



THANKSGIVING 1899

By Marion Harland

A Woful Thanksgiving

THE fact was we had never spent "a Thanksgiving" in the country. And in town the Pilgrims' holy day has degenerated into an "Arry and 'Arriet "blowout." It was decided in a family council to tie us in a body to a country box among the hills, where we had enjoyed four idyllic summers, and there keep the hoary old festa as Yankee pro-Raphaelite aquarellos tell us it should be observed.

Snow fell two days before the important Thursday. All the better! It would have been all the best had the storm held off until we were actually housed and could read "Snow-Bound" over blazing logs answering roar for roar, the "grand old harper" sniting and twanging the oaks and hickories of the grove.

We took the 9 o'clock train from the city. It was crowded, mainly with one sort and condition of men. Each of them was presumably going to the old homestead—gray, yellow or white, backed by the invariable red barn—"for Thanksgiving." Some chewed orange peel to tone down their breaths to the decorous prejudices of the old folks at home, others inhaled bad cigars in the "smoker," and brought the evil incense into our car. At least two-thirds munched peanuts and strewed the floor with the shells. One and all talked loudly and laughed boisterously. A red-hot stove at each end of the car brewed the reek of whisky, tobacco, orange peel and roasted peanuts into a nuisance.

It was an accommodation train, halting at every "turn-out" to set down trippers moved by filial piety or farmhouse romance and poetry to maintain the traditions of the day. At the end of the fifteenth mile we came to a dead-standstill. A coal train had been wrecked and must be cleared away before we could go on. We were stranded in the exact centre of an uncomely expanse of fields covered with sodden snow and criss-crossed by blackish stone fences. Now a farmstead was visible for over a mile on all sides of us. Half a dozen mean huts knotted into a sort of settlement about some railway coaling sheds, and twenty disreputable loafers lounged from them to inspect the wreck and our train. The one sort and condition of men afflicted right speedily with these, and whereas paterfamilias made divers abortive excursions in various directions in quest of a draught of milk and slices of bread for his hungry children and a reasonably clean spot where materfamilias might retire for awhile from the growing strife of tongues dashing against the becalmed train, it was but too evident that mountain dew and Jersey lightning were to be had for good fellowship and for money. All babbled, more or less tipsily, of the day we were celebrating, drinking to it with every imaginable form of expletive, and some that, until that unhappy hour were quite unimaginable by materfamilias and her terrified younglings. The average American's one idea of a holiday is license, and the one idea increased and prevailed as the hours dragged by.

We were halted at 10.30. At 3 the rails were free and the celebrants of the honorable anniversary tumbled tumultuously into their seats, the one idea uppermost.

All over the broad and teaming land turkeys had offered their brown breasts, reeking with richness, to the carver's blade, cranberries had bled by the million, pumpkin pies and plum puddings had recruited the tens of thousands of sensible people who had stayed at home and feasted conventionally. Since our early breakfast we had eaten just one water cracker apiece; we were lame with long sitting, sickened in body by foul air and in soul by foul language.

What was left of spirit and hope revived with each mile left behind us. Materfamilias told stories to the confiding innocents of the sleigh drive they would have from the station, the dinner and fun awaiting us at home. We had managed to get off a telegram to our caretaking gardener at 11 o'clock, ordering him to send to every train until we came and to keep the dinner hot.

At 2.3' we alighted at the shabby little station nearest our idyllic

stage. No sleigh was in waiting; not a living creature was in sight, and the station was locked. A bitter wind moaned up and down the valley, and the unsympathetic sun was hardly a yard above the hills. Paterfamilias shouldered the two-year-old baby and led the forlorn procession "across lots" of unbroken and stiffening snow. By the air line we projected for ourselves the walk was a mile long. We were wet up to the knees with snow water and exhausted to faintness when we reached the gardener's lodge at the entrance to our grounds.

It was shut fast; no answer was vouchsafed to our knocking; no faint blue reek arose from chimney. The children had behaved heroically up to this instant. When their father announced darkly that the villains had never got his dispatch and had taken



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themselves off upon a Thanksgiving spree of their own baby began to sob, and silent tears glazed the purpled cheeks of the eldest girls.

"This is the tassel upon the cap of the climax!" said their mother in deadly calmness. "We will go to the house and break our way in. Since starve we must, we will starve in our beds, under plenty of blankets."

She took a child by each hand, paterfamilias reshoouldered the weeping baby, and we pulled our feet out of the congealing snow. A plantation of evergreens hid the turn in the path at which we had our first glimpse of the cottage. A weak cry from the children, an astonished snort from paterfamilias, a devout ejaculation from the mother, broke into the gusty air. For royal banners of smoke, tinted by the glowing west, streamed from every chimney, each window was stained by scarlet fire-gleams from within; Frank, our faithful watchdog, bounded from the porch with a bay of welcome, and at the joyous yelp the front door was flung wide.

