

The Centurion's Story

An Easter Poem

I—Roman soldier, lord of kings,—
At guard I stood upon
The entrance to the grotto tomb—
A bold Centurion!
A Roman's fear is cowardice—
And I from seventeen
Of Caesar's bravest guards was picked
To watch the Nazarene!

TO watch Him, buried in His tomb,
Lest He arise again
And prove His victory o'er the grave,
His crucifixion vain!
It seemed a foolish care to me,
But, like a soldier true,
I stood, a statue by His tomb,
And watched the night hours through.

AN earthquake shook the sepulcher
Of Him I guarded well!—
I heard the triumph of the heavens,
The deep despair of hell!
Back rolled the grotto gate, unsealed
By giant hands unseen,
And glorious and terrible
Came forth the Nazarene!

IFELL upon the ground. I smote
The earth with humble head,
Adoring Him I mocked alive,
Despised and sneered at dead!
Was He the God—the King of Kings?
I felt that this was He—
So glorified I feared to lift
My dazzled eyes to see!

HE passed, fair angels leading Him,
And singing as they went;
And I—ere half the glory fled,
And half my fear was spent—
I hurried unto Caesar. "Lord,"
I cried, "though death's my doom,
I swear the Nazarene is risen,
And empty is His tomb!"

AND Pilate said: "This gentle man
On Calvary crucified,
Free of His blood at last my hands—
For He has never died!"
Said I: "Yea, yea, my lord, I swear,
Though death shall be my doom,
The Nazarene WAS dead, but now
Is risen from His tomb!"

ALOYSIUS COLL

THE LEGEND Of the EASTER LILY

THE beautiful flower which is in evidence on every hand today, the Easter lily, is the result of a development which might almost be called an evolution. Records of the existence of the plant which is now known as the Easter lily go back to 1,000 B. C. At that time the emperor of China was Chow, about the most cruel ruler the Celestial empire has ever had. His prime minister was Li Chung, a really good man, who hinted to the despot that his restless people could be pacified by inaugurating a series of reforms. The cruel ruler became incensed, and as he had an unpleasant habit of ordering off a few heads each day Li Chung concluded that it was about time for him to think of getting away to a place of safety. For some time he watched his master, and when he became convinced that the danger point had been reached he asked for a private audience. This was granted.

The good, though crafty, Li Chung informed the emperor that he had had a vision in which he was commanded by the gods to make a sacrifice of 100 sturdy young men and 150 beautiful young women. But—and here was the unusual portion of the demand of the gods—it was required that the sacrifices be made upon an island far out in the sea, to which the commander of the expedition would be directed by supernatural aid. It was further commanded that a period of elaborate feasting should precede the sacrifices.

The superstitious emperor listened carefully and was manifestly pleased. He was relieved to find that he could so easily extricate himself from his difficulties. The wily Li Chung doubtless noticed that his story was making an impression and elaborated upon his original fiction accordingly. At any rate Li Chung, as he had anticipated, was appointed to the command of the finest ship in the royal navy and was charged with the important duty of seeing that the wishes of the gods were carried out to the letter.

Chung selected the young men and women and loaded his vessel with the choicest delicacies the kingdom afforded.

THE recent discussion of the affairs of the Red Cross society, precipitated by President Roosevelt's declaration to serve as a member of the advisory board of that body or to permit the members of his cabinet to do so, has naturally brought into prominence once more the name of Clara Barton, president of the American Red Cross since its organization, and of ex-Surgeon General W. K. Van Reypen of the United States navy, who is mentioned as the probable successor of Miss Barton in the event of the resignation of that lady of the position which is hers by an election for life.

Clara Barton, no matter what may be urged for or against her present management of the American branch of the Red Cross society, will be admitted to be a remarkable, almost an extraordinary, woman, with the faculty of organization developed to a degree found in but few men. Although she is about seventy-seven years old, the allegation that she was unfitted by the infirmities of age for performing the arduous duties of her position as president of the society with which her name is so inseparably identified has been made only within the last few months. Her experiences on scores of battlefields and in numbers of cities and villages devastated by flood, fire, famine and earthquake appear to have left no impress upon her, and she declares with a firmness of purpose which no one can help admiring that she is ready today to start into active work in any field in which her services may be required.

Miss Barton may be said to have been possessed of great executive ability even as a child, for before she was sixteen she had left her home in North Oxford, Mass., to become a schoolteacher in Clinton, N. Y. That she is also a natural worker, that she works because her nature will not permit her to remain idle, may be realized when it is mentioned that she has been inclined to do so she need never have made any

effort in life beyond the trifling one of signing a check once in awhile, for she inherited a goodly fortune from each of her parents as well as tidy sums from other relatives; so that there was never the spur of the necessity of earning a livelihood in anything which Clara Barton has done.

