

Thanks giving

WHAT was a moving and an enlightening incident of the little girl from the poor-house who, at a Thanksgiving dinner where each guest was requested to mention something for which he was truly thankful, said, after some hesitancy and pause for thought, "I am thankful I have a country to love." Friends or kinsfolk or prospects she had none, but in the dearth of the near and the obvious she had reached out and drawn close the great thought of patriotism; cut off from the common blessings of home and care, she had groped after an ideal and found a country to love. It was, after all, her good fortune that, undazzled by an inrush of small prosperities, she became the more aware of the greater blessings.

Truly the human heart is indomitable, and only the weakest cease to be thankful. "Books and my food and summer-rain," Stevenson enumerates as enough to melt the sunniest heart to gratitude. All great blessings are free and common to us all, but the universally accessible matters of gratitude we are like to forget when we sum up our causes of thankfulness. Foremost, there is the overarching sky, in which we all have part and portion—the sky with all its shifting scenery, its vast dome of night sprinkled with the dust of stars, the splendor of dawn, and the evening pageant; its unending surprises in cloud-groupings, the pomp of its midday depth of blue—these are matters to give a new face to joy every hour. Who cannot remember, too, when he first took the sky into his confidence, became aware of it as a constant friend stretching its beautiful expanse over his personal life and making a grand background to all his little living and being? The odors of summer, of winds blown across the blue heather-land, or salty from the sea, or hot and pine-scented, these are matters that outweigh the frettings and the worries of our little day, and live long in the afterthoughts. "This intellectual being," as Milton calls it, just this power of apprehending, of translating through the senses the colored stretch of space to the mind within, who could lose it without regret? Surely to have been born, little as it may seem so at the wrong moment, is a cause for thankfulness. For the next step after birth is the pursuit of beauty, and beauty knows how to keep the chase exciting to the end, giving us a hint, a suggestion, a trace, enough to start us on, but melting ever into the mystery beyond before we grasp the prey.

Memory, too, is a chief blessing of life, for with memory we piece together the personal existence, we gain the feeling of continuity, of each life forming in some sort a definite whole. And what life, lingered over by memory, does not present itself as having a kind of sacred pathos, a dim and broken beauty like sunlight on a rippling stream? And then we have humanity to be thankful for; humanity, never wholly overborne, facing the mystery and the dark, rising up after disaster, undaunted by helplessness on its spinning ball of a world making it knows not whither, ending it knows not when, yet still ever of high courage, each atom laying obligation upon himself to do for others, to bear not only his own share but part of some one else's share of the weight of living; humanity, facing with each new dawn new burdens, new work, unresting, unbreakable, unafraid, dreaming dreams and pursuing visions as high as hope can reach.

And for such measure of dutifulness and courage as shall be meted out to each we have too to be thankful, even if it never is given in the abundance we desire; and also for the thoughtless merriment of childhood and the thwarted hopes of our youth and such virtue as we have met along the way, and, finally, for the peaceful resignation of old age when the blood flows slowly. And for love, even though it dies, and for friendship even after it has betrayed, we have to be thankful, for these are hints and suggestions of what life in completion might be. But above all we have to be thankful for the thirst of the soul after wisdom, a thirst unquestioned and unquenchable, beckoning us on, on, till we lose all count of the years in hunting for the well that holds the sacred water, and time and space drop away from us as we travel, and the great mysterious sleep steals down upon us.



The Thanksgiving Turkey.

How to Prepare it for the Oven and Some Details of the Roasting.

Having decided which kind of the baking pan one teaspoonful of dressing you want, prepare it and fill salt and teaspoonful of water; baste the cavity of the turkey from which the crop was taken, sew up the slit in the skin, fold it over and fasten with a few stitches to the back; put the rest of the dressing into the body of the turkey, sew up the opening, tie the legs down close to the body of the turkey, passing the twine around the rump, so as to draw the legs down close to the body, and secure them by passing twine around the body of the turkey. Lay the wings down flat on each side of the breast in their natural position and secure them by passing the twine or narrow tape around the body, tying it securely.

Now rub the turkey all over with butter, dust it with black pepper and flour and it is ready to bake. Put in Home and Farm.



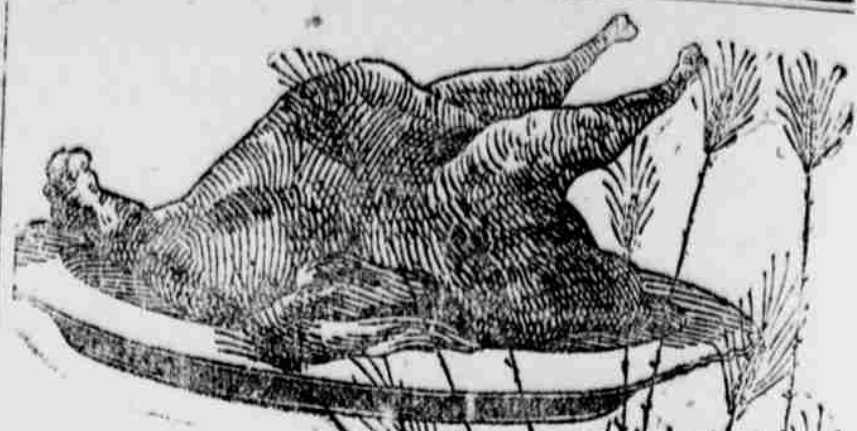
Yankee Pumpkin Pie.

