

BROWN'S THANKSGIVING

It Made This Speculator Think Life Worth the Living,
AND TO A GAY TYPEWRITER GIRL
It Brought Sweet Peace from Out Life's Dizzy Whirl.

GEOURGE CALDWELL, of Gotham town the morn before Thanksgiving From sleep awoke, so nearly broke life hardly seemed worth living. Now this man Brown had been thrown down by Wall street's fluctuations; To rise again seemed to him then beyond all calculations. "My race is run, I'm quite undone," Brown mused as he was dressing; "I never knew things quite so blue nor creditors so pressing. And then he took his pocketbook and counted up his money. The dollars four, there were no more, so few were they seemed funny. It made him smile that little pile and then his blood departed. For Brown had stuck, believed to luck for those not chicken-hearted. And to his breakfast golly down went speculator Caldwell Brown. While he drank his coffee hot to his hand a note was brought, and the writing on its cover made him turn it o'er and o'er. When at last he broke its seal its contents fairly made him reel; Made the blood rush to his head, for this was what the letter said: "George Caldwell Brown, Esq.: "Dear Boy—it gives me several kinds of joy To send a check made out to you to pay the hundred, long since due. You kindly loaned when I was broke. "Most sincerely, R. T. CHOAK." As he picked his way down town, thus mused Speculator Brown: "On the day before Thanksgiving, life is always worth the living. Every cloud has its silver lining; somewhere, always, sun is shining. Now it really seems to me I should very thankful be; Yesterday the sky was murky; now I'm sure to have my turkey.



THE DOLLARS FOUR.

But holy smoke! As I'm a sinner, no one's asked me out to dinner. Last Thanksgiving I'd a lot of bids to feed, but this year not a soul, so far, remember me. Jimmy crickets! Well, we'll see." Thinking thus, Brown stood before his sixteenth story office door. "Would it would it not fright her if I asked my young typewriter How to work this plan," thought Brown, as he went and set him down. And as he read his letters o'er, he thought about his plans the more. And as he thought he grew perplexed, until at last she thought him vexed. "To-morrow's Thanksgiving," ventured she. "A day when all, it seems to me, should eat lots of turkey and pumpkin pie, and all sorts of skin's that money can buy." Thus quickly to the girl's amaze, Brown made reply in following phrase: "And," he went on, "I have a plan, and you must help me if you can." Then he told her how he borrowed money came. And how he sorrowed much before it came. He said: "The landscape blue, it turned to red. It filled my heart with thankfulness, it drove away my wretchedness. But," he continued, "then I thought of other men dead broke. I ought to see some other lackless sinners furnished with Thanksgiving dinners. The maiden listened to his words. "You want my help to buy the birds. The every and the pumpkin pies and other things," she said, her eyes bent on the floor. Then he replied: "That's it exactly; if you tried. You could not closer speak my mind. And further, if you'll be so kind And help me at the dinner, too, I'll always grateful be to you." The maiden's cheek was like a peach, and as she listened to his speech, into it crept a rosy pink, so comely, that it made him think:



THE DINNER.

"Well, I vow: in all the city there is no other girl so pretty." So to the market forth they went, on benevolence intent. On the way the girl observed: "Where will you have the dinner served? If you have not got another plan, I'm certain that my mother. Would be happy if you were to have it cooked and served by her." "A very good idea, my child," said Speculator Brown, and smiled. "How many guests, then, will there be? Have you asked them yet?" said she. "No, by gracious! I forgot. When we have the dinner brought, I'll find fellows out of work, and bid them



Let He That Hath Plenty Give To Him That Hath None.

