

A THANKSGIVING FEAST.

We two are the last, my daughter! To set the table for two Where once were plates for twenty, Is a lonesome thing to do.

Samuel, my son, in Dakota, Is a rich man, so I hear, And he'll never let want approach us,

Oh! the happy time for a mother Is when her babies are small, And into the nursery beds at night she tucks her darlings all.

I know the Scripture teaching, To help the halt and the blind, And keep the homelick and the desolate At the festal hour in mind.

I tell you, Jessie, my darling, This living for money and pelf, It takes the heart from life, dear, It robs a man of himself.

Shame on my foolish frettings! Are letters, a perfect sheaf! Open them quickly, dearest; Ah, me! 'Tis beyond belief.

By ship and by train they're hastening, Rushing along on the way, Tell the neighbors that all my children Will be here Thanksgiving Day.

LESLIE THISTLE'S WAR-TIME THANKSGIVING.

On evenings now the fire in Mr. Thistle's great old-fashioned fireplace felt almost deserted. The big logs and iron braziers and father's brass crackled as loudly as they possibly could to help make things lively; but do their best, they could not bring the old times.

It was the evening before Thanksgiving, and Cousin Abbie White had driven over from the Cape for her semi-yearly visit. Baby Edwin was lying in her lap crowing at her deep soft laugh, and Leslie sat on a green cricket at her feet.

Leslie drew the head of her dollie, Clarissa, close to her breast. The quiet little maiden was thinking sweet thoughts of Brother Malcolm and Brother MacGregor, who had given her Clarissa. She was a real store dollie, Clarissa was, about ten inches long, made of wood, and had such cute arms and legs.

"I really cannot give you the reason—possibly it was owing to a strain of Scotch-Irish blood—but the Thistle family, in place of the customary chicken or turkey, always had roast goose for their Thanksgiving dinner. The children's playmates thought this very funny.

feed Clarissa a walnut meat. "Why, they will not see the end of a goose's wing. I shall feel real mean when I am eating my drumstick. Malcolm and MacGregor always want drumsticks."

The sound of footsteps was heard coming along the porch. A moment after Mr. Thistle entered the room. He was a pale, tired-looking man, and the depressing atmosphere of the inclement evening outside seemed to still envelop him as he dropped into his arm chair at the right side of the fireplace.

"That is Mr. Nelson's ax handle, isn't it, father?" said Alec. "He breaks more ax handles than anyone else in the neighborhood."

"What a smart man you are, father!" said Henry, carefully watching the progress of the pencil. "There is not a boy's father around here who works as hard as you do after having been busy in the woods all day. They are only just farmers and never learned a trade the same as you did."

Cousin Abbie laughed. "I should think your pa would have to manage with all the bills he has to fill, and now your big brothers off in the army. Your father is smart, boys, and I can remember, as you cannot, when he used to make barrels eveninging, for he learned the cooper's trade. That was when Malcolm was four years old. They were the neatest, prettiest barrels. Then he would take the hayrack and fill it full of them and drive over to Faston and bring back barrels of flour and bags of meal in their place in the hayrack."

Mr. Thistle was now at work with his drawshave. "Mother," he called out, "if she has not been hindered, Daniel's daughter ought to be on the boat tomorrow morning."

Leslie's blue-gray eyes grew big with interest and tender with feeling. Uncle Daniel had been killed at the battle of Bull Run. He was shot down at the very beginning of the battle. Leslie and her young brothers were in the little red schoolhouse that July morning. A man on horseback rode up through the village and out by the schoolhouse, crying, "A battle has been fought at Bull Run! Heavy losses!"

The teacher sent Alec and James out to ask the man some questions. They came back, saying that some of the Bellport boys were killed, but the man did not know their names.

Now, five days ago Mr. Thistle had brought home another letter. The shock had been too much for Uncle Daniel's sick wife, and she had followed Uncle Daniel. Little Emily, who was only ten days younger than Leslie, was to be sent to her mother's sister up in Monroe. A friend of Uncle Daniel's, who was coming East, would take charge of Emily as far as Boston, where he would put her in charge of the stewardess on the Bellport boat.

