National Day of Thanksgiving

Annual American Feast Had Its pootype Among the Ancient People.

By A. W. GREELY.

WHEN President Roosevelt issued his proclamation appointing November 29 as a national day of thanksgiving he forged another link between the present and the dim, prehistoric past, for in practically unbroken chain the feast of thanksgiving, the harvest festival, stretches back to unknown origins in barbarous rites among savage peoples when the world was young.

When next Thursday American families reunite around the plump turkey and mince pies, after an hour of religious service, following the feast with attendance at a football game, they are executing a programme indentical in spirit with the Roman feast of Ceres, the Greek festival of Demeter, the Feast of the Ingathering of the ancient Hebrews, and similar observances among the Hindus and Chinese. The harvest thanksgiving is a universal mode of the weltgeist, an unchanging expression of the time spirit that unites past and present, civilized and savage, in bonds of brotherhood.

Among the yellowing documents in the executive departments and the Congressional Library may be traced the evolution of the National Thangsgiving Day as an annual observance. It was a struggle of more than three-quarters of a century before the day was nationalized, and it did not come until the real birth of a national consciousness after the old bitter sectionalism had dissapeared in the bloody solvent of civil war. In a sense, the Thanksgiving Day we of the present generation celebrate is one of thanks and joy for Peace between the North and South, for the salvage of the nation after the old ship of state had been battered and shaken in the long weary years of the fiercest internecine war in the history of the world.

Old newspaper files show that the devout enthusiasts, after the curtain fell at Appomattox on the concluding scene of the nation's great tragedy, planned a peace thanksgiving that should perpetuate in annual religious observance the victory of Northern arms over Southern valor. Following Lincoln's Thanksgiving proclamation in 1864, for a while many pulpits blazed with partisian bitterness, the heritage of war, but as time passed the harvest festival dominated more and more, until to-day the peace thanksgiving idea is submerged almost beyond the reach of memory.

The American Thanksgiving day was not always devoted to the worship of turkey and football. That is the present day evolution of a pious ceremony which had its origin on this continent when gravefaced Puritans at Plymouth Rock lifted their earnest voices in sincere prayer of thanks to Jehovah who had guided the frail Mayflower through storm and stress to an asylum where conscience was free.

In 1621, after their first year in New England, the Puritans in October, had their first harvest festival, the annual festival of old England, which as the years passed was to become the dominant feature of Thanksgiving Day. But at this time, as in England, thanks giving days were appointed for some particular event, and had no permanent connection with the ancient harvest celebration, in itself almost as old as the human race. Of this first Puritan harvest thanksgiving "Mourt's Relation" contains a quaint description of the feast with Massasoit and his Indians as guests. It is now a familiar schoolroom classic.

In 1623 occured the second Puritan Thanksgiving Day. The year had been one of disaster for the struggling colonists. Pitiless drought had scorched the unwilling soil, and the crops were perishing under brazen sun and rainless skies. Famine and pestilence threatened to wipe out of existence the struggling colony. In this extremity, true to their deep religious extincts, the Puritans, believing their sufferings were due to the vengeance of an angry God punishing them for their sins, appointed a day of prayer, fasting and humiliation to purge themselves of their deductive wickedness in order to placate a vengeful deity. But before the day set for donning sackcloth, and ashes the skies relented and pouring abundant rains on the parched soil and wilted crops saved the colonists from their impending fate. The appointed fast day was turned into one of fervent thanksgiving, the second one to be celebrated in the new land of promise.

From this time on to the revolution thanksgiving days were observed with increasing regularity, the tendency being to make a yearly thanksgiving feature of the old harvest festival. But this union was established only in face of the vigorous opposition of the Puritan ministers, who viewed the harvest festival games and merrymaking as deepest sacrilege on Thanksgiving Day.

It was the same battle which had been fought and lost in England. In the old country days appointed by the church for religious thanksgiving for particular events were turned by the hoi polloi into days of boisterous revelry and license. In New England human nature demonstrated its universal brotherhood, or innate sinfulness, as old Cotton Mather would have put it, and even heavy fines, cart-tail whippings, and like ignominious punishments could not exterminate that spirit which to-day finds expression in the Thanksgiving football game.

During the first century after colonization of New England a thanksgiving meant two long prosing sermons with a scanty cold meal crowded in between the pious exhortations. Gluttonous human nature in the flight of years has glorified that scanty, unpretentions lunch into a feast that for the vast majority of erring mortals has crowded the sermons into a disappearing background.

The fateful, era-marking events of the Revolution gave occasion for the appointment by the Continental Congress of several significant thanksgiving days.

