THANKSGIVING DAY STORIES

A MAID'S THANKSGIVING.

(By Augusta Prescott.)

An old woman can be as truly beautiful, in her way, as any young woman in how enjoyed people—that is, those who have had lives long enough in this imperfect world to get the hang of things—are not aware of it.

This, by the way of preamble to the statement that Mrs. Carr, the other of those two women, who were sitting together before a pretty little stove in a prettily furnished little room, in a pretty little New York country town, early in the current month of November, 189, was quite as beautiful as there was nothing for me to be thankful for this Thanksgiving Day of 1898."

There yet remained nearly three weeks before Thanksgiving Day. On the morning after this self-communing between the elder and the younger woman, Ethel, dressed in mourning, as she had been for several months past, but also dressed for traveling, came to Mrs. Carr's little cottage and said, "I am going to the city, Mother Carr. I shall be back in less than a week."

Ethel Muir did not remember exactly the address where Prof. Van Horne Carr, her friend of years gone by, lived in the great city, yet she knew very well how to find Van Carr's place of business, and as soon as she reached the Grand Central depot of New York, she went to that place of business.

"Why, Ethel," said the busy man, "what brings you to the city?"

"I came to see you," said the girl.

"Have you five minutes to spare?"

"If you want me," said Van. "But won't it do this evening? You're going to stay with us, of course? Kate will be mightily glad to see you. How did you leave mother?"

"Well—tolerably. My business won't wait till this evening. I want to know right now if you have heard a story about poor Ephraim—about his having been seared to go forward in Cuba—at Santiago?"

"What?" Carr's mouth twitched. "Did you say, Ethel, that Eph was not exactly. You see, Ethel, nobody would be likely to tell me a story like that. There would be trouble."

"Then there will be trouble at home next time you go there."

"To anybody giving out such talk as that on there?"

"Yes, I think so. Never mind who. Your mother has heard it, he says I."

"But you don't mean you believe it, do you?"

"I would rather die than believe it. Yes. But that isn't enough. I want poor Ephraim's honor. I want to get proof and go and crate the lie down the throats of that—that scum."

"Well, I'm with you. You're a lessons, Ethel. Yes, you are. Here, take this card and go to this address on the back. Take an elevated train and get off at Fourteenth street. This man will give you what you want, I think. He was a surgeon with the right sort."

So that very evening, late, when a soft, wet snow had begun to fall, and Dr. Thomas K. Upgood, who discharged the laborious duties of assistant to a fashionable city physician, came into the office, after a long round of calls, he found a pretty girl in a dark traveling costume, waiting for him.

"I won't detain you long, sir," she said. "This isn't a professional matter; it is personal. I want to know if you remember a man named Carr at Santiago."

"Was his first name Ephraim?"

"That was it," said Ethel. "His brother said you could tell me something about him."

"I don't know that I can tell you much," said the young doctor, cautiously, as if anxious not to commit himself.

"But did you happen to hear that he tried to desert back from the firing line?"

"What!" the doctor almost shouted, forgetting his manners. "Desert back? Where did you hear that?"

"Oh, that isn't of no much consequence," said Ethel, "as long as it isn't true."

"My dear young lady, if you mean a man named Ephraim Carr, a corporal, he was taken sick with common fever the day before the attack on San Juan. I had him under my care. He broke loose, when he heard his company was going to the front, and followed them. Next day he fainted and was seized with delirium, and I and an orderly had to carry him to the rear by main force. Did you know the man?"

"Very well, indeed."

"You are not a relation of his?" said the doctor, rising his pretty visitor.

"No," said Ethel, "but I am—interested. His mother has been told so."

"What? That he wanted to run away from the Spaniards?"

"Just so. Will you give me what you have just said, in writing?"

"Certainly," said the doctor. But before he had settled down to write a new idea seemed to strike him. "I should like to meet Carr's mother," he said, "and talk to her myself. You are Miss Muir, I believe. You live in the same town with Mrs. Carr?"

