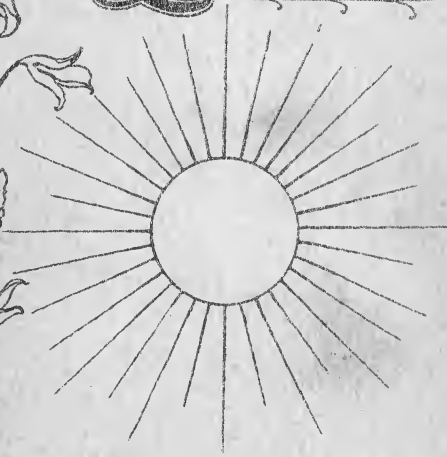






# Easter Lilies



by ADA STEWART SHELTON.



# EASTER LILIES

BY

ADA STEWART SHELTON

33



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## EASTER LILLIES.

### ONE EASTER LILY'S MISSION.

THE first faint flush of the fair Easter  
dawn

Touched with its tender light a lily's  
face,

So pure and fair that one would scarce  
believe

It could find life in such a dreary  
place.

High up amid the roof-tops crowded  
close

Of wretched dwellings, stairways lead-  
ing in





To darkened alleys, there the fair flower  
grew,  
O'erlooking want and misery and sin.

“My sisters sweet and fair will hail this  
morn;  
Within the churches' walls, with win-  
ning grace,  
They will proclaim to-day the Easter  
joy;  
E'en on the altar they will find a  
place.

“What part is given to me this Easter  
Day?  
In all its gladness I can have no  
share;  
For even those who watch my leaves  
unfold  
Do scarcely know the day whose name  
I bear.”



Soon one drew near whose touch was  
coarse and rough,  
Withal the heart that guided it was  
kind ;  
“ The child that moans below shall have  
my flower,  
Maybe 'twill bring some comfort to  
her mind.”

Down the steep stairway, through the  
alley dark,  
Was the white lily carried, oh, so fair !  
It seemed in passing through the dreary  
place  
To leave a benediction on the air.

Within a wretched, comfortless, dim  
room,  
Moaning with pain, with fever's vague  
unrest,



A young child lay ; with smile of radiant  
joy  
She clasped the Easter lily to her breast.

“Oh ! is it really mine ?” she mur-  
mured low,  
“It almost takes the pain ;” the fair  
flower lay  
Close, closer pressed within that burning  
hand,  
Until at night both lives had ebbed  
away.

Sweet was the life that the fair lily gave,  
Though in the church's beauty she had  
borne no share ;  
Lowly the work that waits in many a  
path,  
Rich are the blessings that lie hidden  
there.

ADA STEWART SHELTON.

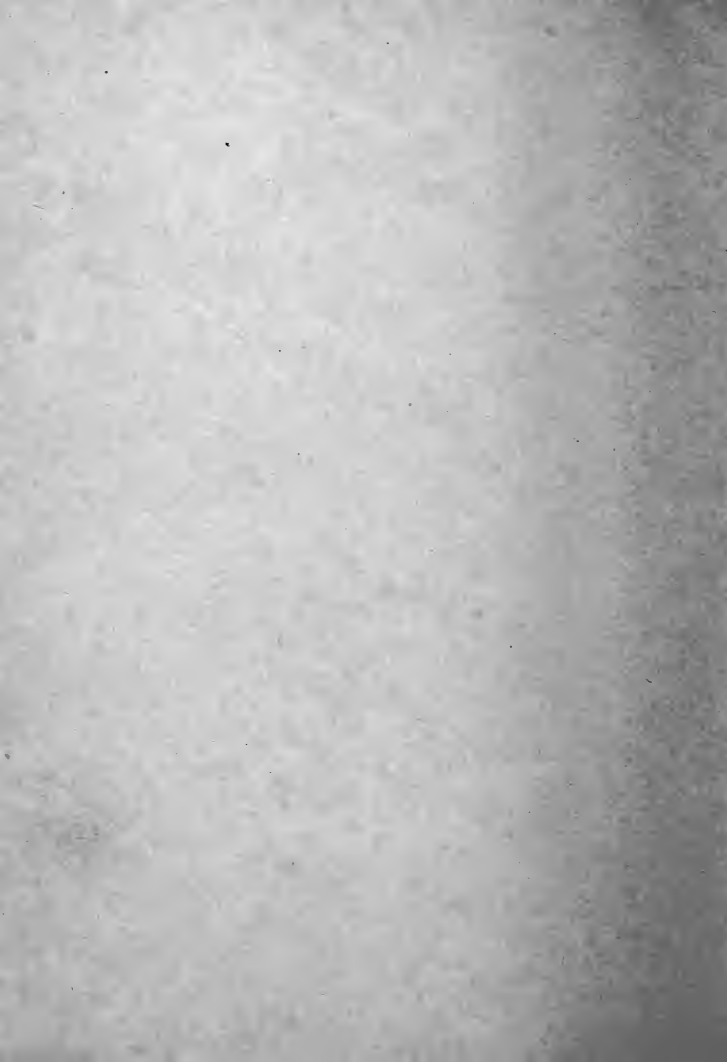


## AN EASTER OFFERING.

“Neither will I offer unto the Lord my God that  
which doth cost me nothing.”

