

Our First Thanksgiving



THANKSGIVING day as it is now celebrated is a composite of the ancient Harvest festival, whose origins go back to the dim pre-historic beginnings of civilization, and of the solemn Puritan religious ceremony of thanksgiving. The joyous celebration of the gathering of the year's harvest, a day or week of feasting, song, dance and revel, is found in all ages and among all peoples. Thanksgiving days are also common to all religions, past and present, but they were not regular or periodical events—occurring generally after some victory of war. "The Puritans and the Pilgrims brought with them from England both the Harvest festival and the Thanksgiving days, the latter being observed whenever the deeply religious mind of the Puritan saw in their prosperity or good fortune the direct intervention of Providence. The Puritan also stripped the ancient Harvest festival of much of its rude license that had grown up around the celebration in England, and gradually through the two centuries following the settlement of New England, there grew up the practice of combining the two events and making the Thanksgiving annual. The religious element has been greatly subordinated as the years passed until at the present time it is to a majority of Americans only an incident that by many is observed only in the breach.

To the stern old Puritan of almost three centuries ago, the Thanksgiving day of 1912 would seem little less than sacrilege so far as the thanksgiving feature of it is concerned. But he would understand and appreciate the day's feasting and revel as a part of the celebration of the Harvest festival. The difference is apparent in the records of the early settlement of America. The first thanksgiving service held in North America was observed with religious ceremonies conducted by an English minister in the year 1678 on the shores of Newfoundland. This clergyman, accompanying the expedition under Frobisher, who settled the first English colony in America. The records of this significant day have been preserved in the quaint rules and regulations of the expedition as follows:

In primis: To banish swearing, dice and card playing, and filthy communication, and to serve God twice a day with the ordinary service of the Church of England. On Monday morning, May 27, 1578, aboard the Ayde, we received all the communication by the minister of Gravesend, prepared as good Christians toward God, and resolute men for all fortunes; . . . and Master Wolfall made unto us a goodly sermon, exhorting all especially to be thankful to God for His strange and marvelous deliverance in those dangerous places."

The second record of a thanksgiving service in America is that of the Pilgrim colony which settled at Sagadahoc on the Maine coast in 1607. It consisted of prayer and sermon as in the first instance. These were thanksgiving days pure and simple, and after the settlement of Plymouth many others of a similarly solemn religious nature occurred.

The first Harvest festival held in America was upon December 13, 1621. It has been called, wrongly, the first autumnal thanksgiving held in America, but it was in reality the observance of the Harvest festival, with which the settlers had been acquainted in England. It was not a day set apart for religious worship and it is not likely that any religious service was held; on the contrary, it was the beginning of a whole week of festivity in celebration of the successful garnering of their first harvest in

their new home. Qaintly does "Mourt's Relation" chronicle the event:

"Our harvest being gotten in, our Governour sent foure men on fowling, that so we might after a more speciall manner rejoyce together, after we had gathered the fruit of our labours; they foure in one day killed as much fowle, as with a little helpe beside, served the Company almost a weeke, at which time amongst other Recreations, we exercised our Armes, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and amongst the rest their greatest King Massasoit, with some ninetie men, whom for three dayes we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed Deere, which they brought to the plantation and bestowed upon the Captaine, and others. And although it be not always so plentiful, as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so farre from want, that we often wish you partakers of our plentie."

While the bill of fare of this first American celebration of the Harvest festival has not been preserved the feast was no doubt a royal one even if some of the food and the methods of preparation would seem strange and outlandish to present day Americans. The provisions must have been bountiful for there were about 140 persons including the 90 of Massasoit's company who were entertained for three days, and all had their share of supplies. From other sources we know that the foods of the sea were abundant and that the Pilgrims had made the acquaintance of the oyster. Ducks they had in plenty of the choicest species and also geese. Game, from grouse to venison, was brought in from the forest in abundance, and there was a "great store" of wild turkeys. Barley loaf and cakes of corn meal were highly

prized by the colonists and played their part in the feast. For vegetables the Pilgrims had much the same as they had in England. Gov. Bradford's list naming beans, pease, parsnips, carrots, turnips, onions, melons, cucumbers, radishes, "skirrets," beets, coleworts, and cabbages, in addition to wheat, rye, barley and oats. Besides these they had the indigenous squash and pumpkin, and it may be taken for granted that a careful Pilgrim housewife had preserved during the summer by drying a quantity of strawberries, gooseberries and "raspis." Take it altogether, the food basis of the first Harvest Thanksgiving day celebration in America was much the same as today.

