



THE fruits are stored, the fields are bare,
The ground is hard, the skies are gray;
November's chill is in the air;

To-morrow is Thanksgiving day.

The farmhouse stands in sheltered nook,
Its walls are filled with warmth and cheer;
Its fires shine out with friendly look
To welcome all who enter here.

Full forty years have come and gone
Since first this heartstone's ruddy glow,
Fresh kindled, flung its light upon
Thanksgiving guests of long ago.

Long was the list of squires and dames;
From year to year how short it grew!
Read out the old, familiar names
They heard here when this house was new.

Grandmother?—aye, she went the first;
Grandfather?—by her side he rests;
The shade and sunlight interspersed,
Have fallen long above their breasts.

Our aunts and uncles?—sundered wide,
Their graves lie east, their graves lie west;
As veteran soldiers scarred and tried,
They fought their fight, they earned their rest.

Our father?—dear and gentle heart!
A nature sweet, beloved by all;
How early turned his steps apart,
To pass from human ken and call!

Our mother?—brisk and kindly soul!
How brave she bore fate's every frown,
Nor rested till she reached the goal
Where all must lay their burdens down!

Our brother?—toward the setting sun,
From us remote, his home is made,
And many a year its course has run
Since here his boyish sports were played.

Put by the book! My heart is sore,
The night winds up the chimney flee,
But none are here save you and me!

But, sister, you and I again
Will heap the hearth and spread the board
And serve our kindred, now as then,
With all that home and hearts afford.

The scattered remnants of our line,
We'll summon 'neath this roof once more,
And pledge, in rare affection's wine,
The memory of those days of yore.

God bless them all—the fond and true!
God keep them all—both here and there,
Until the Old becomes the New.
Forever, in His Mansions Fair!

—Marion Hicks Harmon, in Youth's Companion.

THEIR ONLY DAUGHTER

A Thanksgiving Story.

NOVEMBER had set in as usual, with dull gray skies and chilly, penetrating winds. Up the broad avenue that led to the Dillingham residence the dead leaves whirled and eddied and settled with many melancholy flutter into their annual graves, while the tall trees tossed their bare arms about, as if lamenting the loss of these cheery little harbinger of spring and summer. In vain; winter stood rejoicing upon the threshold of autumn's decline, impatient to begin his reign.

In the house beyond, however, all was bright and charming with glowing fires and soft, mellow lights. Geoffrey Dillingham and his wife sat in the library, she with a beseeching look in her gentle eyes, he with a slight an-noyance in his.

"So you wish me to invite your people here for Thanksgiving?" he queried, almost harshly. "I tell you, Elizabeth, it's impossible."

"But why, Geoffrey?" returned his wife, with a little catch in her soft voice, "only think we've been married seven years, and you've never asked them here once;" a moment's silence. "And they feel it," she added, in a faltering tone, "and so do I. After all, they're my parents, dear."

Geoffrey Dillingham frowned and turned again to his desk. Scratch went the pen with rapid strokes, then it stopped suddenly, and wheeling around abruptly, he faced his wife.

"And if they are," he began, "I feel that I have repaid them in a measure for the loss of you; from poverty I've placed them in comparative ease. What more do they want?" he demanded, irritably.

"But you forget, Geoffrey," returned his wife, gently. "They love me, too."

Her husband pushed his papers aside impatiently.

"If you please, Elizabeth," he said, curtly, "we'll dismiss the subject. As to Thanksgiving day, I've already invited Wilson and his family to dinner." Wilson was his law partner.

Elizabeth Dillingham smothered a heavy sigh and rose to leave the room; her hand was on the door when her husband called her.

"Come here, Elizabeth," he said, peremptorily, yet with a nameless tenderness. She came and stood near him, a slight, beautiful figure, in her clinging gown of black. He drew her down upon his knee and kissed her with sudden passion. "You know I love you, child," he said, pressing the fair head closely to his breast. "Am I not enough?"

"But I want them, too," cried his wife, with quivering lips.

The tenderness upon her husband's face died suddenly away.

"I have told you, Elizabeth," he answered coldly, turning to his desk.

"Truly heredity isn't everything. That anything so beautiful as Eliza-

beth Dillingham should emanate from the Tracy family was little short of a miracle. When Geoffrey Dillingham, at 35, saw Elizabeth Tracy, at 18, he loved her. Yes, aristocrat, autocrat, courted and wealthy as he was, something about her touched a responsive chord in his heart of hearts, heretofore unreached, and he resolved to win her. But her family! He groaned in spirit as he thought of allying the proud name of Dillingham with that of Tracy—but Elizabeth was so beautiful, and as pure as she was lovely.

