

Easter Out-of-Doors



EAGLE ROCK, LOS ANGELES

By JOHN DICKINSON SHERMAN

CHRISTIANITY has two great anniversaries each year—Christmas and Easter. Yesterday all of Christian faith celebrated the birth of Jesus. Tomorrow they celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. "Death is swallowed up in victory" on Easter Day. "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me."

So said Jesus to His followers before He went to His death on Calvary. Later they saw Him flinching beneath the weight of the cross as He went forth from Pilate's judgment hall along the Way of Sorrows to Golgotha. Still later they saw Him dying on that cross. And finally they saw Him risen from the dead on Easter Day.

To Jesus' disciples the cross symbolized the power of imperial Rome over those who offended against her. Rome stood for material achievement, for oppression. Jesus stood for spiritual things, for love, for human freedom and brotherhood. To the Christian of today Easter is a celebration of the belief that Rome was wrong and that Jesus was right. And he knows that he must carry the cross, as well as cling to the cross.

Man instinctively yearns for life beyond the grave. "Till death do us part," reads the marriage service. There are some who would have it so that not even death can part them. Wrote Robert Browning:

O, thou soul of my soul, I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

Many feel that if there is to be no future life for them then is this earthly life a hideous iniquity, a prodigious failure. Wrote Tennyson:

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust;
Thou madest man, he knows not why,
He thinks he was not made to die,
And Thou hast made him. Thou art just.

It seems inconceivable that man should toll upward with sweat and travail until a Lincoln could say, "With malice toward none, with charity for all" and then should come annihilation. Wrote Darwin:

It is an intolerable thought that man and all other sentient beings are doomed to complete annihilation after such a long-continued and slow process.

So the Christian of today sees in Easter the answer to the ages-old question: "If a man die, shall he live again?"

This is an old, old earth and man has lived long upon it—so long that he celebrated Easter ages before Jesus died upon the cross and rose from the dead. The Easter that man celebrated before Christianity came was an instinctive expression of his joy that winter was over and spring was on the way. To him the sun, if not God, himself, was light and warmth and springing life. So at or near the vernal equinox early man celebrated the change in the seasons that renewed his slender lease on life and comfort.

Man instinctively turns to a god, if not to the God. In the beginnings of the race man saw god in light and darkness; heard god in the thunder and the wind; felt him in the manifold manifestations of nature. Perhaps most of all early man saw god in the sun that drew nearer in the spring and gave light and heat and food. So it is no wonder that modern man rejoices as of old at the coming of spring. He would sing, if he could, with Elias Carman:

Well I know
The sun will shine again and spring come back
Her ancient, glorious, golden-flowered way,
And gladness visit the green earth once more.

For many a city man does Berton Braley speak when he sings of the tunes of the first street piano of the spring:

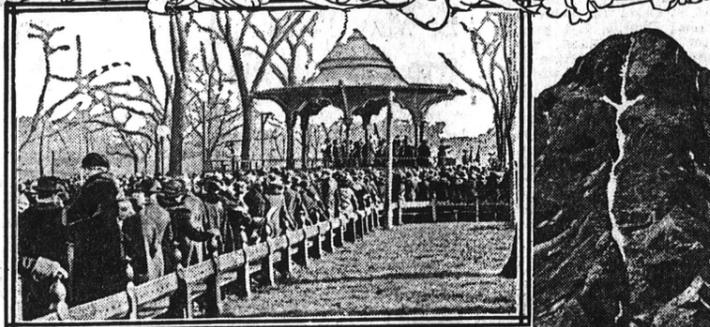
They build me a vision of meadows Elysian,
Of brooklets that babble and breezes that croon,
And wistful and tender young spring in her splendor
Comes dancing to me on the wings of a tune.

Russell Mott, a poet of long ago, spoke for all nature lovers when he wrote:

Godde helpe alle good adventurers
Who love strange roads and wells,
Whose prysonne ys a city street,
Whose counting-house a cull;

Send them a safe deliverance,
That each may lyte his fyre,
With only the starres for guides
Inne the lande of hys desyre.