But if the good housewife of today was obliged to prepare the thanksgiving feast with the utensils and inconveniences of the kitchen of three centuries ago she probably would throw up her hands in hopeless despair. The kitchen with its great glowing fireplace was the housewife's domain and the general living room of the entire family. The walls and the floor were bare and the furniture meager and comfortless, while the kitchen furnishings were odd and strange. It was in this great cavernous chimney that the Pilgrim wife cooked her thanksgiving dinner. Placed high up in the yawning chimney was the heavy backbar, or lug-hole, of green wood, afterwards displaced by the great iron crane. It was beyond reach of the flames, and from it hung a motley collection of hooks of various lengths and weights. They had many different names, such as pot-hooks, pot-handles, pot-claws, pot-cleps, trammels, crooks, hakes, gallow-balke, words that would puzzle a housewife of today to define. From these were suspended the pots and kettles in which the food was cooked. At both sides of the fire-

place were large ovens in which baking and roasting were done.

There were no tin utensils in those old days and brass kettles were worth \$15 a piece. The utensils were mostly of iron, wood, pewter or latten ware. Glassware was practically unknown and bottles were made of leather. Wood played a great part in kitchen and tableware. Wooden trenchers from which two ate were used on the table for a century after the settlement at Plymouth. Wood was also used for pans and bread troughs and a host of other things displaced by tin in the modern kitchen. Of wood were made butter paddles, salt cellars, noggins, keelers, rundlets, and many kinds of drinking bowls which were known under the names of mazers, whiskins, piggins, tankards and kannes, words many of which have disappeared from use.

The dining table of these old days was the old Anglo-Saxon board placed on trestles, and the tablecloth was known as the "board cloth." Thus we have the origin of the time-worn phrase: "Gather around the festive board." And the furnishings of the "board" were simple, inventories of that period mentioning only cups, chafing dishes, chargers, trenchers, salt cellars, knives and spoons. The table fork was an innovation not yet in general use; the fingers of the eater were used to thrust the food into the mouth. The spoons were of wood and pewter mostly. Silver spoons were rare. There was no china-ware on the tables of the early thanksgiving feasts; for no china-ware came over on the Mayflower. That and the lack of glassware and silver would make a thanksgiving table of the seventeenth century look impossible to a housewife of today. Complete the picture by imagining large trenchers, square blocks of wood hollowed out by hand, placed around the "board" from each of which two people dig their food out with their fingers, and you have an idea of the manner in which our ancestors celebrated Thanksgiving three centuries ago.

But if the kitchen and table furniture would appear strange to a housewife of today some of the dishes served would appear even stranger. How many housekeepers of today can cook "suppaw" and "somp" from corn meal? Or bake manchet, simmels, cracknels, jannacks, cocket bread, cheat loaves, or "wasel" bread? The colonists did not take kindly at first to the pumpkin, which in the pie form has become a distinctive feature of the modern thanksgiving feast. They called them "pomions" then, and this is awe-inspiring recipe from which the colonial housewife made "pomion" pie:

"Take a half pound of Pumpion and slice it, a handfull of Tyme, a little Rosemary, Parsley and sweet Marjoram slipped off the stalks, then the cinnamon, nutmeg and pepper, and six cloves, and beat them. Then mix them and beat them together and put in as much sugar as you see fit; then fry them like a froize. After it is fried let it stand until it be cold. Take sliced apples, thinne rounde ways, and lay a row of the froize and a layer of apples with currents betwixt the layer while your pie is fitted, and put in a good deal of sweet butter before you close it. When the pie is baked take six yolks of eggs, some white wine or Vergis and make a caudle of this, but not too thick. Cut up the lid and put it in. Stir them well together whilst the eggs and the pomions be not perceived and serve it up."

Thus saith the old cook book, and the modern housewife who faithfully follows this recipe can have at least a unique concoction, fearfully and wonderfully made, to grace her Thanksgiving table.

THANKSGIVING

By AMELIA E. BARR.

"Have you cut the wheat in the blowing fields,
The barley, the oats, and the rye,
The golden corn and the pearly rice?
For the winter days are nigh."
"We have reaped them all from shore to shore,
And the grain is safe on the threshing floor."

"Have you gathered the berries from the vine,
And the fruit from the orchard trees?
The dew and the scent from the roses and thyme,
In the hive of the honey bees?"
"The peach and the plum and the apple are ours,
And the honeycomb from the scented flowers."

"The wealth of the snowy cotton field
And the gift of the sugar cane,
The savory herb and the nourishing root—
There has nothing been given in vain."
"We have gathered the harvest from shore to shore,
And the measure is full and brimming o'er."