The second time he ever saw his prospective father-in-law, the old man wore a battered straw hat and an old pair of jeans; he was on the street, retailing a story with great gusto to a crowd of loungers, punctuated by peals of laughter. Geoffrey Dillingham passed by, holding his head erect, and looking neither to the right nor left. His clothes were well-fitting, and in his immaculate shirt front a splendid diamond scintillated in the rays of the sun.

"That the chap that's payin' 'tention to your Lizzie?" asked old Elihu Stafford.

Ephraim's knife dropped noisily to the ground; he stooped to pick it up before he answered.

"That's the chap," he answered, somewhat mechanically.

Ephraim Tracy and his wife were decidedly common people; shiftless, the neighbors called him, for the old man had a predilection for telling stories, as I have said, and retailing them from a goods box in Hobb's grocery. He always had an audience, for he was full of humor "as an egg is of meat," and he had a quaint way of expressing himself that was irresistibly funny. He was a little man, pretty well advanced in years, with a kindly, wrinkled face, a back somewhat bent, and serene, benignant eyes. In a sort of desultory fashion he managed to keep soul and body together, and that was about all. He could turn his hand at almost anything, however.

When a good wife of the neighborhood wanted a screen door made or a lock fixed, she always sent for Ephraim. He was not lazy, and the word shiftlessness ought never to have been applied to him. Perhaps it was because he was always working on inventions that were sure to make him rich, but when it came to the test the models always refused to work. But so far as throwing him into the slough of despond, happily his failures had no such effect; with unabated sweetness of nature, he would fall to work on something else, and continue to retail his stories with as keen a relish as ever.

If he was lacking in pride for himself, he had an abundance for his daughter Elizabeth, or Lizzie, as he fondly called her, which affection Elizabeth fully reciprocated. In spite of the fact that he was not a success he was a general favorite with everyone, and if he was not imbued with any great ambition, his family never blamed him, not even his wife, who accepted him as he was.

He had lived always in the same village, consequently his two sons, Jim and Andrew grew up there, and Judson, too, whom nobody counted, because he wasn't bright, but old Ephraim Tracy never would acknowledge it himself. "Jud's got a heap more sense 'n people give him credit for," he always would say, and Jud would smile and nod his head well pleased. Poor Jud, whose blue eyes never lost their childish look.

In the little backyard, the children's playhouse stood yet, where Jud, with a man's body and a child's soul, played happily by the hour.

Elizabeth came next, the youngest of the family. Where she got her beauty, no one could understand. That she possessed it, everyone acknowledged. All the family pinched and saved to clothe and educate her properly, and it was the proudest day of Jim's and Andrew's lives when they could contrive something toward Lizzie's schooling; and Elizabeth went to school and studied hard. She meant to be a teacher, she said. But, the summer she was 18, she met Geoffrey Dillingham, the leading lawyer in Dexter, a thriving manufacturing city a good hundred miles from Elizabeth's home. After a brief, impetuous wooing, they were married.

Geoffrey Dillingham, never, however, recalled his wedding day without a shudder. The plain little room with its cane-seated chairs, crocheted tildies and cheap pictures, the tear-stained, homely faces, the two awkward young brothers, and loving Jud, whose gaudy necktie and ill-fitting best suit was to his untutored mind the very acme of elegance. It should be the last time he would be in their midst, he vowed.

As to his future course, that was already marked out; Elizabeth would soon understand. He gave a great sigh of relief when the little cottage faded from his view and he was free to draw his lovely young wife to his side. Elizabeth threw her arms about her father's neck before the carriage started.

"Gooby, father," she cried, pressing her fresh round cheek against his withered one. "You'll come and see me. I'll write, and—you know I love you, don't you?"

Her father loosened the clinging arms with a big sob in his throat.

"Yes, yes, Lizzie, I know," he answered, tremulously. "There, there, be a good girl and go to your husband. God bless you both."

So when a few weeks afterward Elizabeth began to make happy plans for the promised visit, her husband, with cruel candor, told her:

"My guests must be of my choosing, Elizabeth," he said, "and I don't want to hurt you, but I can't have your parents here."

He never forgot the expression of the lovely eyes.

"Where does Lizzie live, mother?" asked Judson one day. "Can't I go there? I want to see her."

"Wif, you're not ashamed of them, Geoffrey?" she cried, a hot flush stain-

ing the purity of her cheek, and he did not answer.

So in the Tracys' little home, made so desolate by Elizabeth's fitting, the invitation never came. Six months after Elizabeth's departure, old Ephraim Tracy came slowly home. It was evening, and already the first breath of spring could be detected in the soft air. He sat heavily down upon the little back porch looking more bowed than ever and his faded eyes were infinitely weary.