Some tears fell on Clarissa's wooden head as Leslie remembered that bitter day. "I never felt so badly for anyone in my life as I did for Emily," she whispered to Clarissa. "What! tears!" sputtered a log. There was a great snapping in the fireplace, and a shower of sparks flew out. Some fell at Leslie's feet, and others fell before Mrs. Thistle. John rushed with the tongues and Henry with the shovel, Leslie laughed heartily at the boys' antics, and the tears dried on her cheeks.

"Alec, are you awake?" whispered the captain once had a deaf-and-dumb passenger who went around the world with him on the Sally, and I tell you the captain had plenty of time to practice with him."

"Praise the Lord!" exclaimed Cousin Abbie; "I never felt more like getting down on my knees than I do now. I might have known that John would help us out; for he was named for my father, and there never was such a man for taking the ship by the helm when everything appeared to be going to pieces."

"She must have been thinking about Malcolm and MacGregor," said Alec, "and how they have not had many good things to eat. Henry and John have been off in the woods all day with father, so they do not know too taken up with dreaming about Emily's coming to notice anything."

The next morning after Mr. Thistle and the other boys had set out on the long walk to the Congregational meeting house, to hear good old Dr. Woodbury deliver his Thanksgiving sermon, Henry took the two-wheeled chaise and started for the what-to-meet Emily. Leslie took up her station on a window seat between Mrs. Thistle's monthly roses, eager to catch the first glimpse of the stranger cousin. She did not have long to wait, for the boat was on time, and white Bessie trotted home in a great hurry, as though she knew how very dainty Leslie was. Bessie gave her dainty head a toss as she reached the door, as much as to say, "Now, Leslie, see how well I have done!"

Henry brought in a bundle of shawls and placed it on the cricket before the fire. It swayed a moment and rolled off onto the floor, where it kicked vigorously, vainly endeavoring to extricate its arms and legs.

"For the land's sake, Henry, couldn't you have wrapped that child up without making a hippopotamus of her? Never mind, my plum, you will be all right in a minute." A few strong twitches given to Mr. Thistle's blanket shawl, and two laced boots and white knitted stockings were revealed. Another twitch, and there was a black and white gingham gown, and above it a rounded flushed child face, surrounded with golden curls. Cousin Abbie gave one look and dropped down in a chair. Then she looked with trembling hands to the table for her spectacles, wiped them and put them on, and stared at the child with an expression of awe.

Emily looked frightened. Leslie sat down on the hearth beside her and thrust Clarissa into her arms. Seeing the two children so near together, the women and Henry almost jumped. There could be no doubt about it. Leslie and the little Emily were as alike as two peas and two peas of the same size, too. If Emily had had on a red and white checked dress like Leslie's, not even Mrs. Thistle herself could have told which was her own daughter.

Emily hugged Clarissa. Then she put her arms around Leslie's neck and nudged her, too. "Are you hungry, my sweet one?" inquired Mrs. Thistle, who was sitting on the floor. "I ever had. Brother MacGregor gave her me the day that he went to the war."

No reply. But the cookie seemed to have refreshed Emily, and she ran to a window, dragging Leslie by one hand, and stood looking at the flowers. Her eyes sparkled as she gazed up at a pink rose. She turned to Mrs. Thistle, gesticulating with her hands.

Mrs. Thistle's heart seemed to stop beating, and she saw in Cousin Abbie's eyes a question that she would not answer. Mrs. Thistle took Emily up in her arms and rained down kisses on her blossom face. "Fatherless, motherless, lovely as an angel, and a deaf-mute—my Brother Daniel's baby." The kisses and Mrs. Thistle's emotion must have reminded Emily of her own mother, for she burst into a passion of weeping. Mrs. Thistle held her shaking form close, and half an hour later when Mr. Thistle and the boys came in all glowing from their battle with the wind, Emily was still clinging to her.