Our telegram had arrived in good season; the sleigh had gone to meet us by the road, and, being a little behind time, had missed us, who came across lots. While our trusty retainers made breathless explanations the odor of roast turkey was borne to us upon the flood of warm air pouring through hall and doorway. Dinner would be on table by the time we could get ourselves into dry clothes.

Never did another dinner taste so good; never was wood fire more jolly than that in which the children roasted chestnuts, and beside which paterfamilias smoked the cigar of content, and materfamilias dreamed and moralized. To the home nook, "curtained and closed and warm," came the shout of the wind-god, a very pageant of rejoicing for mishaps overpast and for the abundant compensations that crowned the outgoing of our one eventful Thanksgiving Day.—New York World.

and become larger and finer-looking animals when brought under the dominion of mankind. This is not the case with the turkey, which has deteriorated, having lost weight and beauty by being domesticated.

A Novel Idea.

The hostess of a last-year's Thanksgiving dinner secured enough yellow gourds to put one at each of the dozen covers in simulation of the Thanksgiving pumpkin. Each of these gourds held a tiny, growing fern in its little clay pot, the color effect around the table being extremely good.

THE TURKEY'S LAMENT.

I'm a melancholy turkey—sad am I,
For a reign of awful terror draws nigh.
How I dread the smell of pie,
And the cakes and tarts piled high,
For I know that I must die
Thanksgiving Day.

What avail my sparkling eyes, just like jet,
Or my slim and stately neck, proudly set?
Though my glossy feathers shine,
On my flesh will people dine,
And pronounce me luscious—fine,
Thanksgiving Day.

How I wish I had been hatched some other bird,
Chicken, goose, duck or dove'd be preferred—
Any fowl but what I am,
In this land of "Uncle Sam,"
For I'm slaughtered like a lamb
Thanksgiving Day.

How I sympathize with Marie Antoinette!
How that dark and bloody axe haunts me yet!
Soon on my neck 'twill descend,
Take of me a sudden end,
Was a sadder verse ever penned?
Thanksgiving Day.

—Susan Hubbard Martin.

Jacksonville, Fla., has a successful ostrich farm, the only one in the United States outside of California.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

One of the most striking features of the war in South Africa is the ignorance about the Boers which is manifested by the British army staff.

"Luncheon is a superfluity, as any man will discover if he will try doing without it for the period of one month," says the New York World.

It is found that wireless telegrams are likely to become confused if several are transmitted at once. Mr. Marconi can hardly expect to have the entire earth to himself every time he sends a message.

Statistics show that Germany leads the world in the publication of educational works, the arts and sciences, belles lettres and travel; France in history, poetry and the drama; Italy in political economy, and England in novels.

Of course: An American syndicate has bought the San Juan battlefield and will preserve it as it is, with trenches and blockhouses. Then they will probably put a fence around it and let you in for 10 cents. Cuba is learning things.

And now the scientists have discovered microbes in the preservatives used in canning and bottling food, and advocate that they be done away with. Next thing we know the microbe will be infesting chloride of lime and things like that. Nothing is safe from it.

It is the opinion of a German oculist that the use of the ordinary slates by school children tends to produce short-sightedness. As a substitute he recommends pen and ink or an artificial white slate with black pencil. The latter have been introduced in some of the German schools.

Twelve inch guns of an improved pattern are to take the place of the thirteen inch guns in the three new battleships. The new "Kearsarge" has answered every expectation up to the present, and it is her success which has led to an unhesitating application of the superimposed turrets.

Among the new adventures in the egg industry is that of marketing of the egg by weight. The Dominion of Canada has already introduced a bill in Parliament regulating the sale of eggs by weight. The act provides that "unless otherwise agreed upon between the buyer and seller, eggs shall be sold by weight, and the weight equivalent to a dozen shall be a pound and a half," which is equal to fifteen pounds to the "long hundred," which is 10 dozen as demanded by the British market.

In 1897 the corn crop of this country was nearly 2,000,000,000 bushels and must now considerably exceed that amount. Considering that use in manufacturing has been found for every pound of a ton of cornstarch, it may be roughly imagined what value will be added to the country's domestic and exported wealth by utilization of material much of which was formerly looked upon as worse than useless or left to rot in the ground. It is, perhaps, the most impressive lesson given for a long time in the value of the by-product. The American corn grower is changed at once into a producer for more than a dozen different demands, all of them apparently with a permanent place in industry.