So it is that out-of-doors on Easter morn offers a lure for many that no church can equal. Easter morn at sunrise, should you be in Los Angeles and one of those lured by the out-of-doors, hasten to Eagle Rock park. You will find many others going your way and you will come to a vast crowd on Eagle Rock, surmounted by a cross and



CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK

worshiping God in His holy temple, with naught between the worshipers and His blue heaven. And if the refulgent sun seems in some sort god to you, fear not that it is disloyalty to the true God. It is but the instinct of prehistoric ages working in you. And He will not be offended.

And if you be in New York city and the lure works on you, make you way to Central park very early Easter morning. For there on the Mall shall you find a great concourse of fellow-worshipers to whom the lure was equally strong. Who will lead the worship I do not know, except that it will be some worthy leader. Last Easter morn he was the Rt. Rev. Herbert Shipman, suffragan bishop of the Protestant Episcopal diocese, former army chaplain.

Now, does the lover of Mother Nature, Up in the mountains, high in the Rockies, Seeing a moving blue in the aspens, Hearing a twitter sweetly familiar, Say to his comrade: "Lo, the first bluebird! Spring is upon us—springtime, with Easter. Winter is ended. Jesus is risen. Let us go worship where shows the snow cross High on the mountain, Holy Cross morn."

This Easter a few hardy spirits, able-bodied and in love with the out-of-doors, will worship on the slope of the Mount of the Holy Cross in the Colorado Rockies. Around them will be stream and lake and forest and natural scenery unsurpassed. And above them, boldly drawn in everlasting snow against the naked granite of the great peak, will be the Holy Cross in glistening white.

Next Easter morn there will be many more worshipers and thereafter the number will yearly increase. For under the Holy Cross on the slope of the mountain has been established a devotional center in the form of a camp. Thousands have come under the spell of the mountain's giant cross and thousands have asked for this devotional camp. So it is being established and developed, for the benefit of all. Both Protestants and Roman Catholics are interested. All are invited to come and worship at a shrine with, as John Misfeld says,

A beauty perfect, ripe, complete,
That art's own hand could only smutch
And Nature's self not better much.

Dr. Johnson wrote that the mountains were so much hopeless sterility "dismissed by nature from her care." But Dr. Johnson was wrong. All the world loves the mountains—or would, if it knew the mountains. And they are indeed lovely in the spring. Wherever there is water there are aspens and their tender green is charmingly offset by the darker green of the evergreens. Light and distance paint the scene with the gorgeousness of a painter's palette. Distance turns the greens into lilac, mauve, blue and indigo. Gorges, deep and dark, take on purple shades. The shadows cast by moving clouds make fascinating changes in the color scheme. The sunset skies are startling in their crimsons and golds. And down in the mountains is a thing of beauty and therefore a joy forever. The naked granite of the high peaks blushes ruby red under the first rays of the sun and if a peak is snow-crowned the beauty is enhanced. As the shadows lengthen or shorten on the forested slopes there is an ever-changing play of color.

Yes; Dr. Johnson was wrong. As John C. Van Dyke says in "The Mountain," "Mountains are the spots where we get once more back to nature's heart after a lifetime spent in the dreary London of the world." The Mount of the Holy Cross (13,078) is world-famous because of its cross of snow that forms the crowning touch of its majestic beauty. The upright of the cross measures about 1,200 feet and the beam about 200 feet. Its snow is everlasting and may be seen for many a mile. The mountain itself can be seen on a clear day from Longs peak, a hundred miles to the north.

Holy Cross gives its name to the Holy Cross National forest, which is under charge of the for-

est service of the Department of Agriculture. The Mount of the Holy Cross has hitherto been little visited because of its comparative inaccessibility. In 1916, however, the forest service constructed a new trail up the side of the mountain, so that it is now possible to ride on horseback to within a mile of the summit. The starting point of this trip is Red Cliff, and the intervening distance to the peak, 12 miles, can be covered in from five to six hours under favorable weather conditions. Near the foot of the peak, where the trail leaves Cross creek, a shelter cabin has been constructed for the convenience of visitors essaying the climb. The trip from the cabin to the summit may be made on foot in from two to three hours. The vast panorama of snow-clad mountain peaks, evergreen forests, and rolling valleys which greets the eye after this arduous ascent is one of impressive grandeur. In ascending Holy Cross to the foot of the cross the visitor passes through five different and distinct tree zones. Timberline is at 11,500 feet. And all the way up are flowers; in season the alpine meadows above timberline are most gorgeous of all with their myriad blossoms in miniature. In Rocky Mountain National park, a hundred miles to the north, have been collected and identified 289 species of flowers, 21 species of trees and flowerless shrubs and 50 species of ferns, grasses and rushes.

