

The Star.

VOLUME 6.

REYNOLDSVILLE, PENN'A., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1897.

NUMBER 29.

THANKSGIVING SERMON

PREACHED BY REV. W. F. REBER
IN THE M. E. CHURCH

On Thursday, November 25th, 1897, to a
Large Congregation.

"In everything give thanks; for this is the
will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."
1 Thes. 5: 18.

There is said to be a floating tradition which lingers in some parts of New England, that undertakes, in a general way, to account for the origin of our Thanksgiving observance. The story goes that in the early days of the colony, the people somewhere had assembled for the purpose of considering the propriety of setting apart a day of humiliation and fasting in view of the many sorrows and calamities through which they had recently been called to pass. This, however, was not the opinion of one person in the audience who looked at things from a different view point. After the discussion had gone on for sometime, he arose and ventured to suggest the propriety of counting up the many mercies and blessings that God had so abundantly showered down upon their pathway. So deeply did he succeed in impressing his thought upon the minds of those present, that they concluded to change things about, and they appointed a day of Thanksgiving instead of a day of mourning. From this local circumstance, the tradition would have us believe, our November Thanksgiving arose. This, however, is not historically correct. As is well known, the first service of this kind took place in the autumn of 1621, about ten months after the Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth Rock.

We are much more prone to dwell on our calamities rather than our blessings and to cherish a spirit of mourning and repining rather than one of gratitude and thanksgiving. Yet such a spirit is foreign to the genius of the Christian religion. A spirit of gladness should seize every man and woman on Thanksgiving Day. The Church, as on Easter morning, should drop its Lenten seriousness and burst forth in jubilant songs of hearty praise. It has been a year in coming, let it be ushered in with symphonic music. It is not a day to enlarge on the spots of our civilization, or to comment on the sins and follies of the nation. It is a joyous day. Let us turn to the bright side of life, and with eyes and ears attuned attempt to catch the strains and glimpses of the better day. The whole Bible throbs and beats and surges with the intensest ecstasies of joy from first to last.

Whenever you meet with a morose, gloomy Christian, you may rest assured that there is something wrong. His health is bad or his religion is out of order. Heir to all the sunshine in this world, heir to every promise in this dear old Book, heir to a foresight that notes the sparrow when it falls, and to the Providence which counts the very hairs of his head. He is heir also to the glories that are yet to be revealed. With all this within him, beneath him, about him, above him, how can a child of God repine? As one has said, "Every day should be a note of joy, every week a bar of music, every month a line of melody, every year a complete stanza, and life itself one sweet, long, beautiful Psalm, a prelude to the anthem sung above. And when we turn to the prophesy of Isaiah what a charming song greets our ears and what a perfect picture meets our vision. A gifted writer has phrased it most beautifully: "The princely son of Amoz, with the laurel on his brow, the immortality of genius in his bosom, sings in a melodious way of the royal reign of heaven in the soul. His vibrant voice gives utterance to words electric with the majesty of great ideas. Visions ecstatic unroll before him. In imagery the most beautiful and forcible, he paints the new Time—the redemption of society upon this earth. He gives his voice to the hills, his melody to the groves and streams, his incense to the flowers. Inanimate nature is represented as trembling with joy and gladness. Instead of thorns to cut and lacerate, the old prophet saw fir trees, symbols of beauty, majesty and goodness. Instead of the brier, he saw the myrtle with its glossy leaves, its snowy blossoms and pleasant odors. Instead of mountains of misery rearing their heads, there were mountains clad in verdure, dripping with wine and flowing with milk. Instead of fireless, breadless homes, there were homes of plenty. Lips unaccustomed to song were uttering the heavenly hallelujahs." The prophet evidently had in mind the glory and the ripeness of Messiah's kingdom. Let us be thankful to-day for the centuries that are gone and for what they have so generously contributed to us.

I. Note some of the general grounds for thanksgiving. It is peculiarly fit-

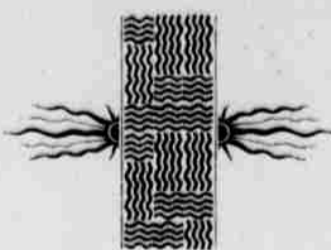
ting for us in Reynoldsville to close our Bibles for a moment, and let geology speak for a little with her lips of stone. We know that there was an abundance of plants and trees on the earth during the great geologic ages long before man appeared. The full evidence of this is seen in the fossil remains yet found in the rock and in the vast coal deposits that have been carefully stowed away in the collars of the earth. During all that period there is, however, no trace of grains, or fruit-bearing trees, or flowers worthy of the name. Indeed, the blossom is no essential part of the flower; stamens and pistils are alone necessary for seed, and the beautiful corolla is required for none of these purposes. Instantly, when man was created, however, all the grains and fruits and flowers came on the earth and went forth in procession to meet and greet him at his appearing. A beautiful picture this that science brings before us! Our Father above has spread out a table in the wilderness for his newly-arrived guest, and furnished that table with the choicest food, and heaped it up with the richest fruit and wreathed and adorned it with the rarest flowers, and man came and sat down at this table, and bowed his head and worshipped. This is where geology finds her first Thanksgiving service. Now open at the beginning of our Bibles. "Behold! I have given you every herb-bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed to you it shall be for meat." So that geology becomes a commentary on Genesis, and they both tell the one wondrous story. All the plenty stored up in the granaries of the world to-day are as truly God's gifts of love to man as were the miraculous supplies wrought by Christ when He was on earth. In the small supply of seed grain multiplied into the abundant harvests that have just been waving golden over every valley and hillside and plain, we have had again wrought before our eyes, on a vastly grander scale, the same miracle by which the hungry thousands were fed on the greensward by the Galilean sea. The same miraculous draught again rewards the fisherman's toil.

