

His Wife's Talent

AN EASTER STORY

By ELVIRA FLOYD FROMECKE

THE Babcocks were fortunate young people; and their good luck was more than partially invested in Nancy. Nancy was of the grenadier type; severe, capable and thorough. She had been "managing" help for the ten months of their married existence; cooking, washing, ironing and dictating, till they became more like her children; and the day she proposed to "larn Mis' Babcock housekeeping" was a day deferred.

One sad morning Mrs. Babcock paused as she opened the kitchen pantry door, for there, like a ghost of the departed, hung Nancy's "chore duds," i. e., faded cotton skirt and sack, checked sunbonnet and huge prunella gaiters. "Mercy!" exclaimed she, "I feel as if Nancy's eyes were on me. I wish she were here. I'd hug her."

"What's that?" called Joe. "If you feel like hugging anybody, come here and hug me, for I must be off."

Mollie sniffed. "Poor Nancy, I hope she can come back to-day. Oh, Joe! Easter three days off, Nancy sick, the choir coming here for Easter supper, and a wife who knows nothing but singing and loving! Poor Joe!"

Joe did not answer, but his kisses proved his content, and Mollie, flushed and smiling, was convinced.

A boy stopped Joe at the gate. "I'd like to see Mis' Babcock," he said. Joe indicated Mollie.

"That hain't never Aunt Nancy's marm," he gasped; then "Be ye?" to Mollie; and added: "Wa'al, I swan," before he delivered the mournful news of Aunt Nancy's "swol" jaw and shet eyes" that would keep her in bed for a week.

"Oh-h!" said Mollie, and "Oh-h-h!" mocked Joe.

"What shall we do?" laught Mollie. "Do everything we proposed and a little more, to show how clever we are," answered Joe.

"Yes, but Alice Morris will pity you for having married me."

"Will she? Then think how you would have pitied me had I married her," and, singing a rollicking little song, he ran down the path, like the happy fellow he was.

At choir practice that night they rehearsed the Easter anthem, "Therefore, Let Us Keep the Feast." The music was new and delightful. Sopranos and tenors led, Alice Morris coming in with her deep contralto at the words "with malice and uncharitableness."

"Alice sings her solo as if she understood malice perfectly," whispered one of the chorus. Mollie heard the ungracious remark and resolved to be very gentle with Alice and her friend, if possible.

She spoke pleasantly and walked home beside her. She told her she had

room, where they unpacked his shopping.

"You dear," she cried, as the treasures were unrolled that proclaimed Joe's catering ability; "I never should have remembered half these things, yet I should have missed them directly we were at table! But didn't you bring me anything?"

"O, yes. I met Dr. and Mrs. Grey at the station, and they are expecting us for dinner to-morrow, sure."

"Is that all? That was for you, too," pouted Mollie.

"All! All! Well, I think it pretty nice, Mrs. Babcock! No dinner to cook, and a jolly good one to eat! What do you women expect?"

Easter morning dawned clear, and Mollie awakened in a joyous mood. She sprang out of bed, and, singing a scale or two, rejoiced.

"O, leave off, can't you?" mumbled Joe, longing for one more snooze; and remembering the rusk, secretly rising for the Easter feast, she "left off."

Suddenly Joe's drowsiness fled. He remembered that Nancy was away,



THERE, WITH HER HEAD ON THE TABLE, WAS MOLLIE.

and, dressing swiftly, he hastened downstairs. No breakfast odors greeted him, and the house was very quiet. The kitchen fire blazed, but no kettle was over it. There with her head on the table was Mollie, sobbing as if her heart would break, and from the refrigerator rolled and effervesced rusk dough, that like a frothy sea surged over the kitchen floor.

"What under the canopy," began Joe, and then he laughed. Oh, oh, how he laughed!

Mollie tried to look haughty, but broke down and sobbed out her story on Joe's shoulder.

