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THANKSGIVING

Tomorrow is Thanksgiving Day throughout the United States and it is a day which is historically and otherwise of far more than ordinary significance. Of the origin of Thanksgiving Day our students are well aware and mention of the beginning of the annual observance of it is not necessary at this time. It is, or should be, in the fitness of things, a day set apart for the "giving of thanks." Formerly it was a day more or less solemn, during which was observed the kindness and bounty of an All-Wise Creator. In a sense it was of a religious character and was solemnly observed. Such was the beginning.

Customs change with each succeeding generation, and, "for better or worse," the observation of Thanksgiving Day has undergone a complete change. It is no longer a day of prayerful thankfulness, as it used to be, but it has become a "regular holiday," a day of rejoicing and often of unrestrained hilarity. While once it was an occasion for serious reflection and meditation on the mercy of Providence, it is now a time for almost anything but that. We have feasting, often not wisely, but too well; and for some the "cold gray dawn of the morning after" ushers in a day for which many are not thankful, for the gormandizers must pay the penalty.

We find no fault with the change in Thanksgiving Day observance in comparison with the past, for we believe that whatever adds to human happiness in a legitimate way is of itself good, especially when there is ever too much of sadness in the lives of the great majority. However, it is well for all of us to take stock in ourselves and our surroundings now and then, and Thanksgiving Day seems to be deemed especially fit for communion with self. A little serious reflection now and then is good for all of us. It renders us more charitable in our dealings with others, and we can see our own short-comings, and by reflection conceive a lot of possibilities for betterment of self and others. Do a little serious thinking tomorrow and be thankful that you have the intelligence to do so.

It seems that the majority of us are prone to lament this or that, to bewail our lot, to rave about conditions, etc., when as a matter of fact the chances are that we, ourselves, are the manufacturers of our own

calamities—those abominable conditions which we believe are wrecking our lives. Let us snap out of this view for all time, and tomorrow celebrate the day by reflecting upon our mental emancipation from a lot of morbid thoughts which get us no place worth while.

The American wishes all its readers a day tomorrow for which they can be truly thankful—then they should be happy, and we want them happy. Be thankful for good health, for friends, for the wholesome necessities of life, for the protection of the foremost government in the world, where a man's a man and you can enjoy religious and political liberty. Now, be thankful!

CRADLES HAVE CHANGED

The oldest form of cradle known is an oblong oak box without a lid. Originally rockers on cradles were detachable, but like other household appliances this one has been subject to the changes of fashions—in shape, adornment, etc. The original and simple shape persisted for several centuries, then the hood made its appearance. During its time the cradle has been paneled, inlaid, and mounted in gilded bronze.

In the 18th century cradles became very elaborate, especially those used for state occasions. In modern times they have become lighter and simpler, the old hood usually being left off entirely or replaced by draped curtains. It was about the middle of the 19th century that iron cradles were introduced along with iron bedsteads. Now this ancient article is more often called the "bassinet." Bassinets are usually made of delicate wood frames, iron frames or wicker.

In this country the Indian mother still hangs "baby, cradle and all" to the branch of a tree, where the wind rocks the little red bundle off to sleep. These cradles are usually made of a framework of bark, very warmly lined and packed into a sort of shoe, then both baby and cradle are strapped with reindeer thongs and lashed to the tree. The value of one superior Indian cradle is said to be equivalent to the value of a good horse. Some American babies take over the old family clothes basket (sometimes a new one) for their cradle, while others have elaborate bassinets lined with fancy silks and satins. In all lands cradles are inevitably connected with songs. Generations of mothers have sung "Hushaby baby in the treetop" and others.