THE OMAHA ILLUSTRATED BEE.

The National Thanksgiving Day---Its History and Its Significance







"PROMISE OF THE FUTURE."-Photo by a Staff Artist.

OWN through the ages the oc-П casional and periodical expression of thanks to supernatural rulers. on the part of masses of people has taken various forms and has persided and greatly developed. In the monotheistic system of the Hebrews it first assumed that deeply religious and emo-tional character which' has been transmitted to like services in the Christian church. From the conversion of Constantine. Te Deums nearly always followed every great martial victory won by a Christian monarch or general. Te Deums are associated with some of the blackest crimes against religion and humanity that were ever committed, as well as with some of the noblest deeds. The first ever heard in this western hemisphere was, of course, that chanted by Columbus and his followers on their landing in the West Indies. Cortez also thus celebrated his atroclous crucitles to the Toltecs and Aziecs. In the same century one finds the Protestant Reformers in Europe often employing the solemn liturgies of thanksgiving after memorable successes for their One instance of this stands out very strongly in the history of the heroid struggle of the Netherlands against Philip of Spain. It was the great Thanksgiving in the cathedral of Leydon, after the delivery of the town from the awful alternative of butchery or starvation by the letting in of the waters of the North sea to surround it and drive its besiegers back to dry land. Motley says of this touching and inspiring scene:

"Magistrates and citizens, wild Zealanders, emaciated burgher guards, sailors, soldiers, women, children-nearly every living person within the walls-all repaired without delay to the great church, stout Admiral Boisot leading the way. The starving, herole city, which had been so firm in its resistance to an earthly king, now bent itself in humble gratitude before the King of Kings. After prayers the whole vast congregation joined in the thanksgiving hymn. Thousands of voices raised the song, but few were able to carry it to its conclusion, for the universal emotion, deepened by the music, became too full for ut-The hymn was abruptly susterance. sended, while the multitude wept like chil-

dren.



HIS KINE SHOW THE LAND'S FATNESS .- Photo by a Staff Artist.

memories of the lean years of earlier history have been forgotten. Experience has been kind in that it has taught the Nebraska farmer what he can not do, and has given an insight into some things he can do and with profit. Thus it has been established that nowhere on earth is farming more certain to bring satisfactory returns than in the Antelope state. In a commonwealth like Nebraska, where so much depends on agriculture and kindred pursuits, it follows outs naturally that when the farmer prospers all lines of business share in the activity. Nebraska has extensive manufacturing interests, but they are so nearly allied to the farm that they may nearly be classed with it, and the manufacturers certainly do well when the crops are good. It has been so long since a crop failed in this state that the manufacturers have long ago forgotten dull times and have been busy for years. The present year is no exception, and what is true for the manufacturers is true for the merchants. With good crops and good prices, the whole state teems with activity and the prosperity of the farmer is shared by all.

Quarter of a Century of Growth.

Those of our readers who have been acquainted with the state for the last twentyfive years realize better than anyone else can the metamorphosis that has taken place during that time. Tweaty-five years ago a steady stream of immigration was pouring into the state, and virgin prairie was being taken up by pioneer farmers. Day by day the frontier was being pushed nearcr to the Rocky mountains, and each night the sun went down on some new evidence of coming settlement where he had risen on a wilderness. As far back from the river as the farming country runs, deep into what is called the "semi-arid" region, this tide of immigration flowed, and within this short period it has changed the face of the country. The sod house and the dugout have disappeared and in their stead the prairies are dotted with handsome homes, where all the comforts and many of the luxuries of modern life are enjoyed by the vigorous

RIVALS OF KING TURKEY .- Photo by a Staff Artist.

on the ocean beach. They had for themselves and families small but comfortable habitations that they had hewed out from the forest trees. They had an abundance of fuel at their doors, so that they would be secure from the wintry blasts.

November 20, 1904.

To people who had only a year before been tossing on the temptuous ocean in a frail bark off an ironbound coast, who, when they finally landed, had only meager and insufficient shelter and but a small supply of food, followed by sickness, the result of these incredible hardships, consigning one-half their number to graves in a strange land. Their present comfort contrasted so strongly that their hearts overflowed with a thankful spirit and they gave expression to this by several days of feasting and merriment.

