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|  | A Patriotic Thanksgiving <br> Our unique American Thanksgiving day is a patriotic holiday second only to the Fourth of July. But it is not an occasion for spread-eagle oratory and flag-waving; rather it is a day set aside for humble stock-taking of our blessings with due consideration from whence cometh our good fortune. The originators-and there were several-of this tradition sought to arouse gratitude, not just for 'material abundance, but for America and what it stands for, for the hope of liberty it held out to all the world. <br> John Adams in 1765 expressed this thought when he said, "I always consider the settlement of America with reverence and wonder, as the opening of the grand scheme and design in Proof the for the illumination and emancipation earth." <br> President Washington proclaimed Thursday, Nov. 20, 1789, as a special day for Americans to give thanks for having at last achieved a new and firmer union. Sarah Hale, editor of Godey's Lady's Book who merits credit Thanksiving of the first national Thank during the civil war, wrote in 1859, "Would it not be a renewed pledge of love and loyalty to the Constitution of the United States if every state would join in Union Thanksgiving on the 24th of November?" <br> Thanksgiving day is thus closely associated with the growth of patriotism in America-a phenomenon Merle Eugene Curti examines in his excellent, objective study, "The Roots of American Loyalty" (Columbia Press, 1946). Pulitzer prize-winner Curti, whose mother was a daughter of the American revolution and whose paternal ancestry is Swiss, is an eminent historian who believed a knowledge of the sources and nature of American patriotism may be an aid to more enlightened citiz̀enship. <br> And on this Thanksgiving day-when Americans have more to be thankful for than any other nation while still such modern expresvions of insecurity as the loyalty oath plague us -it may be appropriate to consider what pat- <br> The seeds of American patriotism, generated in the old countries of Europe, were the colontsts' faith and hopes of a new country where life promised some day to be better, Curti says. The Puritans were firmly convinced that the hand of God had guided this country from the start. of God had guided this country from the start. today-was that this country was destined to be a great, wealthy, powerful nation, light of liberty and Elysium of the common man. <br> But patriotism was first provincial and loyalty to the embryo nation grew slowly. General Washington wrote in 1778, "I know the Idea of Patriotism exists, and I know ft has done much In the present Contest ..." but he often deplored the weakness of national sentiment. Jef- ferson and Paine campaigned vehemently for loyalty to the collective whole. <br> The Constitution, Curti points out, was a necessary instrument in the process by which Amerficans did become a nation which they could love and to which they could be loyal. In due time te became an emotionally charged symbol of national unity. <br> There were other symbols and other factors. Devotion to native soil, the vastness and beauty of our geography, were powerful forces. Heroes, from the spiritual titans of early New England to later generals and presidents, were an essentlal element. The melting-pot idea-a concept of a new and superior race of people made up |
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