Ethel nodded.

"It is not more than forty miles up." the doctor meditated aloud. "If I came there, could you point out the persons who circulated this—this outrageous lie?"

"I think I could point out one," said Ethel, biting her lip to keep down a smile.

"Very well, then," said the doctor. "I can't leave the city for a few days yet. But, say, next Thursday. I hope to have the pleasure of calling on you, Miss Muir—and on Mrs. Carr."

However, Dr. Upgood arrived punctually on Thursday and called upon Mrs. Carr. When his visit at that cottage was ended the widow's face looked unusually beautiful under its crown of silver hair, for her cheeks were flushed and wet with tears, but the tears were tears of joy.

After that the doctor, on his way to call on Ethel Muir, as agreed, met that young woman.

Ethel—it may have been vindicative of her—took the trouble to conduct Dr. Upgood to Cabo Hilton's place of business, and there was an interview, into which, I understand, you know something about Ephraim Carr, who died two or three months ago at Saginaw," from the doctor, each ending with a string of epithets from the same speaker that made two clerks and a female typewriter stare at Hilton, but not enjoy it.

When Ethel went back to Mrs. Carr's cottage, the old lady said to the girl, "Dear, we will both have a great deal to be thankful for this Thanksgiving."

"Yes, Mother Carr, we will. And, do you know, we will thank Ephraim."

"He is alive. Not even a broken head."

"NOT YOU, CALEB HILTON."

GOBBLER'S THANKSGIVING.

(By Grace Dodge.)

There never was a turkey that seemed to understand all about Thanksgiving as well as this one. And he was the most turkey gobbler to be found in all Dorville! Edgar Burrill, his little owner, took a good deal of pride in owning so handsome a bird, and wherever there was company, all he ever came out to see Gobbler and notice how tall he had grown and how plump.

Gobbler seemed to understand all about it. He knew he was to be the center of attention, in the middle of the dinner table, with apples and apples and nuts and all sorts of things, and he enjoyed it. He knew this because he had often heard Edgar say so, and he knew, too, that Edgar's mother had promised to say her little boy a very fine sum for Gobbler's purchase, and that Edgar had planned to put the money in the pretty little bank where the saving pennies for Christmas money.

All these things Gobbler knew. And who wonder than he so he strutted, half puffed, terribly around the other and less important turkey gobblers, and spreading his tail feathers in pride and scorn as he passed them by!

Now Gobbler came to be so tame that Edgar could move about, but one morning he was missing.

"He has gone off to the woods, maybe," said Mrs. Burrill, looking for sorrow. "You see he never was out any of them here, and turkeys always want wrong to go!"

But a thorough search of the premises showed no Gobbler, and that is, he did not come to his roost. "Why, I'm frightened some one had stolen the bird, or whom he was so proud," said Mrs. Burrill, and he, "what may I do?"

Edgar almost cried when he found that he could not get Gobbler back, and it was only when his father promised to buy him all the Christmas presents he wanted to give away, and the things he wanted for himself besides, that he was comforted. But he did not forget about Gobbler.

One Saturday morning, just a few weeks before Thanksgiving, Edgar said to his mother, "Mamma, I'm going to see Old Uncle Billie on the cross-roads, and, mamma, if you can spare it, I could like to take him a big pumpkin and some apples and things for his Thanksgiving dinner. I don't believe Uncle Billie will have very much for Thanksgiving."

Mrs. Burrill found a basket with good things for Edgar and away he started, drawing his little cart behind him, and stopping now and then to take a fresh look at the lovely food.

Old Uncle Billie was "mighty" to every one in the neighborhood of Dorville. He had lived there so many years that nobody knew Dorville half as well as he did, and now that he had grown old and very feeble, the children delighted to go to see him, taking him little delicacies to eat, and in return listened to his quaint stories of the south. Uncle Billie lived all alone and there was nothing Edgar enjoyed so much as a day with him. He fried him little crispy cakes, with his own chickens and hens down.

