

THE CONTINENT

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At the Tomb in the Twilight

"Early, while it was yet dark."

"As it began to dawn toward the day."

So two of the evangelists impress on us the dimness of the morning twilight in which grieving women who loved the Lord sought his tomb with their memorial symbols of a ruined hope. And it was, we are reminded, in that dusk of faintest dawn that they were granted their first kindling hint of the news, too joyous for belief, that he whose body they came to embalm was numbered no longer among the dead but was living again.

It took indeed the full blaze of daylight, under a gloriously risen Easter sun, to confirm for them perfect faith in a gloriously risen Christ. But the revelations and confirmations of the broad day could not have extinguished from the women's hearts a tender gratitude for the comfort of those obscurer encouragements which were vouchsafed to them through angels' voices "while it was yet dark."

And perhaps in these latter times of the church our celebrations of Easter commemorate all too exclusively the clear, sunshiny certainties which gave triumphant joy to the noontide of the resurrection day. Perhaps the high strains of confidence to which music and preaching are pitched in the Easter services of the church—though they bear up strong souls on wings as eagles—may seem too lofty for many weaker ones who struggling with recent griefs and perplexed with heartbreaking trials can at best but barely trace in the sky a gray glow "dawning toward the day."

And while no messenger of the gospel may weaken any word wherewith he is commissioned to proclaim the promise of immortality which the Father of spirits has confirmed to all men "in that he raised Jesus from the dead," yet should not the Easter preacher in every pulpit think gently of those who steal into the garden of the tomb through the dusk of loss, loneliness and doubt, and cannot yet see or feel all the glowing sunshine of positive spiritual assurance?

If their daylight of faith has not yet broken, let them be lovingly encouraged, none the less, to trust their wistful twilight hopes. It is dusk indeed, with them, but it dawns toward the day.

How dark was the soul of Mary of Bethany when her Lord said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life." She had no light by which to see the truth of it. But she answered, "Yea, Lord." And soon she understood and was sure.

The meagerest faith that the soul achieves "while it is yet dark" is surely in God's sight the most precious and wonderful faith of all.

THE HOME COUNCIL

"I Cannot Understand It" :: By Mary Sherburne Warren

"I UNDERSTAND your point of view," said the lawyer. "Because you are a clergyman you think it is my duty to spend one hour each Sunday at church. Because I am confined within four walls during the week I believe it is my duty to spend that hour in God's great out-of-doors."

"Because I am a father I believe it is your duty to attend church regularly," insisted the minister. "Your boy is 8 years old. In a few years he will be—following in your footsteps."

"I am stronger physically because of my Sunday outings. For that reason I am a better father." The lawyer spoke as one having authority.

"But you would still have several hours left for exercise—" began the older man.

"Very true," agreed the lawyer. "But after a Sunday dinner I feel more like lying in the hammock than exerting myself. There's an exhilaration in the morning air."

"I repeat that I think it is your duty to attend public worship regularly," said the minister gazing steadfastly into the eyes of his friend. "But I have a business proposition to make: will you divide your time for three months with the church? Next Sunday you will join in our service; the next, you spend as you wish. The third Sunday I shall look for you again, and each alternate Sunday, for the period I have stated."

The practical nature of the proposition appealed to the busy lawyer. But it was the

In considering this significant piece of fiction, Home Council remembers Sabbath Observance week, April 30 to May 7. A touch of Easter, also is suggested by "A Legend From the Orient."

last day of May, and all nature was calling to him. What answer he would have made had not his son run out to meet him at that moment is uncertain. He swung the handsome lad to his shoulder, gave his hand and word to the minister, and hurried up the path to the sweet-faced woman framed in the doorway.

THE first Sunday in June was a day of gladness. From every treetop the birds were singing blithely, "Come out to me; oh, come out to me!" The minister entered the pulpit and scanned the congregation anxiously. Yes, the lawyer and his family were present, a restless look on the face of the man; in the eyes of his wife, an expression of sweet content.

"He has kept his promise, that is all," thought the minister; but through his sermon that morning there breathed a heart's desire for the awakening of a soul.

The following Sunday the lawyer spent

on the golf links; the next, he was again in the Compton pew; the last Sunday in the month he climbed the rugged mountain that overlooked the village; two Sundays in July he tramped the woods with genial companions; three hot Sundays in August he was one of a faithful congregation, the other two he drove far and fast in his car in search of a cooling breeze. For three months the lawyer had kept his promise. The pastor offered no further word of entreaty. He could only wait.