Then lift up the head with a song!
And lift up the hand with a gift!
To the ancient Giver of all
The spirit in gratitude lift!
For the joy and the promise of spring,
For the hay and the clover sweet,
The barley, the rye, and the oats,
The rice and the corn and the wheat,
The cotton and sugar and fruit,
The flowers and the fine honeycomb,
The country, so fair and so free,
The blessings and glory of home.

WHO'S WHO AND WHY

AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN HELPS TURKEY



The specter of a holy war is unfolding itself before the eyes of Europe.

It began when Italy clashed with Turkey in Africa, and now that the little Christian states, that act as a buffer between the larger powers and Turkey, are at war, the cloud is darkening rapidly among all the Mohammedan nations.

In the mosques of India, the pagodas of Malaysia and the shrines of a dozen other nations prayers are being said for the success of the Turkish arms.

All Islam has thrown its religious support to the khalifate at Constantinople, and should the sultan, as head of the Moslem faith, unfurl the green flag of the prophet it is feared the fanatic Mohammedan nations would begin holy wars.

Even the most conservative of European diplomats admit there is a possibility of political alliances between Turkey and other Islamic nations. The Russian persecutions in Persia have fired the Mohammedans there, and the Asiatic Moslems are looking for a champion who can come to the rescue of the threatened Islamic states—Turkey and Persia.

Habibullah Khan, Amir of Afghanistan, is the man. One word from him, alarmists say and others fear, will bring on a series of religious clashes that will entangle every nation in Europe, Asia and Africa.

The amir has not failed to take advantage of the almost universal manifestation of respect paid him, and in a meeting held in Kabul recently to express sympathy with the Turks he spoke in no uncertain manner.

SOMETHING NEW IN ORGANIZED CHARITY

Before the state legislature in Albany, N. Y., this winter will be presented a plan for America's first "department of home assistance," the first organized government bureau to care for the destitute home. More than a generation ago governmental aid for the families of the very poor was abandoned in New York city; living conditions—and living's cost—have changed radically since then; today the specially appointed committee of investigation for the city conference of charities and correction urges governmental aid as the only hope of real "social justice" and livable support for the homes of the destitute. There are hundreds of women and children starving in New York for whom only the government can adequately care.



"Of course it is, primarily, a matter of the cost of living," said O. F. Lewis, chairman of the conference committee on governmental aid of New York city. "The price of the necessities of life has increased so much that destitution has become a problem too great for the private societies to meet alone. I have no doubt that the private charitable organizations could take care of the destitute families if they only had enough money; but under present conditions they have not enough money; and so something else must be done—something else must be added.

"What we are suggesting is something absolutely new. But it is simply the outgrowth of present conditions. It is a question that has 'broken through' many times lately in various parts of the United States; here in New York we are first bringing it to the point of definite, organized action."

PRINCESS NURSING WOUNDED SOLDIERS



According to press reports from Greece, the hospital arrangements of the Greek army are entirely inadequate for emergencies. The army has acted with such rapidity that it is impossible for the field ambulances to keep pace with it. Princess Alice, wife of Prince Andrew, the fourth son of King George, with a staff of plucked nurses, is following the army and rendering first aid to the wounded, by whom she is spoken of as "the ministering angel."

At Sarandoper she performed almost miracles, flitting with her staff from one quarter to another until late in the evening, when she was compelled to stop because her clothing was drenched with blood.

Princess Helena, daughter of the Crown Prince, has also arrived with her hospital train.

Looking around the railroad station at Larissa, which was littered with wounded men, some on ambulances, others propped against the walls, she exclaimed in pathetic tones:

"Only three weeks to prepare for all this! It was not enough time, and this is only the beginning."

MRS. GROVER CLEVELAND TO WED AGAIN

Mrs. Grover Cleveland, widow of the former president of the United States, is to be married next April to Prof. Thomas Preston, an honorary professor at Princeton University and now occupying the chair of archaeology at Wells College, Aurora, N. Y., the institution attended by Mrs. Cleveland, then Frances Folsom.



Although formal announcement has not been made and probably will not be made until after the debut of Miss Esther Cleveland this winter, the fact of the engagement has been known for some time among the intimate friends of Mrs. Cleveland and Professor Preston.

The second romance of the woman who as "the bride of the White House" charmed a nation and whose high character and devotion to her distinguished husband have been, by example, a national influence toward high ideals of wifehood, is the outcome of an acquaintanceship of little more than a year's duration, with a man practically unknown in America.

Professor Preston, who is about fifty years of age, a literary scholar and a linguist of international distinction, is a man of strong but retiring personality, and, although he has held a high place among the faculty of Princeton for years, it is said that his first meeting with Mrs. Cleveland took place not many months ago.