Uncle Billie was in the front gate, and he delighted he was to see Edgar. "Hallo! Hallo!" he cried. "Glad to see you? Come in! Come in! Invigorating you, my boy! When the leaves on this golden clock of mine turns over an' looks up to the like," pointing to a goodlier potato vine. "There's something good a-coming. An' the time I'm gone and no mistake."

Of course, Edgar enjoyed his morning very much, and the corn roasted in the ashes of Uncle Billie's fire tasted more delicious than any Edgar had ever eaten, he thought. Then, after dinner, out over ashes of the embers, when Uncle Billie dragged down and whittled something to him and poured mysteriously to an old shed covered.

"Why, what do you mean, Uncle Billie?" asked Edgar.

"That for I mean? What do I mean? Hallo! Hallo! Never mind I'll give you a nice big slice of him, an' you can't have him till Thanksgiving day! Jest come here with me!"

And, wondering more and more at the old man's words and queer actions, Edgar followed him out to the old shed and which he had hardened so mysteriously and, as he thought, so secretly, while Uncle Billie unlocked the door. "There! There he is!" exclaimed Uncle Billie proudly. "He's a turkey, and as fine a one as I ever saw.

"THE FINEST TURKEY IN ALL DATVILLE."

Uncle Billie, "he belongs to me now! He came one morning before I was awake and gobbled and gobbled under my window. I guess he was so tame that he took tree most a' called him here. I got up an' fed him, an' then I asked everybody whose turkey he was, an' they all said he didn't belong to nobody. An' by an' by there come along a farmer, an' he said that a big turkey gobbler had got away out of somebody's wagon on the way to market. I tell you, I've taken good care of him. But, what's the matter little boy? Are you gone crazy?"

For Edgar, without waiting for Uncle Billie to finish, had darted forward, and was dancing around Gobbler and crying, "Nice bird! Good old Gobbler!"

"Why, he's my Gobbler! My Thanksgiving Gobbler!" cried Edgar. "Oh, Uncle Billie, how much I am obliged to you for taking care of him!"

And before Uncle Billie had time to quite recover from his surprise, Edgar and Gobbler secretly tied in the basket and was drawing him home on the little cart. "Well, I ain't sorry, if he belongs to the little master," said Uncle Billie, as he saw his Thanksgiving dinner go out of sight. "I guess I'll have to make the pumpkin do for me this year—if I'll keep," and he limped painfully back to the shed, where no lately Gobbler had been the proud occupant.

The day before Thanksgiving Uncle Billie sent him. But when he got up it was with the finished ere of "Gobbler Gobbler" outside his window. And when he opened the outer door, who should walk in but Gobbler himself, with some fine big ears of corn, placed there by somebody who wished to keep the rough contented until Uncle Billie should wake up. Around Gobbler's neck there was this letter:

"Dear Uncle Billie: I send you Gobbler for a Thanksgiving present. Mamma says I may give him to you. He will make a fine dinner! I would like to give him to you all the time, but I was so glad to see him that I brought him home. I hope you have not missed him. I always have Gobbler was a great bird, but I did not think he would know enough to go to a Thanksgiving dinner all by himself. At dinner think of your little friend,

EDGAR."

A THANKSGIVING PUZZLE.

I am composed of twelve letters.

My 6, 3, 5, 4 is a covering of the body.

My 7, 11, 2, 1 is a bothersome insect.

My 9, 3, 11 is a covered wagon.

My 8, 10, 6, 12 is something kids do.

My 1, 2, 3, 11 is what our pocketbooks are after Christmas.

My whole is what old Gobbler dreads.

JOE'S THANKFUL NIGHT.

(By Frank Bunnocks.)

I don't know that I can tell the story just as it was told to me, but that is what I am going to try to do.

The time of it was a man whose name is of no importance to the story, and he told it like one November night. In fact, it was after we had been to the theatre and were eating lobsters—things because we were hungry, and it was nearly time to go to bed.