come and feed on turk." So they planned and so they talked as to the market place they walked. At the market place their eyes filled with wonder and surprise. Food was there from all creation; food enough for half a nation. "Where does it come from?" Brown pronounced. Thus a market man expounded: "Should you ask me whence those turkeys, Whence those birds of rounded plumpness, Stripped each one of ruby wattle, Stripped of all its glorious feathers, Drawn and ready for the oven, There to bake and brown and sizzle Till the cook, with wise decision, takes it from the torrid recess, Ready for Thanksgiving dinners, I should tell you, answer I should: From the plains of Illinois, from the hills of Pennsylvania, From the vales of Massachusetts, from New York and from New Jersey, Where the farmers feed and feed more, All the summer, all the autumn, Till Thanksgiving is not far off; Then they send them to the city. That New York may not be left Of the pleasures of the table." "That's enough of rhymeless rhythm; send two turkeys, and send with them—" Brown began, stopped, perplexed. Turning to the girl: "What next?" Then the maiden skillfully filled the order out, and he paid the bill admiringly. How Brown went out guests to invite would be too long a story quite. But he scripped up half a dozen, and himself, the maiden's cousin, And her mother, all sat down next day to feast on turkeys brown. Who was there? Isiah Stout, who for six weeks had been out. Next to him, contented, sat Candy Maker Israel Pratt. With his wife, John Henry Stiles, employed in good times making ties. Just across the grinning table sat the boot-black, Billy Cable. At his right his face a grin, was the news-boy, Tommy Quinn. Ne'er was dinner better cooked, never maiden sweeter looked. While the guests devoured and gorged, Cupid's shafts lightly forged. Brown's heart was the heart they bound, as he very quickly found. And before the meal was over, Brown was a devoted lover. When the guests had gone away Brown asked if he might linger stay. And to the maiden, with a flush, he told a tale that made her blush. "Won't you help me, if you can, with this better, sweeter plan? Don't you see, a wife I need? Must I with you hopeless plead?" Said the maiden: "Of the other plan I counselled with my mother. If to this one she'll consent, to marry you I'll be content." Nothing more this scribbler tells; listen now to wedding bells.



THE night before Thanksgiving the city was ablaze with lights. The first snow had fallen and the air itself seemed light hearted. The massive mansions that surround Gramercy Park were brightly lit. In muffled silence a young man cloakless and gloveless hurried by the iron bars that fence in the little acre of the rich toward his lodging place. For five years Jack Fleming had lived alone. No one knew very much about him, except that he was a thriftless, indolent genius. When his father died the fortune that might have gone to him had endowed certain wealthy charitable institutions. His mother had died in his infancy, and Jack Fleming had grown up with the servants and his books for companions. He had never seen enough of his father to love him. In his childhood Jack had had one friend, Dora Goldthwait. She was a beautiful girl, several years his junior, who lived in the house adjoining his father's, and every day one or the other would climb the fence that separated them and drop over into the little yard for a romp. Dora was proud of her protector and playmate, for even then Jack was full of book knowledge, and Dora soon learned to love Shakespeare and Milton as read aloud by her here. Another great tramping place for the little boys was Gramercy Park, for both houses faced the handsome playground and Mr. Goldthwait and Jack's father were among the favored rich who possessed keys to the great iron gates that

shut out the children of the poor, who often leaped the iron fence and peered wistfully between the bars at the smiling lawn within. The children were inseparable until Jack was 15 and Dora 12. Then Jack went to college, but every holiday found him at home again, and often books went by the board and Jack came home on the sly to see his little sweetheart. Of course, on these occasions he was smuggled into Dora's home, and good-natured, easy-going Mr. Goldthwait would have thought it the basest treachery for any member of his family to inform his next door neighbor, Jack's father, that his son was playing truant. After three years at college Jack was hopelessly behind in his studies, and his father, still ignorant of the reason, called him a blockhead. One day Jack received a tender, loving letter from Dora asking him to come home at once, as her father had just received word from England that he had fallen heir to a large property, including a theater in one of the large cities, and the business of the latter was



"IN THE LITTLE BACK YARD."

