

of Nazareth was born and that he brought into this sad world the gladness which is born of hope immortal for all men. In that rejoicing I can share the power of the Sun and the spirit of the Son whose strength lies in the ability and willingness to share and make others glad and hopeful.

Easter? Again "Why not?" Again, a universal pre-christian nature festival; the very name taken from a pagan goddess Aoster: a festival of sheer joy in the Resurrection of Life in response to the vital power of the Sun. All winter there had been seeming death in the fields and woods, except for the evergreen trees.

But now, on every hand, are the signs and symbols of life which overcomes death. We find its ancient significance in the legend of Persephone and Demeter and Pluto: in the fairy story of Prince Charming (the sun) awakening the Sleeping Beauty (the earth).

Easter. Aoster. Throughout it is the lovely story of Spring victorious, of Life victorious, of the Resurrection Life.

And again Christianity found this nature-festival, which had rolled out of the very heart of man, and took it over and lifted it and purified it. But, again, if you take it literally and prosily, you lose it. If your belief in Easter depends on the resurrection of a physical body your position is precarious. Possibly the Romans removed his body lest his grave become a mecca for over-zealous followers. No one knows just what happened. But you can know that his grave—as is every grave in all the world—was empty of reality.

There are several accounts of his appearance to his disciples thereafter. Whatever happened we can know that vast, new power was given to the conviction of immortality.

I celebrate Easter because it is a symbol of the immortality of the soul; because by his life, as well as by his death, Jesus bore witness to the value of the soul as far more precious and enduring than anything that could happen to it. And, in so doing he placed the stamp of divinity on a belief which prevailed long before his day, which bore witness to man's conviction that what we call "death" is not the end.

BELIEF IN SALVATION, HEAVEN AND HELL

VI. "Do you—a Unitarian—believe in Salvation, Heaven and Hell?"

Certainly! Yet I would clear those terms of outworn meanings and see them in the light of moral and rational religion.

There was a story once extant, now extinct among thinking people, to the effect that a comparatively short time ago a god named Jahwoh created a man named Adam who, through disobedience, fell. That angered the god (who later became identified with God) and he laid a curse on all new-born babies who were born "lost" and had to be saved. A long time later he sent a pre-existent supernatural Being who by his blood-sacrifice paid off the debt incurred by Adam to this angry god. But, even then, only those who