And now the shadows were gathering. Soon the only light in the room was that which came from the glowing logs. Alec brought out the corn popper and held it over the fire. Emily clapped her hands to see the white kernels jump up and down in the popper, and held Clarissa up to see, too.

Leslie's arms were so lonesome. She had never gone so long without holding Clarissa. She brought out all her rag dollies, and they were a pretty lot, and showed them to Emily. Emily petted them, but became much excited when Leslie tried to substitute one of them for Clarissa.

At bedtime Emily and Leslie were tucked up in one bed, and Clarissa nestled between them, Emily's left hand fast hold of Clarissa's arm. When the little girls were asleep Mrs. Thistle called the house-hold to look at them. They fairly gasped. Of the two curly heads emerging from the white counterpane no one could tell which was Leslie's.

"I could not tell how that child has grown into my heart today," Mrs. Thistle kissed Emily's dimpled hand that lay upon the counterpane. "How can I give her up to Mary?" Mr. Thistle became sober. "You make it hard for me, mother. What if I should tell you that Emily must leave us in the morning? Mrs. Ames, of Monroe, is in the village, and told me after service this forenoon that Mary had charged her to bring Emily home with her. Mrs. Ames is going by the stage in the morning, and they will call for Emily. You know how Mary is, mother. She will fret herself sick till Emily gets there. And after all, Emily is as near to her as she is to you. When Mary has had Emily with her for a spell and gets sort of used to her I will drive up and bring her back for a good visit."

Mrs. Thistle smiled pitifully. In her heart of hearts she did not for one moment believe that Mary ever moment. After the others had returned to the fireside she sat by the bed murmuring soft mother talk to the motherless little one.

At five o'clock the following morning Mrs. Thistle awakened Emily, and John explained to her that she was to go with a kind lady to Aunt Mary's. He succeeded so well in convincing Emily that it would only be a short time before she would be with quite calmly.

At half past five the stage stood before the door. After Emily had kissed everybody good-bye she kissed Clarissa, and tenderly laid her in Leslie's arms. Mr. Thistle then lifted Emily and placed her beside Mrs. Ames in the stage.

"Well, they used to have considerable to say about Emily, didn't they?" "There never was much else in the letters but about how she was growing, and how forward she was." "And you do not call to mind one word that might have given you a hint that Emily was in any way unlike other children?" "Not one word, father. I have had the biggest surprise of my life today, and I cannot understand it yet. But I do know this one thing—that two prouder people never walked the earth than Daniel and Winifred Prescott. They could not have stood your sympathy or mine."

Cousin Abbie shook her gray curls impressively. "Well, there is one thing that is perfectly clear to my mind, and that is, that it all comes from living out in Minnesota. If Daniel and Winifred had been living among their own respectable folks, there would have been some one to have written us the news. That is what the Lord gives us kindred for."

The goose and its accompaniments having been disposed of, Mrs. Thistle proceeded to help the children to generous slices of gingerbread and doughnuts. Theodore watched his mother with growing disapproval. "Mother, where are the pumpkin pies? Aren't we going to have any pumpkin pies for our Thanksgiving dinner?" Mrs. Thistle looked troubled and rather shamefaced. She opened her lips to give an explanation.

"It is all right, mother," called out James, much embarrassed, but determined to stand beside his mother in the breach. "We do not want any pumpkin pies on Thanksgiving Day when Malcolm and MacGregor are faring so poorly." He threw a scornful look at Theodore. "And I will punch the head of the first fellow who is mean enough to say that he does. Theodore here is only a baby. He cannot be expected to know what he is talking about."

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FARM NOTES.

—Many of the poultry houses that are used for laying quarters need some repairing or remodeling, says county agent, R. C. Blaney. Many outbreaks of colds and roup will be eliminated if the housing conditions are corrected before the fall rains and cold weather comes. Eliminate all draft from the houses by covering the east, west, and north sides of the house with 2-ply roofing paper.