At Easter time on the eastern slope of the Colorado Continental Divide the flower of flowers is the pasque flower. Pascha is the Greek form of the Hebrew pesach, from pasach—to pass over. As Easter is the Christian equivalent of the Jewish Passover the flower is well named. It is one of the buttercup family and a cousin to the anemone—wind flowers. It grows in clusters that often number eight or ten blossoms. The flower stands eight or ten inches from the ground. Often the star-shaped blossoms are almost 2 1/2 inches across. They range in color from almost purple to almost white, with a fascinating variety of shades, all of which may occur in the same cluster. In the mountains a fall of light snow corresponds to the spring rain of the plains. In my commonplace book I find this, under date of Easter Sunday:

"A foot or so of light snow fell last night. At 10:30 this morning I took a broom, a basket and a long knife and started out to gather my Easter flowers.

"Easter flowers! Certainly. I know an open space near my log cabin where were growing thousands of pasque flowers and many buttercups and here and there a violet. I had wandered among them before the snow came, enjoying their beauty to the full.

"I plodded off through the snow to the 'Kit Carson Corner'—close to the camp of that famous frontiersman on a beaver-trapping expedition in the Fifties. There I began sweeping off the snow in zigzag fashion. Soon I found pasque flowers in such numbers that I grew hard to please and filled my basket with the largest and most perfect. They were none the worse for the snow. But the buttercups and violets were forlorn. The next day the snow was all gone and the field was brilliant with pasque flowers, unharmed by their adventure."

THE RUNAWAY

By JANE GORDON

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

A YOUNG woman sat on the bench of a rustic bridge in despondent attitude, her blue eyes wide with troubled thought.

The man who came sauntering appeared not to notice the despondency, but only the appealing prettiness of the loiterer. "A lovely day," he remarked.

The young woman stared at him coldly, but he returned the gaze with a winning smile. "So lovely a day," he went on, "that we should all reflect its sunshine. Can you not pass on the kindness of a friendly word?"

A very becoming rose color suffused the young woman's cheek.

"You presume a great deal," she said; "please leave me alone."

"I am sorry to refuse the request," the man answered blandly, "but I have spent so much time in the accomplishment of this meeting that now I must see it through, at the risk of later banishment. This seems to be a favorite spot of yours. I have watched you from afar for several days. Today, only, had I courage to follow. Desperation alone forced me on—desperate fear of losing you without a word."

The young woman laughed, but it was not a merry laugh.

"If you will force your companionship on me," she said sharply, "you shall have a word. It may not be pleasing. I have been coming here for several days to consider the wearisome problem of a mistaken marriage. I have reached my decision; I am running away from my husband—"

The speaker leaned forward, breathlessly intent; she had almost forgotten her listener. The man, now gravely attentive, watched the lovely girl's face.

"Unloved?"—the question broke from him unbelievably.

"Yes," the girl fiercely replied; unloved, left alone in the big house he bought me, from week to week, while he, absorbed in the business which is numbing his very soul, absorbed after business hours with the business associates who come out to his golf course, and to ride the country round in his swift cars, while I may amuse myself as it suits my fancy. Even flirtation with those of his friends whom he brings to enjoy my hospitality does not move him to remembrance. I was miserable enough to try in order to sound his interest.

"Today I left his guests to their own amusement. I packed a few clothes—my simplest things—to be sent for later. I can bear no longer the heartache, the parade of gaiety for the benefit of people for whom I do not care. I shall go to Aunt Janet by the late afternoon train. After that, when I can think clearly, I shall find work some place and try to forget the first happiness of my marriage."

The girl arose, clasping and unclasping her little hands.

"You have had the word you wanted, my friend," she said mockingly; "I fear it brings little gratification."

"The man arose also, and stood towering above her.

"You mistake," he quietly replied. "Your confidence has been wisely enlightening and encouraging. I offer my services to help you in your flight. May I see that your trunk is forwarded to your aunt's home? My car is near by, among the trees of the roadside. It would be more comfortable for you to travel in it than in the hot train this afternoon. And it would be my pleasure to drive you to your destination."