"Lizzie don't say nothin' about our visit, mother," he began.

Mrs. Tracy was busy getting supper, but she came out and sat down by him, taking his hand tenderly between her own.

"Don't you see through it, Ephraim?" said she, gently, avoiding the wistfulness of the troubled eyes. "We ain't Geoffrey Dillingham's kind of folks, and Elizabeth must do as he tells her, of course. I knew just how it would be; the child dassn't write.

A mist gathered in the old man's eyes, and he looked away to where the purple hills kissed the western sun. "The child dassn't write." And he was her father; yes, old, obscure, worthless as he was, she was his child, and Dillingham had taken her from him. He did not eat any supper that night, and after a time crept quietly off to bed.

Next to his father, poor Jud mourned after Elizabeth most, refusing to be comforted. Even the most dazzling bits of green and blue glass, brought to him by his affectionate little playmates, failed to please him, and for many weeks the play-house was deserted. The little fellow would rove in and out, a patient sorrow written in the childish eyes.

Elizabeth, in her home, seemed to grow paler and sicker these short November days. Her husband, coming home one night, found her shivering over the library fire.

"What is it, Elizabeth?" he asked, anxiously.

"I don't know," answered his wife, her teeth chattering, "only I'm so cold, Geoffrey."

So cold. He went up to her and

But his mother had answered him so sharply, Jud had gone away to his little room and cried. No one ever spoke sharply to Judson.

And Elizabeth mourned, too. Affectionate, dutiful and loving as she was, the sundering of old ties was deeply painful. She wanted her mother; her dear old, patient father; simple Jud with his pure, child's soul; she wanted them all, even Jim and Andrew. Geoffrey Dillingham read his wife's heart well, marked the sadness of the sweet face, but he kept silent. November with its short days passed rapidly away, until it lacked but two weeks till Thanksgiving.

Ephraim Tracy came home one night bearing a live turkey.

"For the land's sake, father," cried his wife, as she came out to investigate the muffled gobble, "what did you get a live one for?"

"This is for Lizzie, mother," replied the old man. "I got it early so's to fatten it myself for Thanksgiving. She can buy plenty of 'em, but she'll relish the one father sends her most."

Mrs. Tracy brushed away a sudden tear.

"So she would, father," she answered, softly.

So the turkey was penned securely in the yard and fed so much by watchful Jud that it threatened to burst before the eventful day arrived.

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pushed back the lovely hair from the white forehead.

"You'd better go upstairs, Lizzie," he said, tenderly.

They put her to bed shortly after that, but before morning sharp pains set in and a doctor was hurriedly sent for.

As the fever rose she grew light-headed and babbled on about father, Jud, and Andy, too. She thought she was at home again, living again her simple, humble life.

"Inflammation of the lungs," the doctor had answered briefly.

So, in that luxurious room, the struggle began, the life and death angel closing in combat. Geoffrey Dillingham in the terribly trying days that followed, bending over that slight, beloved form, realized for the first time what his sin had been; the misery he must have caused his wife, the pride that had blinded him to all parental claims. With old Martin Chuzzlewit, he could but exclaim: "Self—self—self!" And now she would die and leave him.

He walked to the window and looked across the bare and frozen fields.

"And they have loved her, too," he murmured. "Oh, Elizabeth, my wife, only live, and I will make it up a thousand times."

He would send for them now, he whispered. As if in answer to his thought, the kindly physician raised his eyes.

"Better telegraph for her parents," he said. "She will reach the crisis before twenty-four hours, and she may not pass it."

Ephraim Tracy was in the back yard divesting his plump turkey of feathers when the telegram came. Jud stood gathering up the feathers for a dustier.

"Ain't it fat, Judie?" said the old man gleefully, "and won't our Lizzie like it?"

Before Jud could frame an answer, Mrs. Tracy came out and held up the yellow sheet.

"Father, father," she cried, tremblingly, "a dispatch has come from Dexter, and Elizabeth is dangerously sick."

"Jim and Andrew are on their way," he said.

"How often," said Miss Miami Brown, "hit do happen dat er thoughtless remark'll spile de pleasure ob er occasion!" "Yassendeed," replied Erastus Pinkley. "One o' de gues'es at ouah own table stobbed pap right in de middle o' de kyahvin' ter ax 'im what he got de turkey." —Troy (N.Y.) Times.

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The above Reward will be paid for information that will lead to the arrest and conviction of the party or parties who placed iron and slab on the track of the Emporium & Rich Valley R. R., near the east line of Franklin Housler's farm, on the evening of Nov. 21st, 1898.

HENRY AUGUSTUS,
President.

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