

al bull by the horns, and issued a proclamation setting apart a day for the feast. His action caused much angry criticism, and several southern newspapers declared that Thanksgiving was simply "a relic of Puritanic bigotry." In spite of this, the innovation was warily welcomed. The hospitable southerners greeted gladly another holiday, and the northern feast soon ranked among them as second in importance only to the "glorious Fourth" itself. In 1858—the year after Wise's proclamation—no less than eight governors of southern states proclaimed Thanksgiving in their sections. The war, however, coming shortly afterward, practically extinguished the popularity of the holiday in Dixie.

But it has become a loved institution in the Middle, Western, and Northwestern States. Exiled Americans, too, cling to its celebration, and every November sees Thanksgiving dinners in London, Paris, Berlin, Rome—or wherever some of the scattered children of Uncle Sam may chance to sojourn. Indeed, Mr. William Astor Chanler the well known explorer, tells of a Thanksgiving dinner which he enjoyed in the very heart of darkest Africa.

Tradition makes Thanksgiving in this country a legacy of the Pilgrims and Puritans, but it was not only the English colonies but those of the New Netherlands also, which made attempt at yearly celebration of a day of general gratitude.

This week of recreation observed by the Plymouth Pilgrims was undoubtedly much enhanced by Priscilla Molin's rare culinary achievements. When provisions were at a low ebb her deft hands prepared many an appetizing dish of the plainest stores, and the "common house" under her superintendence was a scene of banqueting. Gentle Dame Brewster, whom Priscilla loved so tenderly, was strengthened much by her kind ministrations. Naturally John Alden had his share, and in vain Miles Standish sought to be first with the fair maid who prepared the viands.

There is a coincidence in this statement in Young's Chronicle of Massachusetts: "The first The First Thanksgiving day on record in the colony of Massachusetts, was held February 22, 1631." On that day a century afterward was born George Washington. At that early time all the circumstances surrounding the colonists were extremely sad. Winter was approaching and starvation seemed imminent. The envoy, Mr. Pearce, who had gone to Ireland to procure stores, had not been heard from, and fear grew almost to a certainty that the vessel had been shipwrecked or taken by the pirates. It seemed almost a satire then to appoint a day of fasting.

But before that day had passed the longed-for vessel put in an appearance, laden with stores, and their hearts were made glad by news from the loved ones in the distant fatherland. Voices rose in a triumphant burst of thanksgiving, instead of lamentation, and of such has been the day ever since.

In 1675, the year in the history of New England when the colonists mourned their dead sacrificed to Indian ferocity, that pregnant silence, which speaks as no words can, fell upon everything. Wars and rumors of wars were sad realities which blotted out the memories of all previous privations and sufferings. The ever present was now more than the settlers could grapple with. That year they kept no Thanksgiving in Connecticut colony. The next year, light broke and Thanksgiving was again celebrated.

The following is the first Thanksgiving proclamation issued by Washington, in 1795:

By the President of the United States of America—A Proclamation: When

we review the calamities which afflict so many other nations, the present condition of the United States affords much matter of consolation and satisfaction. Our exemption hitherto from foreign war, an increasing prospect of the continuance of that exemption, the great degree of internal tranquility we have enjoyed, the recent confirmation of that tranquility by the suppression of an insurrection which so wantonly threatened it, the happy course of our public affairs in general, the unexampled prosperity of all classes of our citizens—are circumstances which peculiarly mark our situation with indications of the divine beneficence towards us. In such a state of things it is in an especial manner our duty as a people, with devout reverence and affectionate gratitude, to acknowledge our many and great obligations to Almighty God and to implore him to continue and confirm the blessings we experience.