Wide, perplexed blue eyes gazed questioningly up into dark, determined eyes. In the caressing softness of his tone the man spoke:

"From your last remark I would gather that your unfortunate marriage had at first been a happy one. I would also gather that you had loved? Perhaps—may I venture further—you still do love this graceless fellow? Is it true?"

Angrily the young woman fought against humiliating confession.

The man's compelling gaze held, then, with a sudden laugh, all of triumph, he gathered in his arms the small, shrinking figure.

"Oh! my dear, my dear," he murmured. "What a pitiful mess we have made of marriage in our loving misunderstanding. Could you not read between the lines of business absorption my steady purpose to bring to you all those things which I thought every woman desired? Don't you realize that I labored early and late that you might flaunt your fine clothes, your fine home, as my associates' wives flaunt their possessions? And I brought my friends to be entertained by you—that all might see your superiority. Oh! I was proud of you. But of late I dared not let myself think that they engaged you wholly. Those little flirtations, dear one, how they hurt and rankled. Now let's forget in the happy present. Let us take our love away together, to that little town where we first spent our honeymoon. We will ride on in our car—and send for the little trunk later. We will telegraph my sister to hostess the house-party we are deserting. After all, those are good friends. They will be lenient with our lapse, with our stolen vacation."

The tall young man released his wife and smiled at her.

"It is a lovely day," he remarked, in the manner of his approach.

The little wife nestled close. "All's right with the world," she quoted.

BOY SCOUTS

(Conducted by National Council of the Boy Scouts of America.)

PARENTS AID BOY SCOUTS

One of the greatest tributes to the boy scout program of character building and citizenship training is the increasing interest of mothers and fathers in the work of their scout sons. Scouting is creating a bond of comradeship between thousands of sons and fathers who in increasing numbers are spending week-ends together at scout camps, relaxing in the out of doors, skating, skiing, hiking and sledging together. Father and son hikes, banquets and get-togethers are held in practically every community. Contests between "lads and dads" create splendid rivalry and make dad want to get out with son in the open more and more.

One big-hearted father who, as an incentive to his own boy, joined the ranks of the tenderfoot scouts recently with his son reached the very top of the ladder together—Eagle rank.

And mother! You may be sure she is very proud of son's manliness, his scout bearing, his practice of the scouts' daily good turn, of being ready, at all times to help others, his courtesy to the old, the weak, the sick, his deference to those older than himself, his growing strength from his outdoors life. These things with their ultimate bearing on character building, mothers are keen to appreciate. To further the work, scouts mothers' clubs, committees, and associations are being constantly formed. Mother and son hikes and even mothers' week at camp are evidence that the scout son knows "the best pal of all" is right behind him in his advance in scoutcraft.

Scouting does not supplant the home training. It supplements it and fortifies it. Scouting's best supporters are the mothers and fathers who from daily observation see with gratification sons who are living every inch as scouts.

"A SCOUT IS THRIFTY"



Boy scouts honored Benjamin as an expositor of thrift, as well as a great patriot, on the occasion of Franklin's two hundred and seventeenth birthday, when, in common with 40 other national, educational and civic societies, the scouts laid a tribute of flowers at the great statesman's statue in New York city, Scout Adolphe Schmidt, a member of Troop 2, Brooklyn, N. Y., at the ceremony impersonated Franklin at the age of seventeen, arriving at Philadelphia.

A FEW SCOUT "GOOD TURNS"

Here is a series of "good turns" with a splendid climax for which credit is due Troop 1, Ashland, W. Va.: Pruned 50 trees, cleaned streets, removed debris from lot where house had partly burned, cleaned around dwelling houses, set out 60 trees and helped find boy who had run away from home.

CO-OPERATE WITH BOY SCOUTS

Thirteen theological seminaries in various parts of the United States are showing active indorsement of scouting by including training for future scout leaders as a regular part of their curricula.

BOY SCOUTS AID BIRDS

Carrying food daily through the winter to game refuge, and distributing it at places where thousands of wild birds congregate, is one way Troop No. 1, Hamilton, Ohio, has of carrying out the sixth scout law, "A Scout Is Kind." During the autumn migration of birds the boys threw food along the lake shores after the sanctuary birds had been penned up for the night. It is said the birds now recognize the scout uniform as a sign of friendliness.