They called in their Indian allies and together they ate roast venison and turkey, tempered with bowls of succetash. Competition in wrestling and running took the place of the balls and dances of their southern neighbors at Jamestown.

They were but a handful of people in an almost unknown world, surrounded by overwhelming numbers of savage aborigines. They were cut off from the rest of civilized mankind-parted from them by 3,000 miles of ocean waste-their only means of communication peing slow sailing vessels. They heard from the outer world scarcely twice a year.

They had only the barest necessities of life; for clothing they must spin the wool and flax by hand and weave in the cottage loom.

They had no newspapers or printing presses-not even roads, let alone railroads, telephones and ocean cables.

From this handful of people we have grown to a nation of \$0,000,000 souls. From the infant colonies on the edge of the Atlantic ocean we have spread over most of the continent and have planted the flag within a few miles of Asia in our Alaskan possessions. Not content with continental occupation, we have taken thousands of the isles of the Pacific ocean under the protection of our flag.

Our diplomacy has become world wide and the nations of earth have learned that no important step in the world's policy can be taken without the consent of this nation, that has grown from a small handful who inaugurated the Thanksgiving holiday. Its observance has become universal for to be found a more striking illustration of braska and made a wealthy commonwealth all the people who make their home under the creation of wealth by properly directed out of a wilderness. The church came with the starry flag. This has not always been the school, and the sand care that has fos- so, but for many years was confined to the tered the secular education of the youth people of New England origin. The people of the state has been lavished on religious who settled the southern half of our retraining of the young. Nowhere has the public had small use for Thanksgiving, but preferred to make Christmas their chief church in all its branches and its denomholiday. For Christmas the stern Puritan had no sympathy, believing that its observance favored the Roman Catholic church. Now, however, the Puritan vida with the Cavalier in observing Christmas and in no part of the country is it observed more heartily than where Thanksgiving had its origin. In like manner have the southerners come to accept Thanksgiv-

Thanksgiving Among the Puritans. With much reason an effort has been made to trace the Puritan tradition of Thanksgiving in some degree to the practice of the Netherland reformers. Many of the English Puritans had found refuge in the Low countries from the persecutions under Mary, Elizabeth and James. The congregation of Plymouth went to Leyden in 1609. It is not surprising, then, that one of the earliest public solemnities in the Plymouth colony on Massachusetts bay, after this same congregation had emigrated, was a general thanksgiving, prostates. laimed by Governor Bradford in 1621. That it was a feast and ecclestastical service alliance the army at Valley Forge, on combined is shown by the fact recorded in a letter of a Pilgrim that the governor appointed beforehand four fowlers to go forth into the wilderness and kill birds to supply the tables, and of these they brought back many. The wild turkey then abounded and was the bird most sought for food. This may be taken as the institution of the practice of sacrificing the fatted turkey as the in 1784. viotim most fitting the day of general thanksgiving. But a more formal appointing of Thanksgiving was two years later. when abundant crops had succeeded a year of woeful scarcity. The custom of a periodical general Thankagiving grew. The Plymouth elders adopted in 1636 a law "that it be the power of the governor and

assistants to command solemn days of humilicion by fasting. . . Also for thanksgiving as occasion shall be offered." The general court of Massachusetts in 1689 set apart the 19th day of December for Thanksgiving in language that follows:

It having pleased the God of Heaven to mitigate His many frowns upon us in the officient of the many frowns upon us in the simple past, with a mixture of some very simple favors, and in the midgt of wrath of far to remember mercy, that our ha-vests have hot wholly failed; that our ba-vests have not wholly failed; that our ba-vests have not wholly failed; that our ba-vests have not wholly failed; that others in the sent their designs accomplished our just God's yet adding more perfection to our deliverance. Inasmuch also as that he Great God hath of late raised up such a defines to the Protestant religion and h-therest abroad in the world, especially in the overeign King William and Queen Mary, the throne. It is, therefore, ordered that, be they as a day of thanksgiving throughout is, bary is hereby inhibited, and the several may is hereby inhibited, and the several observe the same in celebrating the Just observe the same in celebrating the Just observe the same in celebrating the Just It having pleased the God of Heaven to mitigate His many frowns upon us in the It became gradually settled that the month most suitable for general thanksgiving was November, and a Thursday was with

appointed for that purpose. Thanksgiving became fixed in the New England colonies as an annual occasion about the year 1700. The Dutch governors of New Netherland also now and then ordered a general thanksgiving, and the custom was followed to some extent by the aubsequent English governors.