"Oh, of course," he said, "a man doesn't make a hero. Not by a great deal. Look at Thwaites's nose, for instance."

"I should think not," the storyteller continued. "On the contrary. Well, it may not be quite fair, but you must excuse me not to ever in his place that you know the story."

So we all promised.

"And, besides, Thwaites has long since repented to sack cloth and ashes. He would never do such a thing now. Still, Thwaites is no hero—one or no hero.

"It happened like this. Thwaites was a most uncommonly good-looking young man in those days. His nose was big enough for distinction, you understand, but not too big. That, and other good points about him, and the wholeness—yes, it was downright symmetrical his dress made him a favorite with the girls.

"In those days Thwaites lived in a certain city of ours, and I lived in a town, a little smaller than the city, and very far away. One of those girls who were attracted by Thwaites at one time or another was named Clarinda Elmcomb. And it would not have mattered if the girl had not been out—and out engaged to a fine, manly young fellow who worked as machinist in the railroad repair shops. It mattered all the more because Clarinda was a pretty little girl, take her altogether, only she certainly had a girl's failing of setting too much store by looks, and clothes and such things.

"The other man—the mark'det—was at a disadvantage by the side of Thwaites, because he didn't know how to dress well, if he had had five thousand dollars a year, just for that and nothing else. Some men are like that.

"Well, the first signs that Clarinda gave that she was going to throw over poor Joe—I'm keeping the other name dark on purpose—been when she began putting off the wedding. Then she suddenly took it into her head that she must sing in a church choir—the same choir Thwaites sang in.

"Joe gave up going to the church he had been attending and followed Clarinda to the other one. One morning, when he had escorted her to church, that girl actually had the brass to tell him she was sorry, Joe, but Thwaites has kindly undertaken to escort her home. You need not wait."

"Some people thought there was going to be an explosion right there, but Joe took it all quite meekly and went home.

"Still Joe did nothing but obey the girl's orders.

"Well, of course, any fool could see the end of that business. One day Joe asked Miss Elmcomb if she wouldn't fix on a date for the wedding, and she said she didn't know that she ever would fix any day at all. And that ended it between them—for the time.

"Now, I don't know whether Thwaites knew of what Clarinda Elmcomb had done on his account. He used to see a good deal of her, I know, and it seems natural he should have suspected that he had broken up her engagement with a good man, who could make her a good husband, and would. But, perhaps, he never thought of it; one way or the other. If so, it was a pity.

"Joe took to moping after that day when his girl threw him over. I often saw him when I went to the city, and I saw that he was a changed man.

"While Joe was going on in this ridiculous way, just watching that girl, following her and Thwaites, like a dog, when they walked to church on Sundays, Thwaites seemed to be having a great time with two different girls. He was mean attentive to Clarinda, but there was another one he was 'working' in a certain subject, and I think Clarinda knew it. I don't know if my friend Thwaites worked it like that on purpose, but, don't you know, if you want to keep a good hold on a woman's heart, it helps a lot if you can keep her in a constant stew of jealousy about some other woman—just keep her simmering, as it were, without letting her boil over, you know.

"But, in the end, Thwaites carried his business, or whatever it was, too far. He let Clarinda boil over.

"I heard that the confusion took place at a fashionable reception, and gave all the other guests a regular free show. Clarinda spoke to Thwaites, who was talking to the other girl at the time, and Thwaites only looked around and said, 'In a minute'—which was such a neerish thing, that I think Thwaites could have done it on purpose, for he knew very well how to behave himself in society. Then Clarinda had the audacity to go and take Thwaites by the arm and turn him round, 'Tell you hour me speak to you?' she says.

"Then the other girl faced up and they began to talk very hot. Some say they were just about to begin pulling hair when the hostess interfered. But, anyhow, everybody agreed that the matter ended, so far, in both the girls leaving the house weeping.

"After that he some at the reception, which I did not witness, came another, bigger and more public, scene, which I did witness, happening to be in the city on that night. It happened