

Thanksgiving Day and What It Suggests.

Early New England customs have left an indelible mark upon this country. Puritanism has placed its imprint upon the nation, and seals it with our annual Thanksgiving day. **What was once sectarian is now christian; that which was provincial is now national.** The New England Thanksgiving, with its generous dinner and joyous merry-making, became, first, a state institution; and at last in 1861, when clouds hung about the future of the nation, Abraham Lincoln made it national by his presidential proclamation; and by universal consent, the day is now recognized as one of prayer and thanksgiving by the entire people. We welcome its return, and congratulate our readers on having so much to be thankful for. Even amid panics, and war rumors, and epidemics, and disasters of various kinds, our people have reason to be grateful—every individual for some blessing. It is not our intention, however, to moralize; we will leave that for the pulpit. The various churches of our city will be open for divine service, and we suggest to our readers that two hours cannot be better spent than in worshiping in some one of these sanctuaries. Those who are to preach to the people can this day profitably afford to get out of the beaten track of sermons, and, after reviewing the points for which we should give thanks, wake up their hearers on their duties as citizens, and to the necessity of a higher exercise of those privileges which are guaranteed to us by the national constitution. The most devout christian, the most moral of individuals may be a very bad citizen; if his sin be not that of commission, it is certainly that of omission. Dinner always succeeds the service, and to too many is the chief event of the day. We trust that roast turkey and cranberry sauce, mincepie and cider may liberally abound. If not this, then something better than the ordinary meal of the ordinary day. To those who can and will afford the standard thanksgiving dinner, we suggest that it can be measurably sweetened by the exercise of charity. If there be hundreds of families who will assemble today about a table laden with good things, there be hundreds more who will be thankful to have any dinner at all, and who would regard the plainest meal even with feelings of the most genuine thankfulness. If the reader knows of any such, no act can be more indicative of a generous and thankful heart than that which will place within the reach of his less fortunate fellow the means of obtaining a dinner appropriate to the day. Church doors stand open to all, inviting everybody to perform their vows; dinners are quite another thing. If it be a thanksgiving duty and pleasure to relieve the poor, it is certain that we should not stop with this day only. Our plea this morning is for the organization of some system for the winter for the aid and relief of the poor of the city. There is every reason to believe that there will be much more suffering and much more necessity for charitable projects this winter, than any ever known in the history of the city. The reasons are obvious, and need not be discussed; we would rather impress upon our people the duty of taking some steps toward alleviating any absolute suffering and want. Food of various kinds, clothing, bedding, coal, etc., will need to be distributed. The opening of some house where free lodgings and meals can be had, would also prove a means of relieving many, and of preventing much crime. The wretch who steals rather than starves is to be pitied rather than condemned. If from this thanksgiving day, and the generous charity which should warm the hearts of those who sit about its well-laden tables, there should spring some organized effort to aid the poor and relieve the wants of the needy, a noble work will have been accomplished, and the plea of the News will have been answered.

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