Deeply penetrated with this sentiment, I George Washington, president of the United States, do recommend to all religious societies and denominations and to all persons whomsoever within the United States to set apart and observe Thursday, the nineteenth day of February next as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, and on that day to meet together and render their sincere and hearty thanks to the great Ruler of Nations for the manifold and signal mercies which distinguish our lot as a nation, particularly for the possession of constitutions of government which united and by their union establish liberty with order, for the preservation of our peace foreign and domestic, for the seasonable control which has been given to a spirit of disorder in the suppression of the late insurrection, and generally for the prosperous course of our affairs public and private, and at the same time humbly and fervently to beseech the kind author of these blessings graciously to prolong them to us, to imprint on our hearts a deep and solemn sense of our obligations to him for them, to teach us rightly to estimate their immense value, to preserve us from the arrogance of prosperity and from hazarding the advantages we enjoy by delusive pursuits, to dispose us to merit the continuance of his favors by not abusing them, by our gratitude for them, and by a correspondent conduct as citizens and as men, to render this country more and more a safe and propitious asylum for the unfortunate of other countries, to extend among us true and useful knowledge, to diffuse and establish habits of sobriety, order, morality and piety, and finally to impart all the blessings we possess or ask for ourselves to the whole family of mankind.

In testimony whereof I have caused the seal of the United States of America to be affixed to these presents and signed the same with my hand. Done at the city of Philadelphia the first day of January, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five, and of the independence of the United States of America the nineteenth.

By the President: Edw. Randolph.

G. WASHINGTON.

When, in the year of grace, 1630, sturdy Governor John Winthrop and the Puritan colonists of Massachusetts proclaimed and duly observed a "public thanksgiving," they probably had little idea of the importance which that festival was destined to obtain in the history of America.

The first Thanksgiving differed very materially from its successors, in that it was proclaimed as a fast and not as a feast. Supplies had run short, the ships expected from England were de-

layed, and extinction threatened the "Governor and company of Massachusetts Bay in New England." Winthrop and his council decided to hold a day of prayer and abstinence, "so that ye Lorde be propitiated and looke upon His servants with favor, in that they have humbled themselves before him. Accordingly, a crier was sent about the primitive settlement of Charlestown, and the colonists were each and all invited to take part in the fast. Their sacrifice met with speedy reward.

Scarcely had the noon hour of the allotted day arrived when the long-hoped-for ship made its welcome appearance in Massachusetts bay, the cargo was landed, and the fast was succeeded by a banquet of a sort which must have seemed sumptuous indeed to the exiles so recently plunged in hunger and hardship. On the threshold of dreaded winter Winthrop and his followers found what had been a prospect of fear and peril changed into one of happiness and hope. Such was America's first Thanksgiving, as celebrated 260 years ago. Thereafter each succeeding November was marked in the annals of the colony by a similar festival of gratitude.

When every one is joining in the national Thanksgiving day and giving praises for possessing the benefits of the great country we live in, it is a question of some interest to know how much money it took to discover this land, for the finding of which 60,000,000 of people are expressing their gratitude.

It is not as colossal a sum as one would think, especially in comparison with money values today, that is, if we are to judge at all from the items of Columbus' expedition. It cost only 1,400,000 Spanish maravedis, which is about \$7,500 according to our present standard.

In the archives preserved in Madrid it is stated that \$350 was given to Christopher Columbus for his services. He had two captains under him who received \$195 each, and the sailors got \$2.50 a month, besides their rations. The rest of the \$7,500 covers the cost of ships and fittings.

It seems rather odd that the desire for so small a sum on Columbus' part should have thrown the treasuries of Spain into such a flutter, and caused Isabella, the queen, to have been compelled to pawn her crown jewels to raise this amount. When people read of all the grandeur of those old day kingdoms, one naturally thinks of the people spending millions of dollars, but evidently they knew nothing of luxuries or vast enterprises as the men living now. There certainly are no such investments in these days as to advance \$7,500 for millions and millions.

SAN FRANCISCO HOLOCAUST.

San Francisco, Cal., Nov. 23, 3:40 a. m.—The Baldwin Hotel, on the corner of Market and Powell streets, is in flames and seems to be doomed to destruction. The first alarm was turned in at 3:15 a. m., and since then a general alarm has been sounded. The fire seems to envelop the entire building and the flames are bursting through the roof in various places. Showers of sparks are being scattered over buildings in the vicinity and only the absence of wind will prevent a disastrous conflagration, extending over several blocks. The hotel is owned by Millionaire E. J. Baldwin and cost with its furnishings nearly \$1,500,000. It is of brick, but the interior construction is wood and a high mansard roof with tower on corner afforded fuel for flames.

The fire is supposed to have started in the Baldwin Theater, which is in the hotel building, the flames extended rapidly towards the roof and burst through