First National Proclamation.

During the revolutionary war the Continental congress recommended the general giving of thanks on more than one occa-The first had a particular association with Philadelphia. The Britlah had moved toward this city after the battle of the Brandywine and congress had fied to Lancaster; afterward, when the disastrous news from Germantown was received, proceeding to York. It remained there for nine months, during a part of which Washagton and his army were draining the hit- giving. ter cup of misery at Valley Forge. But joyous news came to York later-tidings of the French alliance and of the surrender of Burgoyne. Henry Laurens of South the second year of the civil war. Presicorresponded most nearly with that of

NO SIGN OF FAMINE HERE -Photo by a Start Artist.

tional thanksgiving, and it was composed of Richard Henry Lee of Virginia, Samuel Adams of Massachusetts and General Rob-Lee wrote the proclamation; it was adopted by congress and issued by Henry Laurens as the executive head of the government, and transmitted by him with a letter to all the governors of the thirteen original

On receipt of the news of the French May 6, 1778, after the terrible winter which history has so vividly described, held special Thanksgiving services. Congress ordered a general Thanksgiving on December 13, 1781, in gratitude for the capitulation of Cornwallis at Yorktown on the 19th of Ogtober. Peace was celebrated in the same way by order of the Continental congress

The first Thanksgiving proclamation is sued by a president of the United States under the federal constitution was that of General Washington appointing Thursday. November 25, as the day of national observance. The chief part of it was as follows:

Whereas, It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almight God, to obey his will, to be grateru fo His benefits and humbly to implore Hi protection and favor. *.** Now, there Almighty His benefits and humbly to implore His protection and favor. * * Now, there-fore, I do recommend and assign Thurs-day, the 2sth day of November next, to be devoted by the people of these states to the services of that great and giorious Being who is the Beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is or that will be, that we may then all units in rendering to Him our sincere and humble thanks for His stind care and protection of the people of this country previous to their becoming a nation, for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of His providence, in the course and con-clusion of the late war; for the great degree of tranquility, union and plenty which we implore His Some one and another had seen while traveing in various countries. One declared in favor of a sunset on Mont Blanc. Another had of tranquility, union and pienty which we have since enjoyed; for the peaceable and rational manner in which we have beer enabled to establish constitutions of gov ernment for our safety and happiness, and seen nothing to equal the valley of the Hudson. The trend of the talk is ame enabled to establish constitutions of gov-ernment for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national one, now lately instituted; for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed, and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and in general for all the great and various favors which He has been pleased to confer upon us. sentimental, and one patriot declared that the most beautiful sight to him was the statue of Liberty as he saw it olice from the deck of an incoming steamer after three years' absence from the country. In a lull in the conversation following this confer upon us. remark a young lieutenant, just around

By this time the last Thursday in Noafter a run of the fever, turned to the vember had come to be recognized as the gill next him and said in an undertone: most suitable and convenient time for gen-"Did you ever see Manila over the stern?" eral thanksgiving. It marked a sufficient

period after the annual harvest to permit of the full realization of the relative value A letter carrier in Kansos City was handof the latter. It was, in fact, the true ing a woman servant a letter at the basement door, when a bolt of lightning struck cessor of the traditional harvest festivals of the olden time, when Ceres, Pan between them. They were both rende: ed and Bacchus were the mythical patrons. unconscious by the shock, but both were But it was not until after Washington's brought around all right. The letter was day that the Thanksgiving proclamation beconsumed. Two farm hands engaged in

came an invariable feature of the presi- plowing in a 160-acre plot in South Dakota dential year. Washington's second Thanks- were killed by lightning within three mingiving proclamation was issued six years utes. Three young kittens playing in a after the first, to commemorate the supback yard in Independence, Mo., were pression of the "Whisky Rebellion," in struck by lightning. One of them was 1796. Other prosidents followed the rule killed, the other two being only singed. of appointing only on particular occasion A German named Blitgen (which means Get me a horse doctor." days of thanksgiving, one being the conclusion of peace with Great Britain in 1815. Meanwhile, in several states the cus- queer name with a party of friends in a tom became an annual one on the part tavern in central Arkansas. The shop of of the governors, spreading thus to the a bird fancier in Chicago was struck by south and into the west. Its slowest acceptance was in the south, where, however, was killed and the other permanently In 1858 eight governors proclaimed Thanks-