While much of the old Puritan zeal and rigor had been modified by the passing years, yet the anthropomorphic conception of direct divine intercession in the world's humblest affairs was a cardinal tenet in the faith of a majority of the people. This firm belief found its first expression in the Continental Congress after the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga. It was the great crisis of the war,with Arnold's irresistible charge, Englan'd military prestige received a staggering blow. The moral effect of the victory was even greater than the resulting strategic advantages. It thrilltd with confidence and hope hearts of patriots made weary by defeat and reverses. Congress, in recognition of the momentuous victory appointed Dec. 18, 1777, as a day of thanksgiving and praise throughout the colonies, and the day, the first Continental thanksgiving, was universally observed.

In 1778, following the consummation of the alliance with France, the second great step toward the success of the Revolution, Congress appointed another day of thanksgiving, and the custom thus established was repeated year after year, culminating in the resolution at the establishment of peace in 1783 and again in the signing of the treaty in 1784.

Thanksgiving day became a political issue in the first national Congress. A thanksgiving day was proposed in observance of the establishment of the Constitution. The proposal led to a long fight in both the House and the Senate. The anti-Federalists accused their opponents with designs of making the day simply a celebration of the victory of the Federalists at the polls. The bitter partisan feeling of the campaign was reflected in vituperation that inflamed the long debates, but opposition was futile from lack of votes. The bill was passed and received the approval of Washington, who appointed November 26, 1789, as the first national thanksgiving day.

The next national thanksgiving day was February 19, 1792. It was appointed by President Washington without the authorization of Congress, and his action aroused considerable critism from anti-Federalists. In Adam's administration, two national fast days were proclaimed, but the pugnacious New Englander evidently found little in the trend of events during his occupancy of the Presidency to be thankful for, and consequently no national thanksgiving days were appointed.

Twenty-three years passed before another national thanksgiving day was proclaimed. The varying fortunes of the war of 1812 gave occasion to President Madison to appoint at various times three propitiatory days of fasting and prayer. When peace with Great Britain was declared, Madison appointed a national thanksgiving for April 13, 1815. This was the last of the national thanksgiving days for many years, although the custom was rapidly becoming an annual observance in the various States, North and South, it became established in 1817 in New York, and by 1858 all but six of the States of the Union observed the day.

Two national fast days, however, were observed between the close of the war of 1812 and the civil war. When President Harrison died a fast was appointed for May 14, 1841. In 1849, when cholera was ravaging the country and devasting the seaports, President Taylor proclaimed a national fast day in hope that appeasing prayer would stay the progress of the dread plague. In 1832 several States proclaimed fast days as remedies for the ravages of the cholera, but with what efficacy history fails to relate.

When the civil war precipitated the greatest crisis in the world's history two fast days of prayer were proclaimed by Congress—one on January 4 and another September 26, 1861. When the Confederate victory of Bull Run made the South blaze with confidence of victory the Richmond Congress proclaimed a day of thanksgiving. The first Federal thanksgiving of the war followed the battle of Gettysburg, August 6, 1863, and was proclaimed by Lincoln for November 26 in connection with the harvest festival day. A movement then achieved form and favor throughout the North for the annual national observance of the day. Mrs. Sarah J. Hale, of Philadelphia was one of the leaders in this movement. The agitation touched a popular chord in awakening national consciousness created by the war, and in 1864 was begun the series of Presidential proclamations which has continued to the present day.

GOING TO NEW YORK.

Commander Peary Will Leave by Train for New York.

SYDNEY, Nov. 23.—Commander Peary will not go to New York on the Roosevelt. He has decided to travel by train. Mr. Peary has received a large number of congratulations and has asked the Associated Press to make general acknowledgements. When the time permits Peary will make a direct individual acknowledgement.

DIX DISASTER.

Inquiry Commenced by the Board as to the Cause of the Disaster.

SEATTLE, Nov. 23.—Inquiry into the Dix disaster developed the fact that the Sound boats are operated in some cases without regard to the United States marine laws. Captain Wyatt, master of the Florence K, stated that he had many times left his boat in charge of the mate, who is a young man without a pilot's license. No lookouts are kept. Similar evidence regarding other boats was secured. A sweeping investigation will probably result from the evidence adduced today. Comparatively little evidence was introduced today regarding the sinking of the Dix.

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FINANCIAL.

REPORT OF THE CONDITION OF THE

Astoria National Bank

No. 4403.

at Astoria, in the State of Oregon, at the close of business November 12, 1906

RESOURCES.