"I cannot understand it," began the lawyer the next morning as he stopped for a hurried call at the manse. "After attending a service at your church I am better fitted physically and mentally for the trying work of the week. The fewer hours that I spend in the country mean more to me than the entire days I formerly had at my disposal, possibly because my wife and child are willing, now to share the pleasure. You know I have not always found it easy to induce my boy to leave Sunday school even for a long auto ride. No, I cannot understand it, for the religious aspect of the situation does not appeal to me. However, I have decided to become a regular attendant at the services of your church."

The minister smiled. "You must not expect all good things to come at once," he said. "Some day, perhaps—"

"Perhaps," repeated the lawyer thoughtfully, hopefully, it seemed to the minister, as his friend turned away without further word.



A Legend From the Orient

BY ISABELLA LEYBURN RITNER

TWO women were walking over the plains of Judea, anxiously, eagerly, talking together. Their minds were concentrated on the object of their going to Jerusalem.

"And have you heard the wonderful news, how that our Lord and Master has really risen from the dead, and has been seen by some of his own followers?"

"Ah, tell me not that. Do I not know that this Jesus of Nazareth, the young carpenter, the son of Joseph and Mary, has been tried, condemned and crucified, and now for more than three days, has lain in the grave, guarded by the Roman soldiers? It has been proven that he was but an imposter, and the Jewish Sanhedrim, the Roman court and the people all, with one accord, condemn him. His few followers are now scattered abroad, doubtless hiding in caves and dens in the mountains."

"Not so, friend, for only yesterday my husband was in Jerusalem, and he himself saw and talked with those who had seen and talked with the Master. They told how two women went to the sepulcher early in the morning and found the stone rolled away, and an angel sitting there, who told them that the One they sought had risen from the dead, and, how the women had turned and seen the Master himself. Ah, no! He lives! He lives and again walks among His chosen few."

Still unconvinced was the other, however. "Should you tell me that these eggs that I

carry in my basket to the market to be sold, had this hour been dyed with the blood which this Jesus of Nazareth spilt, I might as soon believe it," she declared. "Did I not put them early in the morning, with my own hands, into the basket? And they were then as white as snow."

Just then the woman reached the market place in Jerusalem. She opened her basket of eggs which she held on her arm, and lo, they were all bloodred!

Ever since this, the children of all those who believe, dye the snowwhite eggs, on Easter morn, a bloodred.

They Hold Catechism Matches

Not least unusual among the forms of "mental athletics" that are beginning to take their place alongside baseball, basketball and their like as wholesome amusements, is the catechism contest, in which boys of several home mission schools are excelling. Some of these out of the ordinary games are described in a letter written by one of the young Indians of the Casa Blanca school:

"Mr. Dirk Lay brought the Sacaton catechism team here last month. We beat them 70 to 81. Then they said they would beat us on their own grounds. So Mr. Lay came here yesterday morning and took five of us to Sacaton. We beat them again 104 to 145. Then he took us across the river to Santan school. We beat them there 30 to 145.

"I am 9 years old, and I am the oldest in the team. Hazel Walker is 8, Mitchell, my brother, is 8 last month. Blanche Norris and William Walker, I think, are 6 or 7.

We had our big class team along too; Luke Wilson, Harry Thomas and Effie Nelson. They beat the Santans 10 to 21, so we beat three times yesterday."

The boy writer knows the entire catechism by heart, according to the missionary, Rev. Dirk Lay, as do two of his teammates. Six catechism classes are under Mr. Lay's charge, in the different schools of the reservation, class enrollment numbering 305.

Then He Was Sure

However much Americans in general may have lost the primitive virtues of thrift and frugality, the Pennsylvania Dutch still possess them, according to Helen R. Martin, author of quaint Mennonite novels. In a recent interview she tells how she watched a young Pennsylvania Dutchman study three girls, his object being matrimony.

They were sewing, and he made a test of their frugality by the way they tore off their threads. The girl who tore off her thread closest to the stitch appealed to him most. Later he watched them at pie-making. With another test in mind, he asked each of them for the waste dough scraps. One of the girls, wanting to make a "hit" with him, gave him generously. The girl who had won in the first test scrimped a few crumbs for him—and won his heart and hand; soon after his foot was seen on the rocker of her chair as they talked, which is Pennsylvania Dutch for, "I mean to marry this girl!"

There are in the United States more than 2,000 women authors.