It did not become the unwritten law that national thankegiving annually until of

President of the United States as after- each governor of a state shall second the ward instituted. Mr. Laurens appointed a annual Thanksgiving proclamation of the committee to draft a proclamation of na- president with one of his own, naming the same day to be specially observed by the people of his state. The proclamation of the national chief magistrate is not usuerdeau of Philadelphia. Richard Henry ally as long, elaborate and finely wrought as to rhetoric as it was apt to be in the early days of the republic. It now combines succinctness and directness in marked degree. But Thanksgiving is no less an expansive festival than it was then, and it is probable that it would go on just the same, year after year, procla-

mation or no proclamation. It is deeply rooted in the affections of the people, yielding first place only to Christmas. Nebraska Has Special Reasons.

Most Beautiful Sight of All.

Frenks of Lightning.

relates the Times. In the course

of the dinner they fell to discuss-

ing the most beautiful sights

Quaint

together in New York recently, hurt at all.

and thrifty men and women who came Nebraska with nothing but health and strength and a determination to make a home. The traveler nowadays would have

little trouble in convincing himself that Nebraska was originally a wooded state. Towns that then were merely a railcoad station, a section house and one or two scattered frame buildings of the cheaper sort, have grown into tidy little cities, with

everything that makes for comfort of their citizens. Even in the "sand hill" region. once considered hopelessly barren, the prosperity of the cattle raiser has found its expression in the building of good homes and the establishment of thrifty and pushing towns. Each year sees the conquest of man over the unpromising natural conditions pushed a little farther, until another quarter of a century will see the last vestige of desert in Nebraska wiped out, and

all its millions of acres made productive Nebraska people have especially cause and valuable. The story of the state sounds for feeling thankful this season. Never did like a fairy tale. Twenty-five years ago prosperity smile on the people of the state farms were given by the government to more benignly, and never was the outlook homesteaders; today many of those home-

more encouraging. Year after year has the steaders are selling their farms because harvest time returned a bountiful fulfill- they feel that they can not profitably cultiment of the seedtime's promise, until barns vate such high-priced land. From the origand granaries have overflowed and the inal pre-emption price of \$1.25 per acre, the world has turned its stream of gold hither- land has increased until it is now worth ward in exchange for the products of the \$40, \$50, \$60, even up to \$100 per acre. Nofarm, the orchard, the dairy and the cat- where in the world is there a parallel for tle range. Peace and plenty has continued the prosperity that has been enjoyed by to be the lot of the Nebraskan until the the Nebraska farmer, and nowhere is there a God-fearing people that built up Ne-

Features

A Sleepless Wonder.

HIS WINTEP HOARD HEAPED HIGHL-PLot. V. & Staff Artist.

labor. No wonder the Nebraska citizen gives thanks for his condition.

Education and Culture.

Not alone in material wealth has the citizen of Nebraska been increased, but in all the ways that show for growth has he progressed and expanded. Twenty-five years ago the educational system of the state was beginning to put forth evidences of the wisdom of its founders; today it is a crown of triumph for their efforts. Ne braska has stood for years at the head of the procession of the states in matter of diffusion of knowledge. The lowest percentage of illiteracy is a proud boast for any commonwealth, yet the character of gratulation, the citizen of Nebraska is Nebraska's citizenship has been such as to render this merely a statement of rather than a boast. The public school system of the state was richly endowed in

the beginning, and has been carefully fostered since, so that it has always been in the lead. From the district school, in which all the rudimentary branches are taught, to the State university, where the highest of mental training may be had, the educational institutions of Nebraska have shared with the growth of the state In religion the same story is true. It was

inations met with more material anl spiritual success than in Nebraska. It is only natural that a people thus favored should have a capacity for the enjoyment of the good things of life, and the best evidence of this is found in the general culture and intelligence of the citizenship. All the material signs of well developed tastes and cultivated minds exist, and without the ostentatious clamorous assertion of more pretentious but less stable neighbors. And for this, with no tinge of Pharisaical self-

thankful

Increase in Material Wealth.