After a brief experience with her school in Clinton Miss Barton, still a mere girl, went to Elizabeth, N. J., where after carefully looking over the ground she decided to establish a seminary for young ladies. It is related that many of her charges in Elizabeth were her seniors. Her enterprise prospered, but Miss Barton was not satisfied. She removed to Washington and applied for a clerkship in the patent office. She was the first woman ever employed in that department and was assigned to a section which was at the time in a deplorably tangled condition. Her mathematical mind, however, almost sneered at the simplicity of work which had befuddled many a man trained to that special branch. At any rate in a surprisingly short space of time she had got things running smoothly, and then the position palled upon her. Easy work she did not like, and she began to cast about her for something a bit more exacting.

At about this time the civil war broke out, and Miss Barton issued an appeal for food and clothing to be distributed to the sick and wounded soldiers of the Union army. Her appeal met with a rather ready response, but there was the difficulty of getting permission to go inside the lines. This was ultimately secured, and thus Clara Barton began what was to be her life work. She served throughout the civil war, was present at some of the most terrific battles of that momentous conflict, personally attended thousands of men stricken down by wounds or disease, was largely instrumental in the organization of the sanitary commission and was finally charged by President Lincoln with the difficult work of tracing the fate of the thousands of prisoners confined at various times in Andersonville. Out of her work in this connection came the

proposition from her for a national cemetery, made possible by the identification through her efforts of the bodies of thousands of soldiers. But a strain such as that through which Miss Barton had passed must

leave its effect, and in 1867 she sailed for Europe in quest of renewed strength. She was still in Europe when the Franco-Prussian war broke out and at once went to the front with the German army as a member of the Red Cross society, which had been organized in Geneva, Switzerland. In 1864 with thirty-five signatory powers, of

which the United States was not one. After the war she organized relief, which was distributed under her supervision to the poor of Paris. Then she returned to this country and at once began a campaign to secure recognition necessary to rectify all of the movements for the aid of suffering humanity with which she has been identified. Suffice it to say that, realizing early that the greatest usefulness of such a society as the Red Cross in America would be

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A memorial to the late R. D. Blackmore, the novelist, is to be unveiled at Exeter cathedral this spring.

Sir Henry Maine, the great writer upon law, said that "except the blind forces of nature, nothing moves in this world that is not Greek." Even the Christian religion rests upon Greek texts; the Roman civilization in which it first flourished was of Greek origin.

The Earl of Dysart has one of the

most perfect Jacobean houses in England and a Lincolnshire cousin who has fifteen children. His mansion, Ham House, was built in 1610.

For his five visits to America, his three trips to Australia and his journeyings in India and Africa General Booth is now saluted at home as "the most ubiquitous Englishman of our time."

Mrs. Charlotte B. Wilbour, the new

president of Sorosis, called at her home thirty-five years ago the first meeting to consider the formation of that club.

Joseph Chamberlain was showing a lady the Highbury conservatories when von Mr. Chamberlain need hardly ask her of flowers. "Oh," he replied, "I don't know that I am particularly fond of them, but when I started growing flowers I made up my mind that no one should have better ones than I."

Right Hon. George Wyndham, who in-

roduced the Irish land purchase bill in the British parliament, is a lineal descendant through his mother of the great Irish rebel Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who led the revolution of 1798 and who died in prison from a wound.

King Edward's chef is one M. Menager from southern France. He gets \$10,000 a year and comes to Buckingham from his private residence in a daily hansom.

The widow of Ernest F. Walton, a broker, who was one of the victims of

the New York Central tunnel disaster in January, 1902, brought suit against the railroad company for \$150,000 damages. When the case was called in the supreme court, the plaintiff asked and obtained permission to amend the complaint by making the damages \$250,000.

As soon as it was announced that Count Cassini, the Russian ambassador, intended to sail for Europe about the middle of May a rumor became current that he would not return. This is now said to be without foundation. The

count is conceded to be the cleverest

diplomat in Washington and the star member of the Russian corps.

Lilli Lehmann, the prima donna, confesses to being fifty-two years old and has spent thirty-four years upon the stage, having made her debut at Prague when she was eighteen.

Senator Hanna's secretary, Elmer

Dover, believes that he gets more "pedestrian exercise" right along than either the president or General Wood.

He gets it in going from department to

department on the senator's errands.

"I'll bet I walk twice as far as you," he says. "He has invested in a pair of

eternals."

Dr. Benjamin Ide Wheeler, president of the California State university, though still a young man, is a con-

nation of the scholar, skilled diplomat and business man, having devoted most of his time to the subject of interest to the three classes named. His poverty and pleasant bearing are two of his special characteristics.