in urgent need of his immediate attention. The family would sail for England immediately, but Dora wanted Jack to go with them, if he could. A few hours after receiving the letter Jack stood in front of the Goldthwait residence on Gramercy Park. It was closed. No servant answered the bell, and Jack's heart felt like lead. Again he looked at the letter. It was dated two days before and had been delayed in the mails. At home he found his father, but in a mood in which he had never seen him before. "You young rascal!" he shouted, as Jack entered. "So you have been wasting your time next door, instead of studying." No pleading on the part of Jack could induce the turbulent old man to tell where the Goldthwaits had gone. "Never mind," thought Jack, "I will hear from her soon, and then—" But no letter came. Weeks lengthened into months and Jack grew tall and thin. One day he went up to his college town, and an inquiry at the postoffice elicited the fact that several letters had come, up to a month ago, but they had been forwarded to Gramercy Park. That night father and son faced each other for the last time. "Where are the letters Dora wrote to me?" demanded Jack, as he leaned over toward the old man, who stood smiling sarcastically in his face. "I told you that if you refused to return to college you would regret it," was the reply. Jack turned on his heel and passed out of the house. He found it a harder struggle than he expected. His income fluctuated from next to nothing to nothing itself. He became first a wanderer among apartments, then among boarding houses, and at last an inhabitant of "furnished rooms," who ate at cheap restaurants—when he could get at all. He had lived a week in a rear hall bedroom on Twenty-second street before he discovered that its windows were only separated from those of his old home and that of Dora, on Gramercy Park, by the brief New York back yards in which they used to play together. The Goldthwait house was dark. It had been ever since the day Dora left. Next to it, where his father's mansion loomed up against the trees beyond, lights were often seen. But strangers occupied the familiar rooms.

On Thanksgiving Eve just five years since he had left his old life behind him Jack went to his dingy little window to gaze at the two mansions. He shivered with cold; but the blood rushed quickly to his face when he saw the home of the girl he still loved, brightly lighted up. For an instant he stood still, amazed. Then he sat down on his bed to think. Finally, downhearted and discouraged, he turned to a great pile of manuscript and rubbish on the floor, and picking a book from the nondescript mass he turned over the leaves.

"Twelve plays out," he muttered to himself; "five of them probably lost." Only that day he had sent his best and latest comedy to the new English actor who had arrived the day before. As soon as it was rehearsed (as he doubted not it would be) he would send the others in rotation. For months he had expected success to come with the dawn of every new day, and to-night as he threw himself on his bed, hungry and broken-hearted, he realized the mistake he had made in living in a dream. He made firm resolutions to reform, but as his fingers clinched in new-born resolve his eyes strayed across the way again. For the second time that evening his heart stood still. Behind the soft lace curtains of the Goldthwait mansion shadows of people flitted to and fro. The house was inhabited again—but by strangers, of course, he thought.

Thanksgiving Day found Jack poorer and hungrier than he had ever been before in his life. For forty-eight hours he had not tasted food, but he determined to breakfast in spite of the almost total emptiness of his pocketbook. He turned his face toward the lower portion of the city, determined to accept whatever work offered itself, but it was a holiday, and after several hours spent in tramping the quiet streets Jack turned his face homeward. As he trudged up Broadway a clatter on the stones behind attracted his attention and a driverless cab dashed into sight. An elderly man was gesticulating wildly from the window. With a bound Jack responded. In another moment the runaway horse stood panting in the roadway, and Jack's sinewy hand was on the bit. "One dollar to drive me up to Delmonico's," shouted the man. "But your driver?" asked Jack. "Drunk in a saloon," was the response. Without another word Jack leaped up to the cabby's seat and whipped up to the horse. It was the first time he had ever earned a dollar by manual labor, and as he clinched his teeth firmly a flush mounted to his cheeks.

When the once familiar restaurant came into sight Jack thought, with moisture in his eyes, of the many times he and Dora had lunched in the great dining-room. As he reined up before it, haggard and mud bespattered, totally different from his old self, he started with amazement. There, standing on the sidewalk was the subject of his dream—not the Dora of old, with short frock and curling hair streaming in the wind, but the beautiful woman into which the years had changed her. For a moment Jack could hardly restrain himself from rushing forward and declaring his identity. But a thought of his clothes and his work made him stop. He became as anxious to hide his face as he had been a moment before to tell his name. Dora and her father passed into the restaurant and Jack earned a second dollar by getting a new driver for his passenger's coupe. He passed and repassed the restaurant in an unsuccessful attempt to get another glimpse of the woman he loved before he even satisfied his hunger. It was dark before he went back to his little room and stationed himself once more at his window to gaze at the lights in the Goldthwait mansion. He was filled with a conflict of love and pride. He had no reason to believe that Dora had not forgotten him, but his love for her was as strong as ever. He longed to go to her, but the knowledge of his poverty and shabbiness kept him back. The windows of the great old dining-room were bright with light and their raised curtains gave him a clear view of