Millions of dollars are lying in the Neing for opportunity for profitable investment. All the fiduciary institutions of the state report an increase in deposits and a general extension of business. Building operations have been even more than usually extensive during the year, and not a hamlet, village, town or city in the state one of the most bountiful in the history _ite of the state, while the prices that are being paid for farm products make it certhat it is the most valuable ever tain raised in the matter of dollars and cents. It has been estimated by conservative men as being worth in the neighborhood of

man, woman and child living in the state. Aside from this enormous amount added A man who spends considerable time each to the wealth of the state by the yield of year hunting in the northern woods tels the soil, consideration must be given to the live stock industry of Nebraska, which which led him to believe that that parties is also enormous in extent. No exact ular bull was nobody's fool. He sligh ly figures are at hand, but careful estimates, based on returns made to the United States government and to the state by the assessors, indicate that there are at least 2,000,000 head of cattle, 3,500,000 head of hogs and probably 2,500,000 head of sheep in the state. The total value of this great aggregation of live stock is more than \$150,000,000 No account is taken of the horses, mules and other farm animals that are really a part of the machinery of the farm, and not a marketable quantity. If the value of the manufactured products of the state were added to the figures from the farm, it would be seen that the increase in ma-

> to a close has been not far from \$500,000,000 for Nebraska glone. Is it any wonder that the thinking citizens of the sints are thankful?

In the Pilgrim Fathers' Day.

terial wealth during the year now drawing

A popular and also an effective way of impressing a truth on the mind of the people is by contrast. In no other way can the Thunksgiving of today be as well shown as by contrasting the circumstances. of the people who kept the first Thanksgiving holiday in America and the circumstances of the \$0,060,000 people who observe

it now. In the fall of 1621 the survivors of the Pilgrim band who landed on the granite rock at Plymouth had by diligent cultivation and barter with the Indian tribes ac- slon to be thankful for one square meal. cumulated a sufficient store of malze to assure them their food for the coming winter. the practice of the founders of They, by the teachings of their Indian al-Hes, learned to trap and shoot the game their feast.

haustible. They had learned that there away from its observance than the people were shell fish to be had for the gathering who keep it.

Reasons for Thankfulness.

ing as their holiday.

Americans are not this year forced to the conclusion of Charles II of England, who, after a year of unprecedented disaster to the arms and agriculture pracks banks just now, not idle, but wait- of England, his prime minister asked him: "What have we to be thankful for?" Charles replied: "We should be thankful that things are no worse."

Conditions are the opposite with us this year. Our industries are at the full tide of prosperity, our corneribs are full to bursting, the wheat bins overflow with fatness; has been omitted in this direction. And the kine, sheep and horses on the hills and the harvest of the current year has been in the valleys are full of life and vigor, the grass to see them through the winter has grown in unparalleled abundance and enough is now gathered in ricks and barns to tide them over the year. The apples that were on the trees are now in the cellar, the grapes that were on the vine are now pressed and the sparkling wine is now \$200,000,000, or more than \$200 for every on draft. A great abundance of the vegetable kind are safely shielded from the frost and they have yielded with a prodigality surpassing all former history.

For all this wealth poured into our laps should we not take a day off to show that we are thankful? There were no scattered families to gather the first Thanksgiving; now Thanksgiving is a day of family reunions, when the busy man of the world drops his business, taking his wife and children, returns to the anoestral roof tree, where for a few hours, amid good cheer, the sire and son meet, the daughter exchanges confidences with the mother and the innocent prattle of thyoungsters crown the day.

The more devout assemble in their various places of worship and in a public manner thank God for His favors.

No up-to-date Thanksgiving is now held in towns without the foot ball game. Notwithstanding that some overcautious persons do not approve of the game, the verdict of the general public is overwhelming in its favor. And exhibitions of courage and strategy are shown on Soldier.

