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Some Appreciate It.
 Don't poke fun at family trees. Ancestry is a mighty fine thing for one who feels the need of it.—Duluth Herald.

Back to Mythology.
 Lightning bolts, it is predicted, may be hurled in the next war. Zeus found them useful a long time ago.—New York Herald.

Easter-Day in Easter-Land

By DR. S. R. VINTON

Easter comes at a different date in the Near East than in America, owing to the fact that the Greek church still clings to the antiquated Byzantine calendar. Easter is pre-eminently the most important holiday of the year in Greece, and its observance is more universal and more elaborate than anywhere in Western countries. In this article Dr. Vinton, famous world-traveler and lecturer, tells of his experiences in Athens, where he spent Easter last year among the refugees and orphans who are being cared for by America through the Near East Relief.



AM writing in Athens, at two o'clock in the morning of Easter Sunday, according to the Greek calendar. I have just come from a two hour service that started shortly before midnight. Although I could not understand the Greek words of the service, I could enjoy and appreciate it, and as a result of three days of church-going there runs through my mind very persistently the words so long ago uttered by St. Paul in this very place: "To men of Athens—very religious."

Tonight was the climax of a series of observances that started on Good Friday. All that day the bells were tolling and flags were at half-mast everywhere. Business stopped. Throughout the day steady streams of people poured into the churches, not simply the great Cathedral, but into scores of little chapels I had never noticed before. There was no general or congregational service; it was all individual worship. People came alone or in family groups. Every class of society was represented. In most of the churches there were representations of the sepulchre and people knelt for

back into the church; the crowd began to move, but nobody was in a hurry. They were greeting friends with the glad tidings, "Christos Anesti." Mothers whispered it to their children and the children lisped back reply. Refugees in old ragged clothes, with the memory of massacre, deportation and suffering, said softly, thankfully, "Christos Anesti."

A two-hour service of more formal character followed, in the Cathedral, marked by antiphonal chanting of very impressive character. Perhaps five thousand people crowded into the building, all standing. An impressive thing was their obvious familiarity with all the liturgical requirements of the service: at certain points five thousand hands moved as one when they made the sign of the cross at some point in the chant or reading. No one had a prayer-book; everyone seemed to know the service perfectly.

At one point in the service, a Bishop advanced toward the open door and called out a question in a loud voice. There came back from five thousand throats the answer, in Greek, but unmistakable: "He is not here; He is risen."

The climax came when two Bishops advanced to the altar, carrying be-



ORPHAN CHILDREN OF THE NEAR EAST RELIEF ON THEIR PLAY-GROUND IN CLASSIC ATHENS
 Near East Relief, 14 West Franklin Street, Baltimore, Md.

a moment as they kissed reverently the sacred pictures in front of the "tomb." I watched long and, I am frank to say, critically, for evidence of mere formality, mere routine. But I saw earnest, reverent, prayerful worship. Late into the evening the bells still tolled and the people were still going to the churches. That night thousands and thousands marched in procession through the streets and up the long winding road to the Chapel of St. George at the top of Mount Lycabettus.

Saturday night the city took on a more festive turn. By ten o'clock the streets were full of people. Every person carried a candle, most of them unlit, but enough lit to make the scene one long to be remembered. Soon after ten, a movement started toward the great square in front of the Cathedral, and I pushed along with the crowd. After a few blocks the crowd became thicker and progress difficult. But it was a good-natured crowd. There was talking and laughing, but there was nothing boisterous. It was a reverent, honey-crowd, grouped in families, with thousands of children.

Reaching a cross street, I found the main approach to the Cathedral Square. I could scarcely believe my eyes; the square was as light as at noonday from a thousand flaming gas lamps and at least ten thousand candles. The center of the square was a great stand which had been erected for the church dignitaries and their midnight Easter service. In front of the stand were a thousand orphans from the American orphanages, drawn up in close formation, hats off, reverent and worshipful.

At 11:45 the bells of the Cathedral burst into music. The crowd surged forward. Those who had not yet lit their candles borrowed lights from their neighbors. Then came the processions from the church, first the sacred icons, then the parish priests, then the bishops and finally the Metropolitan, head of the church. A hand began to play a stately Gregorian chant; the soldiers came right to salute and held it for the full five minutes of the chant. Everybody joined in the singing. Ten thousand voices came to me, a deep vibrant sound like the combined music of wind through the pines and the distant breaking of heavy surf. I could distinguish no single voice, so heavy and overpowering was the swelling chorus. Everybody knew the chant and joined reverently. It was as if they were singing to themselves and God alone, with no consciousness of anyone around them.

The chant was finished just before midnight, and the Metropolitan's voice rose clear and strong, resending a climax on the stroke of twelve with the familiar words "Christos Anesti!"—Christ is Risen! As the bells broke forth in joyful whole-throated pealing, every person in the crowd repeated again and again these words, "Christ is Risen." Each man greeted each of his neighbors with the joyous phrase, as people in an American crowd will say "Happy New Year" to each other at New Year's. The procession filed

tween them a very old book. Then the Metropolitan, in full ecclesiastical robes, came forward and read a chapter in a clear, strong voice that filled the great church, closing with the words, "Christos Anesti." Every candle swept upward as the crowd, in hushed tones vibrant with deep emotion, echoed his phrase. Three times this was done, and then followed a chant in which the same words rang out again and again.

In the American orphanages and in the refugee camps, it has often seemed to me that the secret of these remarkable people of the Near East is to be found in Paul's phrase "very religious." An amazing thing is the faith and spirit of these people. In every corner of the Near East I have been impressed with their deep religious character and their devotion to their church.

In the American orphanages there is, of course, daily Bible study. That is generally taken for granted; I didn't take for granted, however; I inquired everywhere and never failed to find a regular program, in which the children displayed great interest. But there is also spontaneous religious life among these children. At Sidon, I found the orphans holding a prayer service of their own, not daily, but twice daily. At Nazareth the boy carpenters used a part of their lunch hour for a devotional service. On the door of the Boys' Club in another orphanage center I saw a sign, written by one of the boys, "Come here to study the Bible."

The deeply religious nature of the people of the Near East and their intense faith in God are a chief explanation of the spirit in which they have endured so much without losing heart and hope. Recognition and development of this spiritual factor are of great importance in the contribution that America is making toward a permanent and just solution of the many problems of the Near East.

The East has been awakened. It is stirring with new life, new vitality, new aspirations. The Nile Valley, Palestine, Syria, Turkey and the Balkans, are electric with potentialities. Perhaps the future of every child on earth today is taking form in this cauldron of old races and old hatreds, of new hopes and new power.

Ten years ago a bomb exploded at Sarajevo in the Balkans, and destroyed the old life of every man and woman and child in the United States. Let us not doubt that the fate of our children is being affected by the momentous events of today in the Near East.

We do not doubt it. Nor are we helpless and blind in imagined security, as we were ten years ago. The American people are acting now, in the turmoil of the Levant. They are speaking clearly and strongly the one word that means friendship, understanding, peace. Through our humanitarian and relief activities we are expressing in action, not in lip-service, the ideal of the Golden Rule. Sixty thousand orphaned children, of all the Levantine races, are learning it from the Americans who have rescued them from death.

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