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THANKSGIVING.

For the hay and the corn and the wheat that is reaped, For the labor well done, and the barns that are heaped, For the sun and the dew and the sweet honeycomb, For the rose and the song and the harvest brought home—

HOW WE GOT OUR TURKEY.

A THANKSGIVING STORY.

HERE was no doubt that the country was prosperous. No reasonable man could deny it. The harvest had been plentiful, the earth had yielded up her fruits in abundance, and there were abundant reasons for thanksgiving.

President's Thanksgiving message and agreed with it heartily, as far as others were concerned; but somehow I couldn't see how it applied to me. Perhaps you will say I was selfish, and I am willing to confess I am.

You see, Nellie was always practical and unselfish, while I was impracticable and poetic. Why, if I had her executive ability I'd have been a millionaire by this time, a cool millionaire, with a yacht and a country house on the Hudson.

I must go on, however, and tell my story. The month preceding Thanksgiving Day of 1885, was the gloomiest time I ever witnessed. We had just arrived in the city from Shandaken, N. Y., in the Catskills.

We had an old-fashioned melodeon in the house, and with the help of a few lessons the famous singer gave me and what I could learn from hints in the opening pages of the choir books, I made life a burden for the rest of the family.

Well, we were married, and for a time my music was given up. But the life of a farmer fretted me, and I took up my music again, and after two years' hard work at it we moved to the city.

saved and brought with me melted away like snow on the roof of a barn. My time was mainly taken up in running around to the musical agencies looking for a situation.

You will readily see that we had to live frugally. In fact, for two weeks we lived upon oatmeal and molasses, and toward the last there was no molasses, and Thanksgiving coming over the hills.

Wait a minute. It makes me feel faint to think of it, even after the lapse of three years. Well, it's all over now, I don't know why it affects me so strongly.

With a parting hand shake he disappeared. As the train rattled along over the shining rails I could see the lights of the big bridge fading away behind me.

With a heavy heart I started to walk over the bridge just after sunset. The wind blew cold from the northeast, and I buttoned my coat close to my chin.

It was a starlit night. The great towers loomed up above me like entrances to some gigantic temple. The river rushed and swirled below, and reflected in silver gleams the light from the electric lamps.

But the hardest sight for me to bear was the look Nellie gave me. Just one quick glance into my face and she knew all the sorrowful tale. It was not necessary to tell her how I had tramped the streets of the big city all day, how faint I had become from hunger; how I was raging at heart like a caged lion; how in my awful rage I cursed the rich and hated humanity.

Then came the oatmeal alone. For the molasses was all gone. I don't eat oatmeal now. My palate rises in rebellion against it. I have heard of the man who ate thirty quail in thirty days.

On the morning before Thanksgiving I was fairly crazy with grief and anticipation. Nellie and I had a consultation the night before, and she suggested that I should write a piece of poetry about the Thanksgiving turkey.

The idea pleased me. It was a relief certainly from the brooding over the morrow. I got a book of poems from my little store, which had so far escaped the pawn-shop and hunted up a metre after which I copied, for of course I knew nothing about metre or poetical feet.

Under the cheerful influence of Sam's sympathy I soon regained my lost courage. He insisted that we should go to the nearest grocery, where he picked out the biggest turkey he could find. Then there were two quarts of cranberries, three big mince pies, a package of candy for the children, a bunch of crisp celery,

and other things appropriate to Thanksgiving Day. When Sam left me at the elevated station he pressed a \$5 bill into my hand, despite my protests, with the remark: "Now, you take it, old man. I got good prices for my truck this season. 'Sides that I am only lending it to ye. Ye've got to pay me every cent back!"

His comb is as red as roddy wien, His breast is a shining sheen; But his carcass is safe from me and mine— We can't pick his wishbone clean.

By this time I had got into the spirit of my undertaking. The lines ran off the cad of my pen as smoothly as water runs off a duck's back. With a confident smile I finished the last verse.

The day was spent in the usual way, running around looking for a job and finding none. I managed, however, to earn fifty cents by carrying some coal. It hurt my pride to do it, but the faces of the children rose before me, and I would almost have committed murder just then.

It was a startling night. The great towers loomed up above me like entrances to some gigantic temple. The river rushed and swirled below, and reflected in silver gleams the light from the electric lamps.

I began to climb up the railing to reach the roadway below, when a policeman touched me on the shoulder and told me to "move on." I did move on, but in a dazed, uncertain way, until I reached the Brooklyn entrance.

There was something familiar in the voice, and looking up I saw the homely face of Sam Jones, of Shandaken, before me. Then came another shake, and this time I came to myself again.

By George, Sam, I'm glad to see you, I stammered. "Well, let's go on 'get something' to warm you up. You're new freeze, man." Thawed and melted by a steaming cup of coffee, I told Sam all the sorrowful story. How the children would be waiting at the station for me expecting the turkey I had foolishly promised them and my inability to procure it. I was interrupted at intervals by exclamations from Sam such as: "Well, I'll be blessed! You kin bet yer boots them kids is goin' to have their turkey! B'gosh! I ailers did say that the city's no place for a farmer!"

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THANKSGIVING IN THE OLD HOME

Like the patient mose to the rifted hill, The wee brown horse is elinging. A last year's nest was full with singing. Though it erst was filled with singing. Then fast was the children's pattering feet, And their trilling childish laughter.

