not a tent, not a soldier, not a glittering bayonet, was to be seen on the heights above Feldkirch.—Boston Globe.

An Easter Sermon.

"I'm glad that Easter Sunday's here," said Mrs. Henry Gray.
"My bonnet new and other gear I'll wear to church today. A vein of glory will pervade My hymn of praise and prayer, For when my toilet is displayed How Mrs. Bliss will stare!"

"I hate that horrid Mrs. Brown, With all her quirks and smiles. Of all the women in the town She aces the coarsest styles. She bought her bonnet 'way last spring And wears it now for new. And as for that old Thompson thing, I vow I hate her too!"

"I hear Miss Jones, the cross eyed cat, Has bought a new peppy And terra cotta Paris hat To wear to church today. And Helen White has got a dress They say is just divine. They say it's just divine. Come, Mr. Gray, and do you guess It's half as sweet as mine?"

"There go those awful Billings girls. They paint and powder too. They pad and wear cheap bangs and curls. They do—I know they do! You needn't laugh, I boldly say And stake my honor on it—I'll paralyze them all today With my new dress and bonnet!" —Eugene Field.



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