

THANKSGIVING 1916

THANKSGIVING IS "OLD HOME" DAY

It is well to hark back now and then to the old days and the old ways. Thanksgiving day in the beginning was a New England holiday. It is only of late years that it has been domesticated in the rest of the country and made a federal observance.

Ex-Secretary of the Navy John D. Long in a reminiscent article told how the Pilgrims celebrated it. He wrote:

A man must have been born in a New England village more than a generation ago to know the full old time flavor of Thanksgiving day. Then families were large. Flocks of boys and girls were in evidence and filled the half dozen or more scattered school-houses which since then have become so depopulated that most of them have been abandoned, and the vastly diminished number of successors of former crowds of scholars are carted back and forth in a single omnibus to some more pretentious structure at the village center. Then holidays were rare. New Year's day and Washington's birthday and even Christmas, still under the blight of the old Puritan protest, were for the most part unobserved. Fast day had no significance in the way of its recognition, except possibly a sermon or, if the snow was on the ground, a game of ball. The Fourth of July was an outdoor celebration, often as quiet as a Sunday after the old swivel had been fired at sunrise.

The crowning festival of the year was Thanksgiving, the festival of the harvest. When the apples and pumpkins had been gathered, when the early snows had fallen, when the grandfathers and grandmothers and Uncle James and Aunt Betsey were invited to dinner, and the boys had strayed away to an acquaintance elsewhere, came Thanksgiving. The appetite of a "hog" and "beef" had been killed and his quarters stored for the winter's only supply of fresh meat. The hog that had grunted all summer in his pen and grown fat had gone under the butcher's knife; some and sausage had sent their appetizing odor through the house, and the pork barrel was full. "Mother" and "the girls"—there were no servants—for days previous had been making marvelous constructions of mince and apple and pumpkin pies. The turkey flanked one end of the table and a huge chicken pie the other. The small boy, already gorged, when his aunt stily asked him which kind of pie he would have, as if he could have but one, timidly but eagerly answered back, "All three."

IN THE TENEMENTS.

Thanksgiving Brings Good Cheer, and Kiddies Understand Day.

The spirit of Thanksgiving penetrates not only the attics and tenements of the poor of the big cities, but many dwellings of the sick and unfortunate. In the great hospitals the kiddies in the convalescent wards have a real Thanksgiving dinner, and as a member of a hospital staff said:

"Most of them are thankful they're in the hospital on Thanksgiving day. It's the best place for them. If they were at home they'd be miserable and lonesome probably. In the hospital there are other children about with whom they can celebrate."

In practically all of the Settlement houses the harvest feast is enjoyed, whatever the nationality of the "neighbors." No little Italian or Polish but learns the joy of "turkey day." One wonders sometimes just what the vision may be in the innermost recesses of Tony's little soul, but there is no hesitation in his manner as he answers:

"Please, teacher, Thanksgiving is the day what my mother gets a turkey by the church. It is to be thankful to the Lord for the things we're thankful for."

It took a public schoolteacher to explain the gibbiness of these little foreign tongues.

"Why, of course," she said, "they learn the story of Thanksgiving almost before they can speak English. They have pictures of the pilgrims and the Indians, harvest fields and pumpkins and corn and turkeys. Well, I don't suppose they ever saw pumpkins growing or have any conception of what harvest means to the farmers, but they're clever little things. They have some kind of vision of something good. It's wonderful how quickly they acquire a veneration of American ideas. It's only a veneer, and it's pretty thin in places, but it gets them through."

The Herald's THANKSGIVING PAGE



A Thanksgiving Puzzle

By GOODLOE H. THOMAS

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YOU'D think we could all quite agree That the turkey is merely a bird, But peruse this and quickly you'll see That the species is merely inferred.

Uncle Jim, for example, will show That our strutting, fat gobbler out there Isn't properly classified so, But is rather a "perfect old bear."

Sister Kate's view is odd, to say least, For she claims, as Thanksgiving draws near, She can see that for gracing a feast Our old gobbler 'll be simply a "dear."

But my dad has that turkey enrolled In a family that's noted for butin'. Though that turk wasn't raised in a fold, Dad remarks, "You're my Thanksgiving mutton."

But the turkey has sized up his kind In a way that's most worthy of note, For he gobbles each time he has dined, "They are fattening me—I am the goal."