With a parting hand shake he disappeared. As the train rattled along over the shining rails I could see the lights of the big bridge fading away behind me.

TESSIE'S THANKSGIVING.

BY MRS. M. P. HANCOCK.

CLICK on the mantel struck one sharply and then went off in an angry whirr, as though it understood fully that no lingering on the part of their employees.

Draper & Co. allowed no lingering on the part of their employees. Ten minutes late, five cents fine" it ticked, noisily, over and over again.

Tessie opened her sleepy eyes and having, as she used to say, "no five-centes to lose," sprang out of bed and began dressing hurriedly in the dim light.

Her breakfast "coldly furnished forth" from the dining table the evening before, was ready and waiting, save for the cup of tea which was quickly made, and she ate with the appetite resulting from youth and health and the serene consciousness of a few minutes to spare.

"Tessie," called her mother from upstairs, "what is the weather this morning?" She looked out of the window for the first time and drew herself together with a little shiver.

"The cold wave has come, mamma dear," she answered cheerfully. "Are the buttons and braids on my coat?"

greeted her with a smile. "You are five minutes early, Miss Wilbur," he said, graciously.

"No, indeed, sealskin; my, ain't we fine," etc.

"Certainly, certainly. Is that all?" and he hung the coat in his private wardrobe. "Remember me to Mrs. Wilbur," and with a light heart Tessie went to her post at the ribbon counter.

She was glad when pleasant little Miss Baker, of the mail order, came to her with a long memorandum to fill, and chatted brightly over the task, promising before she was through to bring her a lot of samples of reduced black dress goods for her mother.

Then came her lunch hour, and on her way back to the counter a visit to the cashier's desk. Thursday was pay day, and being Thanksgiving, the day before was substituted. As she approached the desk she was struck by the expressions of face in those who were leaving—some angry, some dejected, some scowling, others almost in tears—and she was not altogether surprised when the amount was handed to her sixty cents short.

"All right," said the cashier, frowning, in answer to her look of inquiry. "All salaries reduced ten per cent. from the drapers down. Sign, please. Next—"

And she was pushed away by those pressing behind. The silver made her purse sarcastically full, she thought, bitterly, and it was fuller yet, when, later in the day, she placed the sample from Miss Baker in the same receptacle for safe keeping.

When at last the long day was ended, the ribbons replaced in their boxes, and she stood on the street corner, waiting for her car with the rich sealskin coat almost covering her neat black dress, and a pretty black hat crowning her golden tresses, she felt herself a fraud, and the fat purse in her hand was but of a piece with the rest of her tout ensemble.

Indeed, there was nothing about her to suggest the working girl; she looked much more like a rich young woman belated in shopping. It was too late to walk, and a few flakes of snow were falling, which made the ride imperative for her sealskin. Tessie promised herself never to wear it again, as she boarded the crowded car, and felt that she must stand a while longer.

It was gone! It was too late to stop the car, and, sick at heart, she went home. There had been fifty cents in the purse besides the week's salary. Not a large amount, it is true, but it represented a hard week's work, and it was much to her. "We must have a chicken instead of a turkey for Thanksgiving," she thought. "The worst of it is it will worry mamma so." Mrs. Wilbur was watching for her at the window, and opened the door almost before she reached the step.



"How cold it is! Come in and get dinner and then we'll bundle up and go marketing to-morrow. Why, what is the matter, child?"

Tessie told her story of the lost purse. "Maybe you dropped it. You know the conductor, don't you?" suggested her mother. "We will go to the car stables in the morning. Why, what is this?" and Mrs. Wilbur, who was searching the pocket of the sealskin coat nervously, held up a gorgeous diamond ring, which Tessie recognized as the one which she had seen sparkling on the hand of her polite friend of the street car.

"There was a little slit in the lining of the pocket, and it had slipped down," explained her mother. "but, how did it get there? I never had such a ring, and nobody else has worn the coat."

"He picked up the pocket," gasped Tessie, "and the ring caught in the slit and slipped off; and he seemed so nice and gentlemanly; I'll never trust appearances again!"

"He? Who?" asked Mrs. Wilbur in bewilderment, Tessie explained. "Yes, that must have been the way of it. Well, well, take it to Mr. Cold-spring and ask him what to do about. He knew your father, and will be ready to help us for his sake."

"A very fine diamond," said the jeweler, when the plan was put into execution. "Worth at least \$500. Of course, you can advertise it, but I don't think I would. The thief is caught in his own trap, and won't be likely to claim the ring, since to do so would be to court arrest as a pickpocket. I think you may rest content with having bought a fine diamond very cheaply, very cheaply indeed."

And so the matter rested. His Turkey. The best practical joke I ever knew—said Uncle Will, in the story-telling hour after dinner—was one I played, years ago, when I lived at Hamstead. I was working at the carpenter's trade, —it was before I got the start I have now—and a lot of us was just finishing old Simpkins's barn. Simpkins was the richest and stingiest man I ever saw. One afternoon, several days before Thanksgiving, we got talking about him, and Jerry Bowles said: "He's an old screw, but I bet he'll have the decency to give us all Thanksgiving turkeys."