By JOHN S. GREY

You may talk about your foreign cooks and all the things they make, The thousand dainty dishes that they stew and boil and bake; You may prate about their wondrous skill in culinary arts, How deftly they can manufacture puddings, pies and tarts; Go praise the French and German chefs, and the Italians too, For making salads, sauces, soups and fancy dishes new— But for a toothsome morsel upon which I can rely, Just give to me a solid wedge of Yankee pumpkin-pie.

Let those of fashionable tastes turn up the nose in pride, And think it quite plebeian to be simply satisfied; Let them eat their pate de foie gras, their truffes and such stuff With foreign names, suspicious looks and odors rank enough; Let them eat those airy pastry puffs they think so very nice, Because they've got outlandish names and cost a mighty price— But say, to curb your appetite, and your stomach satisfy There's nothing like a great big chunk of Yankee pumpkin-pie!

Roast beef may have more nutriment, more body-building worth; Veal, mutton, lamb, be nourishing, and stretching of your girth; Your chicken, duck or turkey may suit palates very fine— But these can take a back seat when I'm passing down the line. Fish, flesh and fowl may serve to stay the appetites of some; But you must treat me better when I to your table come. Leave out the high-toned viands, let each dainty dish go by— If I can get my face fast in a piece of pumpkin-pie!



History of Thanksgiving

THE autumn of 1621 was a prosperous community. Plymouth, Mass., was both healthy and wealthy. Sickness, though it had destroyed one-half the company of Pilgrims, had ceased, and the crops, as a whole, had been good, the peas alone failing. All the houses in the settlement had been put into condition and a goodly stock of furs and prepared lumber had been made ready for export, to England, by the next ship. The waters swarmed with fish and sea fowl were abundant. The call of the wild turkey was heard in the woods and the patter of the feet of fleeing deer was nothing strange.

The summer was past; the harvest ended. The Pilgrims decided upon a period of recreation. The Governor sent out four huntsmen, who in one day, secured game to last the colony a week. Hospitality was extended to Massasoit, of the neighboring settlement, who brought 90 people with him. The guests remained 30 days. The company engaged in rounds of amusements, in which military drills and religious services formed a part. Thus heartily and loyally, was inaugurated the great New England festival of Thanksgiving. For two centuries it has continued to be observed, at first mostly in the Eastern States, but it has now become national.

Thanksgiving Day is peculiarly an American custom, though there are some writers who claim that it is not possible to determine the date of the first observance. John A. Goodwin, in his historical review, "The Pilgrim Republic," is positive, however, that the first celebration occurred in the fall of 1621, this being followed in 1623 by the first Thanksgiving proclamation, by the Governor of Massachusetts. In 1630 there arrived at Plymouth, fourteen vessels, bringing with them 880 colonists, making the number nearly 1200 instead of a mere 300. On July 8, 1630, another Thanksgiving was held in acknowledgement of this accession to the ranks of the colonists. The Dutch Governors of the New Netherlands, also appointed different dates for public thanksgiving, from time to time, and in some historical works there is record of a dispute as to which of these colonies deserve the credit for having first inaugurated the day. Most of the best founded historians, however, give the credit to the New England States.

The Dutch Governors of New Netherlands appointed occasional days of thanksgiving in 1644, 1645, 1655 and 1664, and the English Governors followed their example in 1775 and 1760, and the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States in its prayerbook ratified in 1789, recommends for Thanksgiving Day the first Thursday in November, unless some other day be appointed by the civil authorities.

The struggle of the Colonies for independence marks the beginning of general observances of days of thanksgiving in this country. The Congress of 1777, the one which prepared the articles of confederation for adoption by the Colonies, adopted a resolution setting apart the 18th day of December, 1777, to be observed as a day of solemn thanksgiving and praise.

Washington, during his administration, issued two thanksgiving proclamations, one in 1789 and the other in 1795, just after the suppression of the "Whisky Rebellion," which had threatened the peace of the country, and President Madison issued one upon the declaration of peace in 1815. However, in the early years of the nation the rule was for the Colonial custom to be followed and the proclamation made emanated from the governors. The Western States, largely people from New England or New York, early followed the lead of these portions of the country. As we have seen, the annual recommendation by the Governors of New York began in 1817. From that time the observance gradually crept southward and westward, and in 1855 Gov. Johnson of Virginia adopted it, and though, in 1857, Gov. Wise of Virginia declined to make the proclamation on the ground that he was unauthorized to interfere in religious matters, in 1858 a Thanksgiving Day was proclaimed in eight of the Southern States.

The day had thus naturally grown to be a National Institution of almost universal observance, when the Civil War brought to sudden ripeness this along with many other tendencies, and President Lincoln put upon it the seal of his official proclamation. President Lincoln's first proclamation was in 1862, on account of the first important victory of the National arms. He issued a similar recommendation in 1863.