WITHIN a crowded dwelling-place,  
Climbing its narrow stair,  
A little maid is toiling slow,  
Who in her hand doth bear  
A jug of water, which she guards  
And holds with anxious care.

Slowly she climbs the stairway dim,  
So narrow, steep, and high,  
To where her little window looks  
Out on a patch of sky ;  
And o'er a flower upon its ledge  
She bends with loving eye.





The only treasure that is hers !  
She dreams of it by night,  
Guards it by day ; the blue eyes watch  
Its opening to the light.  
Was ever lily seen before  
So pure, so fair, so white ?

Soon, very soon, is drawing near  
The blessed Easter Day,  
When from a grateful, loving heart  
We give our best away.  
What offering could the dear child make ?  
She ponders day by day.

Such scanty earnings naught could yield,  
From them she fears to take ;  
But there upon the window-ledge—  
Oh ! can she, can she make  
Such sacrifice, and give her flower  
For Easter—and His sake ?

. . . . .



The glad-voiced bells are chiming clear,  
The dim-lit church is sweet  
With font and chancel filled with flowers,  
This Easter morn to greet,  
When up the silent aisle there comes  
A child with faltering feet.

Softly the notes from organ grand  
Are stealing through the air ;  
Beneath the Altar's gleaming cross  
She lays the lily fair,  
And then all timidly she kneels,  
And clasps her hands in prayer.

" 'Tis all I have," she murmurs low,  
" Dear Lord, to give to Thee,  
And so I bring this flower I love,  
An offering from me ;  
For on this holy Easter Day  
Thy child I pray to be."



Amid the throng at service hour,  
In anthem, chant, and hymn,  
One sweet voice rang, until it made  
The older eyes grow dim ;  
They did not know what filled her heart  
With gladness to the brim.

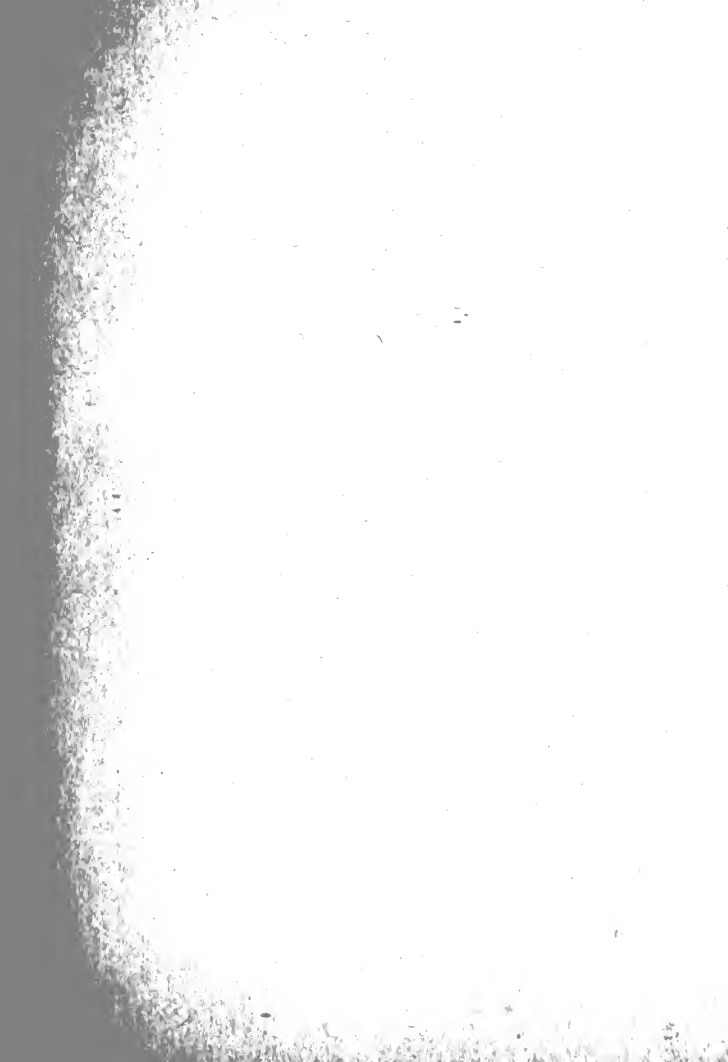
The best that it was hers to give,  
That she had given away ;  
Not " that which cost her nothing," but  
What nearest her heart lay.  
Lord, grant that we may also give  
Our best on Easter Day.















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