the place where he and Dora had had many happy Thanksgiving reunions together. He saw her sitting about the table as of old, putting the finishing touches on the arrangement of fruits and flowers. He could see her plainly. She looked even younger and more beautiful than she had that afternoon in her heavy wraps.

Half an hour passed and some one came into the room—a tall, handsome man. Dora seemed to forget her household duties, for she hung on the man's arm and seemed to plead with him. At last he sat down, and then still another person came in; it was Mr. Goldthwait. They sat by the fire, with Dora between them. She was talking earnestly, to the handsome stranger seemed to be listening intently. Occasionally Jack could see that Mr. Goldthwait spoke. The Dora would beam with happy smiles. Suddenly she jumped up from her seat and a moment later when she returned she had in her hands a fluttering manuscript.

She read it. The old smile played about her lips. The gestures waved the graceful hands. It maddened Jack. He felt that he must be near her once more—near her voice again.

A wisteria vine ran down from his window. Clinging the strong, dry stalk, descended until he stood on the fence and leaped to his memory. Softly he crept and still he reached the little veranda at the rear of the Goldthwait mansion, peering through the window he fastened his eyes on the face of the girl he loved.

Jack was overcome as he saw again the little details of the room which had had been so familiar to him. He bowed his head. He pushed against the pane of the swinging window. The window opened a trifle. Jack started back frightened, but the air was still outside, and the inmates of the room had not noticed. How he could hear Dora's voice. It said: "Now, Mr. Langdon, let me read the drama to you before dinner is announced."

Langdon was the name of the English actor to whom Jack had sent his play, and as Dora's sweet voice read on, Jack realized that it was his own comedy she was reading. "Capital! Capital!" cried Langdon. Jack was filled with intense excitement. His hands were clinched. "Do you accept it?" asked Dora, triumphantly, of the actor. "I do," was the reply. "It is the comedy that I have been waiting for."

"I will write him to-night, then," said Dora. The beautiful girl sank back in her chair and went on: "And now I will tell you a story that will explain why I was so anxious to have you take the play."



"HE SAT ON HIS BED AND THOUGHT."

Jack listened breathlessly. "You see," said Dora, "I used to have a friend here named John Fleming. When we went abroad I wrote to him, but he did not answer my letters. I lost sight of him, but I did not lose my—well, my regard for him."

"A splendid fellow," interrupted Mr. Goldthwait. "There never was one like him," said Dora. Then she went on: "Well, when we reached New York last week father and I began to look him up, and we found in the first place that the reason he had not answered my letters was because his father, who was angry at both of us, had intercepted them; in the second place that father and son were never reconciled, and that the old gentleman disinherited Jack when he died, and in the third place that Jack had been ever since busily making a living out of literary work and trying to get some one to produce his plays."

"We finally got track of him this morning, and this morning also I saw the manuscript of this play lying on the table where you had left it when you brought it up from the theater. The words 'By John Fleming' caught my attention at once, and I picked it up and read it. It seemed to me so strange that I made up my mind that you should send it back without reading it, so I read it to you myself. And now I shall send for Jack to-morrow, and when he comes I shall have good news for him. And—and good news for Jack is—is good news for me, you see. So I am very happy."

There was a noise of an opening window, and Jack, wild eyed and unkempt, but very joyful, stepped in. For a moment they did not recognize him, but when they did—

"Well," said Mr. Langdon, "this cinema beats anything in your play."

"Yes," added Mr. Goldthwait, "and it is doubly good because it will be followed by a real Thanksgiving dinner."—New York Press.



"Give Me the Wishbone."