Some one has said, "Could we only discern things as they really are, every mountain would become to us a Sinai whence Jehovah yet thunders forth His law; every valley would become to us a vale of Sharon, where the rose and lilies bloom; every tree would be to us a burning bush; every nightly gem of light would be to us a Bethlehem star; every sea would yet be trodden by the Master's feet and stilled by his command; we would find sermons in stones, books in running brooks, and good in everything."

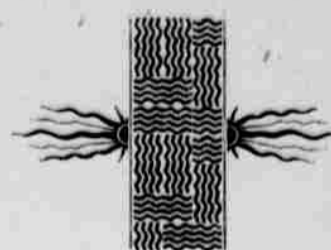
One thought more before leaving general considerations. A suggestive writer has called attention to the unspeakable scene of utter desolation which presented itself before Noah when he came out of the ark on Ararat and stood amid the wreckage of a perished world. Would not a feeling of terrible insecurity rise up within him? What is the use of going out and building cities or cultivating fields when at any moment another deluge may sweep everything away before it? In that awful hour of dread and uncertainty, the patriarch turned to his God and built an altar on the mountain top and knelt down beside the smoking sacrifice and bowed his head and made supplication. Then a voice spoke out of the troubled sky: While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease. Each ripened head of grain from that day to this is a standing witness that God has kept his word. And will he keep covenant with every blade of grass in the field and every tree in the forest and every bird in the air and every perishing creature on the earth, and shall he not keep covenant with man, created in His own likeness, redeemed by the blood of His own son, and heir to immortality? Every loaf and blade and stalk about us should rebuke our unbelief. "Have faith in God" are the words of the Master. "The word of the Lord endureth forever." Who can behold the miracle of God's bounty and His enduring faithfulness without gratitude and wonder? Let us feel that each harvest has come as truly and directly from Him as did the manna which fell in the wilderness, and let us pause to-day to offer Him our warmest thanksgiving.

II. This Thanksgiving Day is peculiarly an American institution. It recurs at a stated time of each year and is observed as a national holiday. Since the reign of our sainted Lincoln it has been strictly observed by the nation. We had much to call forth our gratitude then, but to-day we have still more. We were a nation shattered then, to-day we are a solid rock. * * * However great our population may now be in relation to other nations, it is

(Continued on 8th page.)



SAY!



Colder weather is here, Fall and Winter Garments are needed. Here's the place to get them. The fact that our goods wear twice as long as those sold by other dealers is in itself conclusive evidence of the matchless inducements we offer.

See the Men's Suits we sell at \$5.00 Strictly all wool and cut in the very latest Fall styles. We couldn't sell them for less than \$8.00 if we had bought them as other houses bought theirs. But we didn't. We bought ours when woolens were away down in price. Today the manufacturers ask more at wholesale for these goods than we sell them at retail.

Then we have some better ones at \$6.00, 7.00 and \$8.00. These suits are made of stylish, all-wool Cassimeres, Cheviots and Meltons, cut in popular sack styles, lined, trimmed and finished in a splendid manner. Each suit perfect fitting, each button hole done with care.

See our big line of Men's Working and Dress Gloves.

Also our big line of Men's Heavy and Dress Shirts. Also over 3,000 pairs of Boys' Knee Pants, Iron-clad and All-wool.



Overcoats

That Excel in Style and Quality. That's the kind we have, the kind we built our reputation on. We have them from

\$3.50 to \$15.00

They are made of medium and heavy-weight Meltons, Cheviots, Kerseys, Cassimeres, Mixtures, Etc., all well trimmed and made throughout; in fact, any other store in this town will ask you from \$2.00 to \$4.00 more for these same overcoats than we sell them at.

- - PRESERVE YOUR HEALTH - -

Protect yourself against sudden changes in the weather, so common this time of the year, by wearing the proper weight Underwear. We have it. Over 300 cases, all bought by us direct from the manufacturers before the recent rise in prices. These all go on sale this week at prices lower than present wholesale figures.

25c. for men's serviceable natural wool Underwear, value 50c.

50c. for men's extra fine pure camel's hair or natural wool Underwear, value 75c.

\$1.00 for men's fancy, heavy-weight Underwear, nice and soft as velvet, 6 different colors, pearl button finish, value \$1.50.

Millirens.

In making a selection of Goods for

Fall and Winter Wear



It is important that the choice should be made from a thoroughly up-to-date and well assorted stock. Then there is no possibility of getting goods of doubtful style. Our offerings of

DRESS GOODS,
LADIES' JACKETS
AND CAPES

Can be accepted as being absolutely correct, care having been taken to secure exclusive, but popular styles. In every department the articles presented will be found of a quality to command approval. Prices are wonderfully small for such value. Such goods as we have will serve better purpose elsewhere than on our shelves, and we sacrifice profits to make quick sales.

N. HANAU.

A. D. Deemer & Co.

Wish to call your attention to their new line of goods, including Fancy Dress Goods of all the latest designs and patterns, Ladies' Misses' and Children's Wraps—these have been selected from the best houses in New York, Cleveland and Pittsburg, and know they will be sure to please, not only in appearance, but in price. We also have a full line of

UNDERWEAR

for ladies, misses and children in fleece-lined and natural wool. Also Blankets in cotton and wool, at the very lowest price.

Overcoats,
Boys' Reefers,

and a full line of Gents' Furnishing Goods. We have faith in the quality of our goods and have evidence that the people have the same confidence by the large sales made, not only to our Reynoldsville patrons but also to the surrounding towns and villages. All are cordially invited to examine our line of goods.