"See here," said Joe, kissing her and putting her out of the kitchen. "You run upstairs, Mrs. Babcock, and get to rights. When your eyes look like my Mollie's eyes, open a box that lies on the bed, and see if that box's the right shade. Tut! as Mollie sobbed again, "mind! You're not to come down till I call." He closed the door and began to whistle.

"Gee!" said he, "what a mess! That old cat (meaning Miss Morris) has given Mollie the wrong recipe. I bet I could make rusk enough for 20 people out of what's left. It's lucky I was brought up on a farm."

When Mrs. Babcock smelled coffee she forgot her instructions and made straight for the kitchen. To her surprise Nancy was at work, faded calico, prunella boots and all.

"Why, Nancy," said she, "I am glad you're back."

"Nancy be blessed!" shouted Joe from the depths of her plaid sunbonnet, and Mollie's fun began; for in Nancy's "duds," and imitating her stride and grab of things, he did present a droll figure, and Mollie laughed until they were both merry and bright as Easter day.

"There! That's O. K., little woman," said Joe, standing off and viewing the table; and indeed it was. All their prettiest china, glass and silver decorated the sabbath-like cloth. The dishes were laden with salads, meats, preserves, cakes and dainties, and, like a floral weave, were hyacinths and lilies.

"Listen, Mollie! By and by I'll slip off, light the fire and put over the kettle. When I come back, you van-moose and finish up." Mollie nodded, smiling delightedly.

The members of Trinity choir were coming. Mollie and Joe met the happy ten at the door and made them welcome. All were merry and full of the day's events. Mollie kept talking and avoided personalities; she dreaded being questioned about rusk. In due time Joe disappeared—unmissed—for some one was playing "Die Trauermel." He was gone so long that Mollie trembled; but when he returned, flushed and happy, Mollie slipped off like a vision.

The kettle's music greeted her, the kitchen was neat, and a scent of baking filled the air. Mollie wondered at it, but was too busy to investigate.

When they assembled, all complimented them on the beauty and abundance of the table.

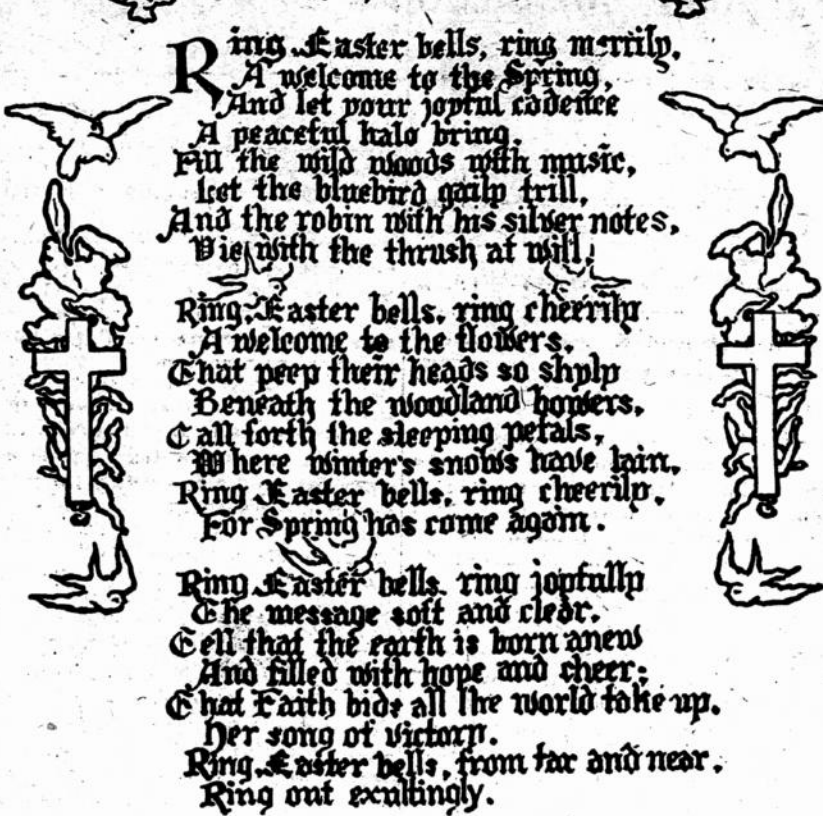
"Yes," cried Joe, ecstatically, "Mrs. Babcock is a notable housekeeper! Mollie," he went on, avoiding his wife's rebuking glance, "Why, Mollie, you are forgetting the rusk!"