Loans and Discounts		$325,619.80
Overdrafts, secured and unsecured		10,005.45
U. S. Bonds to secure circulation		12,500.00
Premiums on U. S. Bonds		600.00
Bonds, securities, etc		54,834.75
Banking house, furniture, and fixtures		4,000.00
Other real estate owned		8,233.41
Due from State Banks and Bankers		5,537.05
Due form approved reserve agents		282,053.87
Checks and other cash items		332.56
Notes of other National Banks		380.00
Fractional paper currency, nickels and cents		802.63
Lawful Money reserve in in Bank, viz:		
Specie	$44,237.75	
Legal-tender notes	125.00	44,362.75
Redemption Fund with U. S. Treasurer, (5 per cen of circulation)		625.00
Total		$749,887.27

LIABILITIES.

Capital stock paid in		50,000.00
Surplus fund		35,000.00
Undivided profits, less expenses and taxes paid		16,772.22
National Bank notes outstanding		12,000.00
Individual deposits subject to check	$351,308.81	
Demand certificates of deposit	38,880.77	
Time certificates of deposit	245,925.47	636,115.05
Total		$749,887.27

State of Oregon, County of Clatsop, ss: I, J. E. Higgins, cashier of the above named bank, do solemnly swear that the above statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

J. E. HIGGINS, Cashier.

Subscribed and sworn to before me me this 17th day of Nov. 1906.

GEORGE C. FULTON, Notary Public.

Correct—Attest:
GEO. H. GEORGE,
A. SCHERNECKAU,
GEO. W. WARREN.
Directors.

REPORT OF THE CONDITION OF THE

First National Bank

at Astoria, in the State of Oregon, at the close of business, November 12th, 1906.

RESOURCES.

Loans and Discounts		$459,032.16
Overdrafts, secured and unsecured		3,651.74
U. S. Bonds to secure circulation		25,000.00
Premium on U. S. Bonds		500.00
Bonds, securities, etc		63,120.00
Other real estate owned		3,000.00
Due from National Banks, (not reserve agents)		130,717.26
Due from State Banks and Bankers		53,771.14
Due from approved reserve agents		206,876.24
Checks and other cash items		149.46
Notes of other National Banks		1,385.00
Nickels and cents		381.08
Lawful money reserve in bank, viz:		
Specie	$164,000.00	
Legal tender notes	450.00	164,450.00
Redemption fund with U. S. Treasurer (5 per cent of circulation		1,250.00
Total		$1,113,294.08

LIABILITIES.

Capital stock paid in		$100,000.00
Surplus fund		10,000.00
Undivided profits, less expenses and taxes paid		37,209.79
National Bank notes outstanding		25,000.00
Individual deposits subject to check	$731,021.74	
Demand certificates of deposit	210,062.55	941,084.29
Total		$1,113,294.08

State of Oregon, County of Clatsop, ss: I, S. S. Gordon cashier of the above-named bank, do solemnly swear that the above statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

S. S. GORDON, Cashier.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 15th day of November, 1906.

C. A. COOLIDGE, Notary Public.

Correct—Attest:
G. C. FLAVEL,
W. F. McGREGOR,
J. WESLEY LADD,
Directors.

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*28,	*34.	**26.	*30,	*22.			*21.	*23.	*27.
			pm	a.m	Lv.	Ar.	a. m	p. m	p. m	a. m
			7.00	8·00	PORTLAND		11.55	9.50		
			8.10	9.10	GOBLE		10.45	8.40		
			8.25	9·23	RAINIER		10.30	8.25		
			9.03	10.05	CLATSKANIE		9.45	7.40		
			10.35	11·35	AR ASTORIA Lv.		8.20	6.10		
a.m.	p.m	a·m								
8.15	5.50	11.40		11.35	Lv. ASTORIA Ar.		8.15	5.20	2.45	10.45
8.35	6.10	11·55		11.55	Ar. WARRENTON Lv.		7.55	5.05	2.20	10.25
8·36	6.11	12.05		11.55	Lv. WARRENTON Ar.		7.54	5.05	2.15	10.25
8.45	6.26	12·15			Ar. FT. STEVENS Lv.		7·42		2.00	10.15
8.46	6.26	12.30			Lv. FT. STEVENS Ar.		7.41			10.14
8.55	6.39				Ar. WARRENTON Lv.		7·28			10.05
8.55	6·40				Lv. WARRENTON Ar.		7.27			10.05
9.25	7.20			12.30	Ar. SEASIDE Lv.		6.50	4.30		9.30
a·m.	p. m	p·m		p. m				p. m	p m	a.m

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