

YOUR THANKSGIVING AND MINE.

The great American nation takes a holiday at the bidding of the President every November. Our many States unite in keeping the beautiful festival of Thanksgiving. Its very name is suggestive because the giving of thanks implies a recognition of One, unseen but ever-living, Who sends the world the gifts on which its existence depends. From Almighty God we receive the rain, the sunshine, the summer's heat and the winter's cold, the bread we eat, the fuel that warms us and the clothing we wear. There is no one so foolish or so stupid as not to believe in the great Creator and the kind All-Father, from Whose hand our daily blessings come. Especially should you and I have a thought of Him when the myriad homes of the country are enjoying at this season the gifts that must be traced directly to the kindness of Heaven. The great nation keeps Thanksgiving, but the great nation is composed of millions of individual persons, among them you who read and I who write. Suppose we stop and ask ourselves what we like best about this holiday and what spirit we may bring to its celebration.

First, I think we like it because it is so genial and jolly, so cheerful and bright, so patriotic and stirring a day. Thousands of families are reunited at the Thanksgiving dinner. The trains that come to New England or Pennsylvania, or Illinois, from California, Oregon and Nevada, bring home for Thanksgiving men and women who want to be boys and girls once more under the old roof.

I remember watching from a train as it stopped at a station the delighted greeting of a half-dozen people who seemed to be father, mother, sons and daughters, as they swarmed upon a dear little old lady who was waiting to receive them. Her husband, the haired patriarch, who might have sat for the portrait of Santa Claus, was holding his horses while the children and grand-children thronged into the big four-seated wagon. They had come home for Thanksgiving. Many such scenes will be enacted this year, as they have been every year since our country was settled.

The daughter at home, whose days are spent in pleasant household tasks among her own people, is full of business at this special time. She has notes and letters to write, messages to send, rooms to arrange for guests and upon her falls much of the responsibility of preparing the menu and setting the table for the holiday feast. If she is coming home from college she will probably bring with her two or three friends whose homes are too distant to permit of their return for so brief a vacation. Thanksgiving on Thursday means only the brief weekend following it before college duties must be resumed. If there are brothers there will probably be football and the order of the day must be modified from the old mid-day dinner to a later feast, that the young people may witness the great spectacular game that finishes the football season for the year.

The girls wear the college colors of the men and are enthusiastic for the eleven they prefer. They know the glory of a touchdown, and every incident of the game is appreciated by them, because though girls do not themselves engage in this peculiar sport, they love it well enough to cheer the boys on. A Thanksgiving game would be a tame affair were there no crowds of admiring girls to swell the number of lookers-on, although these include men of every rank and profession, who shout until they are hoarse for the side they espouse.

It is of the daughter away from home that I have a word to say in this bit of talk. One is never so homesick as when she is an absentee from the home circle on a merry holiday. She can see in her mind's eye every room in the house, can hear the voices of father and mother, and the steps of the little ones as they play about the floor. She cannot be there herself in person, but she is there in spirit, and it is hard for her to keep a real Thanksgiving. If you are one of the girls who cannot go home, if you live in lodgings where you pay your room rent once a week, if you go out to restaurants for your meals and, if there is no one to share a Thanksgiving dinner with you, the day will be somewhat trying. Never mind if it is. Take hold of your cheerfulness with both hands and a resolute will. Be brave, and don't let yourself show the white feather. Be thankful that your dear ones are spared to you, that you may write to them and receive their letters, and that you may very possibly have the surprise of a box from home, with a chicken roasted, as only mother knows how to roast it, a glass of jelly, a fruit cake and other good things which have the genuine home flavor. A box from home on Thanksgiving day is a delicious treat, and the business girl who receives it and invites a friend in to share it with her is not left out of Thanksgiving.

You and I should be thankful that we are living in this wonderful age. For my part, I never cease to be glad that I have a telephone on my desk and that at discretion I can chat with friends both near and far. When I was a girl, as you are now, the mention of such an invention would have been derided as the wildest dream. It would have seemed like witchcraft, and people would have been a little afraid of the invisible young woman called central, who answers our call when we take down the receiver. Part of my Thanksgiving is for the telephone, for rapid transit, for electric lights, and good reading lamps, and a fire on the hearth and plenty of books and magazines. You and I should be thankful for the common things which we take for granted, for the little conveniences to which we are accustomed, for the two cent stamp and the open, for the trolley car and the typewriter, and I know not what else, which belongs to our daily life.

If ever we are tempted to say that though others have much to be thankful for, our lives are hard and our

paths are thorny, let us stop a minute and see by what standard we are measuring our blessings. If we look at a cripple plodding along with crutches we cannot help being thankful that we have feet which serve us well and that we can walk and run without so much as considering the effort. If we see somebody who is barefooted we may be thankful for shoes. When the rain beats on the roof at night we may be thankful for the house that shelters us. When the doctor calls next door to see an invalid who is tossing with fever we may be thankful that we are well. If there are flowers on the door bell across the street we may be thankful that there are no vacant chairs in our home.

There are girls and older people, too, who do not measure in this way. They work hard for small wages and they envy the man and woman who spends money like water. They can only afford a five-cent fare and they wish that they were possessors of a motor car. With the utmost labor they merely make both ends meet, and they wonder how it would feel to have the purse of the millionaire. This sort of reasoning never tends to thanksgiving. It is apt, on the other hand, to tend to foolish discontent. Some of us are even so silly that we grumble at the weather and cannot be thankful if the day is cloudy when we want it to be fine.

If we have been so unwise as to let this spirit weave its evil spell around us, let us break the fetters without delay. Wherever we are, at home or abroad, rich or poor, let us be thankful that we have reached another golden milestone in life. I repeat that Thanksgiving is a genial, cheerful, wholesome and breezy day. Let us make the best of it, get the best out of it, and wherever we are be as jolly as we can.—By Margaret E. Sangster.

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