Convict labor is in demand in Georgia, and prices are rising, to the benefit of the state. Formerly the lessees of convicts paid the state only \$11 per head yearly, but the new law in addition to securing humane treatment for the prisoners, has resulted in greatly increased prices for their services. Under the latest bids few of the convicts were farmed out for less than \$100, and one lessee has recently sold his bunch of fifty convicts to another contractor at a handsome profit.

The latest report of the United States Land Commissioner shows that Uncle Sam has 929,308,000 acres of land which he is anxious to give away or sell for a song. Much of it is not fit for agricultural purposes, but then since the mineral development boom, who can tell what the rough lands may be worth with respect to that? It might pay men with money to invest to look up even the lands that are considered worthless.

The discovery that we owe our alphabet, the very foundation of our civilization, to a people of Chinese affinities, is rather dampening to our pride of race. But that is not the only thing in which the Mongolian intellect has been the pioneer of progress. The Chinese were the first printers, and it was they who first invented gunpowder and the mariner's compass. Is it possible to mention four possessions of our modern civilization more absolutely fundamental than the alphabet, the printing press, the compass and gunpowder?

Among the many incidents and phases of life in France set forth in the special cabled letter from Paris observes the New York Herald the most curious perhaps is the case of a man who on the occasion of his son's wedding called himself a baron. Being put on trial for this false assumption of title, he explained to the jury that his purpose was to make a brilliant match for his children. "Men don't care for titles," he said, "but they have such great prestige in the eyes of the women." The fact that he was acquitted would indicate that a jury did not take a very serious

view of the offence, but the hunger for titles in republican France and the reason assigned for it are very suggestive.

In order to save the beautiful trees which it is necessary to remove in constructing the buildings for the Paris Exposition an ingenious method has been devised by the engineers in charge of the enterprise. Trees, roots and the surrounding earth are enclosed in heavy plank bins built around them, and are then bodily lifted into the air and kept suspended there until the excavations and building foundations are completed, when, if there is room, the trees are let down into their former positions. The plan has been found to work admirably, and it is so simple and practical that it might be adopted wherever it is necessary to disturb trees in the course of building operations.

The Indiana State Geologist in his annual report says that during the last five years pipe lines have been extending toward the heart of the natural gas field. Until now the center is less than 150 square miles. All the gas producing rock is now more or less intimately connected, and whatever tends to reduce the supply in one part of the field has the same effect on all parts. This is shown by a remarkable reduction in pressure. In three years the pressure sank from 264 to 181 pounds and the average pressure at which a well has to be abandoned is between 130 and 150 pounds. Petroleum will probably replace the gas in the greater portion of the rock and while it lasts can be used as fuel, but the supply like that of natural gas is limited.

An ambitious colony of Mormons is planning to make a second Salt Lake City in Alberta. The settlement in the far North was started a few years ago by two hundred Mormons, who "trekked" away from Utah 700 miles into the Northern wilderness. Their first town, which they named Cardston, is quite flourishing, having a cheese factory, a creamery, a grist mill, a saw mill, several stores, and a graded public school. Four other towns have been established, and each has its school. Although fifty miles from a railroad, the colonists are prospering, and find a market for their products, among which last year was 100,000 bushels of wheat. Polygamy is not practised, and the colonists have the friendship of their neighbors. Although their principal pursuit is farming, they find opportunity for sociability. Each spring the population of Cardston moves out into the fields to begin the farming operations, and during the summer the families have their residences far apart. But when the crops have been harvested, the people return to the town for the winter.

Do not despise the hen. The hen annually earns more than the total value of the wheat crop, more than the total value of the cotton crop, and is still clucking cheerily away as though she had done nothing remarkable before all. It is estimated that in this country there are more than 350,000,000 chickens, which produce annually about 14,000,000,000 eggs. These eggs are worth to poultrymen and farmers \$175,000,000, while the sale of poultry for table consumption, at a conservative estimate, will equal \$130,000,000. Assuming that each hen is worth 30 cents, the entire brood foots up \$105,000,000. This places the total product of the humble hen at \$410,000,000 a year. All the cows in the country only amount to a total value of \$370,000,000 in round numbers. British hens would give up in despair if it were intimated to them that they ought to supply all the eggs the population over there can consume. In fact, the number of hens is so very inadequate that over 1,330,000,000 eggs, worth \$20,000,000 are imported in Britain every year to make up the deficiency of the home supply. Large numbers of eggs are also imported into the United States from Canada. The possibilities of the poultry business seem practically without limit.

One of the Troubles of a Rich Man.

According to his own admission, Henry Willard, one of the two surviving brothers of the three who were famous in Washington hotel history for a third of a century, is in falling health, although he is active as a cat on his feet and has every appearance of robust vitality. Henry Willard is one of the wealthy men of Washington He retired from active business several years ago—that is to say, he retired as much as he could. A day ago a friend met him on the street and inquired about his health.