He stepped to a side table, and, lifting two plates heaped high with golden steaming rusk, placed them with the feast.

The blessing was a saving grace; and Mollie could lower her radiant, overmist eyes, for well she knew that the reason of her good husband's love had saved her from the "old leaves of malice and uncharitableness."

Ring Easter Bells.

By Helen A. Holton



Ring Easter bells, ring merrily,
A welcome to the Spring,
And let your joyful cadence
A peaceful halo bring.
Fill the wild woods with music,
Let the bluebird gaily trill,
And the robin with his silver notes,
Vie with the thrush at will.

Ring Easter bells, ring cheerily
A welcome to the flowers,
That peep their heads so shyly
Beneath the woodland bowers.
Call forth the sleeping petals,
Where winter's snobs have lain,
Ring Easter bells, ring cheerily,
For Spring has come again.

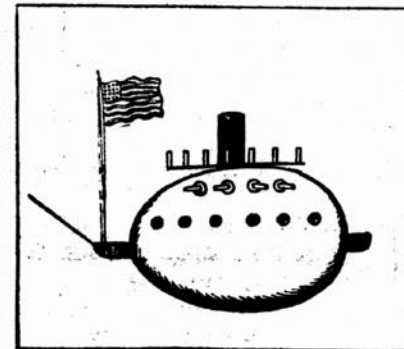
Ring Easter bells, ring joyfully
The message soft and clear,
That the earth is born anew
And filled with hope and cheer.
That Faith bids all the world take up
Her song of victory.
Ring Easter bells, from far and near,
Ring out exultingly.

Home-Made Easter Novelties

Pretty Things Easily Made,
That Will Interest the Little Folks

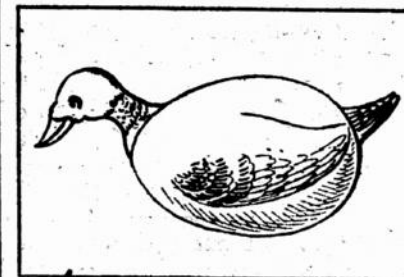
THE little Americans like Easter for the novelties the season brings them. The stores are filled with them, and many others are made by the ingenious boys and girls themselves. Here are a few that may be made at home with nothing more expensive than the always abundant egg.

One that is sure to please is a torpedo boat that floats. It is made by blowing out the contents of the egg



by making a pinhole at each end, and then blowing steadily at one end.

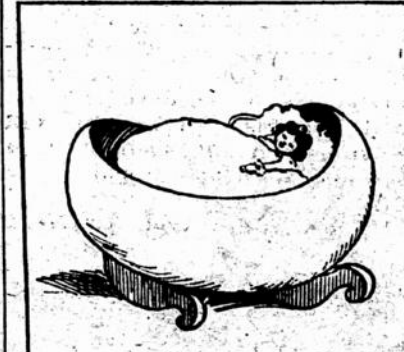
Make a hole in the middle of the side of an egg and pour in melted sealing wax and lead. Paint a row of portholes around the egg and glue on a bow and a stern cut from a cigar box or a shingle. The smokestack is made of black cardboard, and the railing of wooden toothpicks glued in a circle of cardboard which slips over the smokestack and is kept in place



with a touch of glue. The American flag flies from a toothpick. If a needle is put into the bow the boat can be drawn through the water by a magnet.