Franklin and Marshall fields, not inferior to the strategy of some great battle, as the teams of the great universities meet and struggle for supremacy.

Feasting still occupies a large place in the program.

Good will rather than charity is the motive behind the gifts of turkeys to the employes of individuals and corporations. Thanksgiving opens the heart and loosens the purse strings of the average man, and while he is enjoying his abundance he sees that the unfortunate and poor have occain this he has not gotten far away from Thanks giving, who invited the Indiana to share

of the forest that was seemingly inex- Thanksgiving has not drifted farther

him. I don't want an automobile doctor. lightning in our language) was struck and killed by a bolt while talking about his Matter of Business. Oklahoma has two country merchanis, brothers, well along in years and among the most prosperous in that region. One

a bolt. Of two parrots in one cage one of the brothers was moved no: long ago to believe that he should join the church. blinded, besides being rendered deaf and Neither had ever paid attention to religdumb. A garg of circus hand, were tryl g lous affairs, but a stirring syangelist had to round up an escaped tiger in a Misfinally aroused the elder man to f.el that

the president should issue a proclamation souri town, when the tiger was struck the church was where he belonged. He dead by lightning. During a running race endeavored to persuade his brother to join at an lilinois county fair, in which aleven the church with him, but whenever the Carolina was president of the congress, the dent Lincoln appointed special days of horses, were competing for the pas, the subject was mentioned the brother always office in the Pederation of States which general thanksgiving in 1863, 1863 and 1864. Winning horse was struck dead ins antly waived the subject and would not discuss Unwritten saw has come to require that after having won the race by a head on the the matter. Finally the elder brother said

one day: "John, why don't you join the wire. None of the other horses, most of PARTY of Americans were dining which were close up at the finish, were church if I do?" "Well. Hill, I might as well tell you. You go ahead and join the church; but if I join it, too, who's going to weigh the wool?" Albert E. Herpin of Trenton, N. J., who

Current

Tale of a Bull Moose

says that he has not slept a wink for ten years, will undertake to prove himself the eleopless wonder and at the same time of an experience he had with a buil moore. win a bet of \$10,060 made by a Chicago specialist that he cannot keep awake thirty-one days. The test is to commence injured the beast at closer range than it is in Trenton February 28 next. The money has been put up by R. C. Corbin of Chiusually possible to approach such game. cago, and four physicians will "sit up" Suddenly the animal turned and ruthed toward the hunter with lowered head. The with Herpin for the purpose of making sportsman squared away and prepared for. sure that he doesn't steal a nap on them. a second shot, but to his horror his feet Herpin's wakefulness dates back ten years. became entangled in some briers and he to the time when his wife died. His nerves were affected so that he couldn't sleep, fell. Close to him was a large tree seve. al feet in thickness. Without having an opand he kept awake so long that he couldn't portunity to recover his weapon, he carely had time to scramble to his feet and dodge behind the trunk of the tres before the

The breathless nimrod was chased around that tree until his head fairly whired. Suddenly the buil stopped and charged from the other direction. This he stopped again and resorted to the small boy s trick of making a feat one way, then darting in the other. He nearly caught the now thoroughly rattied hunter by the ruse. The a companion, who dropped the wily bell in

house in Boston, in which there was discussed certain phenomena of the mind.

During the discussion a little girl of 10, the daughter of the host, was listening attentively.

"I can do one thing and think another." "What is it?" asked the father.

"Weil," she said, "it is very easy for m to say the Lord's prayer and think of almost anything cise I want to. I do it every night."-Harper's Weekly.

get into the habit of snoozing again. Kind of Doctor Wanted. An action for damages alleged to have bull was upon him. been received in an automobile accident was recently brought in a New York county. A woman had been thrown from a

lo

carriage, the horse atlached to which was frightened by an automobile. She landed in a ditch and was not dange.ously injured. Upon being assisted to her feet, it is related, some one spoke of calling a doctor and suggested a physician who visits his gentleman claims that the timely arrival of patients in an automobile. The injured woman protested, saying: "No. don't call his tracks, was all that saved his ll.e.

A Phenomenon of Mind.

Mrs. Maude Howe Elliott tells of a conversation that took place in a friend's Some one observed that it was a curious fact that no man can do one thing and

think another.