"I am feeling badly," was the reply. "I do not sleep well. I toss all night long, and wake up unrefreshed. I do not know what I am going to do."

Thinking to "jolly" him the friend remarked: "If I were as comfortably fixed as you, I think I would sleep soundly. I certainly would not lose sleep from worry."

"I am not so sure of that," rejoined the old man, and his voice took on a querulous tone. "I am not so sure what you would do if you were in my place. Why, just think of it! Suppose you had from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 lying idle in the bank all the time, and had to worry about investing it. Maybe you wouldn't find it so blamed easy to sleep as you think. Just think of it—all that money not earning a dollar!"—Chicago Post.

Tommy's Question.

Tommy—Grandma, may I ask a question?
Grandma—What is it?
Tommy—Why did Noah take a pair of microbes into the ark?—Brooklyn Life.

THE JOKER'S BUDGET.

Do You Know Him?

There is a man in our town
Who thinks he's wondrous wise;
And when there is an argument
He is willing to advise.
But when there's labor to be done
This man, with smile so bland,
Looks wiser yet and shakes his head,
But he never lends a hand.

How She Lost Him.

He—Positively, you're the first girl I ever kissed.
She—I felt like it—New York Commercial Advertiser.

Worth Seeing.

"Billy, your wife is a very stylish dresser."
"Stylish? Wait till you see our took."

Consistent.

Dyspeptic Patron—See here, this coffee's cold.
Waiter—Sure! This is a quick-lunch joint. If the coffee was hot you wouldn't have time to drink it.—Catholic Standard.

Remnant Refreshment.

"What do you think my boarders call bread pudding?"
"Goodness knows."
"They call it rag-time dessert."—Detroit Free Press.

Missed His Vacation.

Patient—You should have gone into the army, doctor.
Doctor—Why so?
Patient—Judging by the way you charge your friends you would be able to completely annihilate an enemy.

Subtle Flattery.

Hicks—How did you ever manage to borrow \$20 of that stranger?
Wicks—Oh, easy enough. He's a Philadelphian, you know, and when I began talking with him I asked him if he wasn't a New Yorker.—Somerville Journal.

Cause and Effect.

"Why were the neighbors all rushing to her house the other night?"
"Thought she was yelling for help. Come to find out, she was only trying to repeat a verse she had picked up at the grand opera."—Detroit Free Press.

The Two Points of View.

Old Morgan—If you knew how hard it is to get money together you would not be so eager to squander it.
Young Morgan—If you knew what fun there is in spending money you wouldn't give your life to saving it.—Boston Transcript.

Had a Reason for It.

Blobbs—What has come over B Jones? He's so insufferably stuck up that one scarcely dares speak to him.
Slobbs—A second cousin of his was once shaved by the same barber who trimmed the whiskers of a man whose wife's sister's step-uncle went to school with Dewey.

A Brilliant Finish.

"I saw him kiss you just before he was leaving," said the sour-visaged aunt, and she said it in a regular dull-thud tone.
"Yes, auntie."
"Well, I can realize that it would be the last thing he would think of," and she sallied out as though she had scored every possible point.

Her Pleasing Fault.

"I hear that you are calling on Miss Perkleigh pretty regularly."
"Yes."
"Thought you used to say the only thing she could do with any success was to sit and giggle at nothing."
"I know it. She's still that way. Keeps so busy at that she never has time to play or sing rag-time songs."—Chicago Times-Herald.

Misled by the Sign.

Sergeant Brown—Halt! you can't go in there.
Private McGinnis—Phoy not?
Sergeant Brown—Because it's the General's tent, blockhead.
Private McGinnis—Then, phoy in the deuce have they got 'privatize over the door?"

Willing to Assist.

The gradual accumulation of wealth in a few hands," said the rich young man, "is a serious problem."
"True," replied the poor girl, "but in individual cases the danger may be at least partially eliminated by securing the proper assistance in disposing of what accumulates. There are, you know, some fields of human endeavor in which woman is pre-eminent.—Chicago Post.

Becoming Densely Inhabited.

Hiram—If I had any desire to explore around the Polar regions, I believe I'd try making a trip to the South Pole.
Silas—Why not try the North Pole?
Hiram—Oh, there's been so many other fellows gone that direction lately that a fellow wouldn't get very far without being overhauled by some relief expedition or other.—Puck.

Acoustically Perfect.

Whoppers—Toppers has just got up a new pronouncing dictionary that ought to make his fortune. There's no trouble in understanding it.
Longbow—How's that?
Whoppers—It runs through a phonograph.—Puck.

Her Intellectual Career.

"Miss Jinks is literary."
"What has she written?"
"She doesn't write at all; she just asks authors to give her their autographs."