Damp litter in the hen house is usually a result of poor ventilation or overcrowding rather than of a poorly constructed floor. If the greater part of the front of the house is inclosed with glass it is almost impossible to have dry litter without installing a ventilating system. The open front type of house with muslin curtains is recommended. The curtains must be replaced with new muslin when they become dirty, so the air will pass through them.

Most laying houses do not have sufficient mesh hopper space. Plan to have at least eight linear feet of hopper space for each one hundred birds where the birds can eat from sides. Several small mesh hoppers in a pen are more satisfactory than one long hopper. Also provide hopper space for feeding oyster shell and grit.

It is a good plan to have a 2-inch mesh poultry wire stretched over the perches from the rear of the house to the front of the dropping boards. This wire will keep the birds out of the droppings on the dropping boards and will aid in cutting down the number of dirty eggs and losses from disease. When the wire is stretched across the top instead of being fastened to the under side of the perches there will be less sagging and it will last longer. The wire on top of the perches does not seem to injure the birds' feet.

—In curing pork scrupulous care and cleanliness are fully as essential as the salt, sugar and saltpeter. K. F. Warner, meat specialist of the United States Department of Agriculture, elaborates this point.

"One hundred pounds of meat," he says, "can be cured with three pounds of salt or twelve pounds of salt and widely varying amounts of sugar and saltpeter, but unless carefulness is included, the resulting product will be neither economical nor palatable. The boys complain considerably nowadays about the fussy crankiness with which grandpa learned his lesson in the hard school of experience, and he knows that unless meat is put down with care, refined almost to the degree of crankiness, the result will be unsatisfactory."

Mr. Warner also calls attention to the fact that the home butcher should select the animals for slaughter with a view to the weight and quality of meat desired. He says: "Where lard and sausage are the products desired, very large and very fat hogs will serve, but when shoulders, hams and loins are desired these will be in proportion to the weight of the animal. A trimmed ham will weigh about 7 per cent. of the live weight of the hog; the bacon strip about 5 per cent. If one desires ten pound hams the hogs should be butchered at about 140 to 150 pounds weight. If the family can make economical use of twenty-pound hams the weight of the hog may run up to 300 pounds."

—An agricultural college in another State says that "there is more hope for the good farmer on poor land than for the poor farmer on good land. This is applicable to any State as many have frequently observed."

—Growers find that they can get from 10 to 25 cents a bushel more for apples that are well packed instead of being just poured into the basket. Honestly facing a bushel of apples does not improve the flavor or value of the fruit but it makes a more attractive package.

—If pullets are to lay well all winter their body weight must be kept up. This can be done by feeding a good grain mash and some cod liver oil.

—See that you have good viable and disease-free seed for use next spring. Be sure that all seed is thoroughly dried and stored in a place where it will not get wet or be destroyed by rats and mice.

—It is not necessary to put off overhauling the sprayer until spring. On rainy days it may be taken apart, oiled, and the worn parts replaced.

—Many vegetable growers find that they can grow their own plants for early use in the spring where they have proper equipment. Hundreds of Pennsylvania gardeners are using the small sash greenhouse planned and recommended by State College vegetable gardening extension specialists.

—Good Thanksgiving turkeys are well fed and fattened. A fat turkey carries a great deal of flesh and the meat is of higher quality. Fat turkeys are worth more on the market than those lacking finish. It pays to fatten the birds for market.

—With liberal feeding the brood sow will be able to recuperate from sucking her fall litter so that she will be thrifty and vigorous when mated for her next litter. Rations rich in protein and mineral content should prevail prior to mating as well as throughout the gestation period. A combination of corn and oats, plus tankage, fishmeal or buttermilk, will serve the purpose well.

—Protecting farm machinery from the weather now and during the winter will save heavy drains on the bank account next spring.

—Cutting the weed trees in the farm woodlot will improve the quality of the stand in future years.

—A cool temperature (above freezing) and a somewhat moist atmosphere is needed in storage for cabbage, celery, chinese cabbage, kohlrabi, and the root crops.