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The Old-Fashioned Thanksgiving

(Edgar Albert Guest, 1881-1959)

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It may be I am getting old and like too much to dwell
Upon the days of bygone years, the days I loved so well;
But thinking of them now I wish somehow that I could know
A simple old Thanksgiving Day, like those of long ago,
When all the family gathered round a table richly spread,
With little Jamie at the foot and grandpa at the head,
The youngest of us all to greet the oldest with a smile,
With mother running in and out and laughing all the while.

It may be I'm old-fashioned, but it seems to me to-day
We're too much bent on having fun to take the time to pray;
Each little family grows up with fashions of its own;
It lives within a world itself and wants to be alone.
It has its special pleasures, its circle, too, of friends;
There are no get-together days; each one his journey wends,
Pursuing what he likes the best in his particular way,
Letting the others do the same upon Thanksgiving Day.

I like the olden way the best, when relatives were glad
To meet the way they used to do when I was but a lad;
The old home was a rendezvous for all our kith and kin,
And whether living far or near they all came trooping in
With shouts of "Hello, daddy!" as they fairly stormed the place
And made a rush for mother, who would stop to wipe her face
Upon her gingham apron before she kissed them all,
Hugging them proudly to her breast, the grownups and the small.

Then laughter rang throughout the home, and, Oh, the jokes they told;
From Boston, Frank brought new ones, but father sprang the old;
All afternoon we chatted, telling what we hoped to do,
The struggles we were making and the hardships we'd gone through;
We gathered round the fireside. How fast the hours would fly--
It seemed before we'd settled down 'twas time to say good-bye.
Those were the glad Thanksgivings, the old-time families knew
When relatives could still be friends and every heart was true.