To Stuff the "Bird." The chestnuts for stuffing the turkey may be the sweet little native ones or the larger ones from the Mediterranean countries. Cut a gash in the shell. Bruise them over with melted fat and spread on a shallow pan in the oven for a short time. Then the skins will peel off with the shells or the nuts may be boiled to loosen the shells.

THANKSGIVING PHILOSOPHY.

YOU can pray much better to God if you say to yourself as follows: "Consider that this great universe, of which thou art only a trivial atom, is governed by fixed laws and is therefore content in all things to abide thereby and especially to die at any time and submit to God's will of these, whether of individual future life or dissolution into universal mind and matter." That is the spirit in which we should approach Thanksgiving day each year. It is the day when we make special recognition of the existence and rulership of God. On that day we should thank him for those laws which he has ordained to work out the best result for all of his creatures. On that day we should consider whether we have conformed thereto and resolve again not to go contrary to them during the coming year. Do not say that such religion or philosophy deprives us of our free will. Nay, it does not. The free will which God leaves with us is freedom to conform to these fixed laws or to deviate from or go against them. That is the free will which we have, and we should resolve to exercise it properly. There are the things which Thanksgiving day brings to our minds.—William J. Gay.

They're Grateful to America. An English writer on foods has said: "The modern table owes more to Columbus than to any other than can be named. The discovery of America has enriched our tables with the turkey, the canvasback duck, the potato, the tomato, cocoa, vanilla and a host of good things."

A THANKSGIVING OF LONG AGO

THE fondest memory I cherish is of my boyhood Thanksgiving," said Chauncey M. Depew, "and, although Thanksgivings may be now just the same as they were then, they do not seem the same to me—not by a long shot."

"When I was a lad I lived at Peekskill upon a farm, our country estate and the same which now belongs to me. We awoke on Thanksgiving day at early dawn and were up dancing and singing with glee. There were to be no gifts, of course, but the house was full of company, who were with us to spend the day, and that fact, together with the presence of about a dozen little cousins, made the Depew boys and girls very early risers and merry from the minute the sun awoke. My father and mother were very strict. They did not think Thanksgiv-



"WE ALL BUNDLED INTO A GREAT SLEIGH."

ing a day for play or merriment of any sort until one had been to church and given thanks. So my mother always got up early to keep us "bushed up," and my father also arose to be sure that we did not do any laughing. We always had a good breakfast.

"Then came church time! And into a great sleigh we all bundled. It seems to me now that we had snow earlier in those days, for I can remember being stowed away under the robes like a little animated mummy not expected to see light until unveiled at the end of the journey. There always was a very long church service, and poor mother employed all her time comforting or frowning upon us as the occasion seemed to demand. After a time church was out. Then came the dinner and the fun. For in the old time Thanksgiving celebrations the whole character of the day changed after church, and what had before been the strictest Sunday conduct became as riotous as the revelers could make it. "Oh, what a dinner we had! I think now we must have been very rich folk to afford so much. In those days no one had course dinners. And the table was 'set' when the family filed into the room, and the center of the feast was turkey—nothing but turkey."

"After dinner came the dessert. This always consisted of thirteen different kinds of pie. I used to eat all thirteen, and my father was proud of me for it. If anything happened so that I could not get beyond the twelfth kind of pie father rallied me upon growing weak and mother looked anxious for my health. I can see those triangles of pie now. There was mince, of course. Then came 'punkin,' apple, custard, coconut, lemon, prune, blackberry (canned), dried peach and several others, winding up with cranberry. It was a great treat for us boys, who never at any other time in the year really had all the pie we could eat. After dinner we sat down quietly in the parlor and my grandmother told us stories. We were, ourselves, quite too full for utterance. Surely too full for play."

"But the sequel to Thanksgiving day was most interesting of all. It followed on Thanksgiving night, just like a Nemesis. And its program was this: When it came time for all to go to bed my mother would call us children in the pantry, and then came the little dose which was to counteract all bad effects of the overstuffing process. My dose was always castor oil. And well I remember how it was prepared. First into the cup went a great deal of molasses. Then came a spoonful of the oil. Then more molasses. This I had to drink. Since then I have spent many Thanksgivings days, but I never enjoyed any as well as those—except the castor oil afterward."