A more peaceable toy is the duck. Weight the shell and paint it to represent a duck. Cut head and tail of pasteboard, and after gluing firmly to the shell paint in colors.

For the little girls' dollhouse an eggshell cradle can be made. If the maker is skillful it can be cut in one



piece from the egg. Pasteboard rockers are glued on and the cradle can be fitted with tiny mattress, pillow and spread. A penny doll, clad in its nightgown, should repose beneath the covers.

When Easter Comes.

"The festival of Easter is to be celebrated on the Sunday following the first full moon after the beginning of spring."

Therefore, if the moon becomes full upon the day on which spring begins, the Sunday after the next full moon is, of course, indicated by the directions of the council as Easter day. And if the moon becomes full on a Sunday, the next Sunday, similarly, must be Easter day.

Easter Customs of Many Lands

Quaint Practices Found Wherever the Day is Observed

MANY quaint and curious customs are in vogue at the Easter season in many lands. Many of these customs date back to centuries ago, and the legends of their origin are almost obscured in antiquity. Such, for example, is the practice of "lifting" from which our present nursery game of "making a chair" by two children clasping hands for a third to sit upon was derived. This was an old Easter custom in which two persons lifted a third three times.

If anyone refused to be lifted, he or she must pay a slight forfeit, forfeits being applied to buy refreshments after the village games. A kindred custom was that which prevailed in the Yorkshire villages, of taking the buckles from each other's shoes and demanding a forfeit for their return, the earnings being applied to the same end as those obtained in the lifting.

In Hungary, when Easter Sunday comes everything is gladness. Wreaths of green leaves are hung in the windows, and the young girls of the towns and villages, all dressed in white, walk in a procession to the church, carrying branches of the budding spring leaves. It is a very pretty sight. After the young girls the older people walk in procession. The clergy, in their robes, and acolytes, carrying a large gilded cross, walk at the head of the procession to the church. There the people lay offerings of money at the feet of the holy image.

Easter Monday is the favorite wedding day among the Hungarians, as it is thought that marriages made on that day are sure to be fortunate, so the priests are kept very busy.

The custom called "watering" on Easter Monday is extremely odd, and people who have traveled and studied much say that it is not to be found in any other country save Hungary. The men take water in bottles and pitchers and throw it over the girls they meet in the street, whom they know, or call at their houses and throw it on the person who opens the door, if it is a woman. The funny part is that the more drenched the victims are the better they like it, as they think it brings them good fortune for the year. Everybody used to do this, but now the fashionable young men take spraying bottles of perfume. On Tuesday the young women retaliate, and the men often find themselves drenched, most unexpectedly, from a window or door or as they pass a drinking place in the street.

Instilled by nursery lore and very ancient is the belief of German children that on Easter eve a snow-white hare visits every household where the little folks have been "good, obedient, truthful and kind to each other" since the previous Easter. Timid after the nature of its kind, it waits until everybody is asleep and then soft-footed it brings and secretes in odd out-of-the-way places any number of lovely, wonderful colored eggs that the children may find and enjoy on Easter morning.

Many familiar pictures of scenes in the Tyrol are the representation of the Easter custom. The men go about in their picturesque costumes, their broad brimmed hats trimmed with fresh flowers, and sing the Easter hymns to the accompaniment of their guitars. The people come out to the doors of their houses and join in the choruses, and treat the singers with hospitality, giving them eggs and wine. All day they continue their ceremony, and when the night comes on children accompany them, bearing lighted torches.

In ancient days it was a practice among the preachers to introduce facetious stories into their sermons on Easter, to set the example of the dispersing of the gloom of the Lenten season.

WHO SHE WAS

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF LYDIA E. PINKHAM

And a True Story of How the Vegetable Compound Had Its Birth and How the "Panic of '73" Caused It to be Offered for Public Sale in Drug Stores.

This remarkable woman, whose maiden name was Estes, was born in Lynn, Mass., February 9th, 1819, coming from a good old Quaker family. For some years she taught school, and became known as a woman of an alert



and investigating mind, an earnest seeker after knowledge, and above all, possessed of a wonderfully sympathetic nature.

In 1843 she married Isaac Pinkham, a builder and real estate operator, and their early married life was marked by prosperity and happiness. They had four children, three sons and a daughter.

In those good old fashioned days it was common for mothers to make their own home medicines from roots and herbs, nature's own remedies—calling in a physician only in specially urgent cases. By tradition and experience many of them gained a wonderful knowledge of the curative properties of the various roots and herbs.

Mrs. Pinkham took a great interest in the study of roots and herbs, their characteristics and power over disease. She maintained that just as nature so bountifully provides in the harvest-fields and orchards vegetable foods of all kinds; so, if we but take the pains to find them, in the roots and herbs of the field there are remedies expressly designed to cure the various ills and weaknesses of the body, and it was her pleasure to search these out, and prepare simple and effective medicines for her own family and friends.

Chief of these was a rare combination of the choicest medicinal roots and herbs found best adapted for the cure of the ills and weaknesses peculiar to the female sex, and Lydia E. Pinkham's friends and neighbors learned that her compound relieved and cured and it became quite popular among them.

All this so far was done freely, without money and without price, as a labor of love.

But in 1873 the financial crisis struck Lynn. Its length and severity were too much for the large real estate interests of the Pinkham family, as this class of business suffered most from fearful depression, so when the Centennial year dawned it found their property swept away. Some other source of income had to be found.

At this point Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound was made known to the world.

The three sons and the daughter, with their mother, combined forces to

restore the family fortune. They argued that the medicine which was so good for their woman friends and neighbors was equally good for the women of the whole world.

The Pinkhams had no money, and little credit. Their first laboratory was the kitchen, where roots and herbs were steeped on the stove, gradually filling a gross of bottles. Then came the question of selling it, for always before they had given it away freely. They hired a job printer to run off some pamphlets setting forth the merits of the medicine, now called Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and these were distributed by the Pinkham sons in Boston, New York, and Brooklyn.

The wonderful curative properties of the medicine were, to a great extent, self-advertising, for whoever used it recommended it to others, and the demand gradually increased.

In 1877, by combined efforts the family had saved enough money to commence newspaper advertising and from that time the growth and success of the enterprise were assured, until today Lydia E. Pinkham and her Vegetable Compound have become household words everywhere, and many tons of roots and herbs are used annually in its manufacture.

Lydia E. Pinkham herself did not live to see the great success of this work. She passed to her reward years ago, but not till she had provided means for continuing her work as effectively as she could have done it herself.

During her long and eventful experience she was ever methodical in her work and she was always careful to preserve a record of every case that came to her attention. The case of every sick woman who applied to her for advice—and there were thousands—received careful study, and the details, including symptoms, treatment and results were recorded for future reference, and to-day these records, together with hundreds of thousands made since, are available to sick women the world over, and represent a vast collaboration of information regarding the treatment of woman's ills, which for authenticity and accuracy can hardly be equaled in any library in the world.

With Lydia E. Pinkham worked her daughter-in-law, the present Mrs. Pinkham. She was carefully instructed in all her hard-won knowledge, and for years she assisted her in her vast correspondence.

To her hands naturally fell the direction of the work when its originator passed away. For nearly twenty-five years she has continued it, and nothing in the work shows when the first Lydia E. Pinkham dropped her pen, and the present Mrs. Pinkham, now the mother of a large family, took it up. With women assistants, some as capable as herself, the present Mrs. Pinkham continues this great work, and probably from the office of no other person have so many women been advised how to regain health. Sick women, this advice is "Yours for Health," freely given if you only write to ask for it.

Such is the history of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound; made from simple roots and herbs; the one great medicine for women's ailments, and the fitting monument to the noble woman whose name it bears.

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