

going and doing and being right, without any question about it.

Lakeland, Florida.

NOVEMBER.

By Miss Margaret H. Barnett.

The winds are chill and leaden gray the sky;
Against it stand, outlined, the leafless trees,
Gone are the song birds, silent is the wood,
Save for the mournful sighing of the breeze;
Yet there is beauty in the leafless trees,
Unseen, when summer's leafy robe was green;
And solemn music through the forest rolls,
As from an organ touched by hands unseen.
Though the bright tints of summer are all gone,
November days have beauty all their own.

And so, sometimes, life's gray November days
Bring to us friendship, warm and strong, and true,
Which we had ne'er suspected in the time,
When over us the sunny skies were blue.
E'en though life's summer brightness is all gone,
The dreary days bring blessings all their own.

Selections

THANKSGIVING ANN.

By Kate W. Hamilton.

In the kitchen doorway, underneath its arch of swaying vines and dependent purple clusters, the old woman sat, tired and warm, vigorously fanning her face with her calico apron. It was a dark face, surmounted by a turban, and wearing, just now, a look of troubled thoughtfulness not quite in accord with her name—a name oddly acquired from an old church anthem that she used to sing somewhat on this wise—

"Thinkgivin' an—

"Johnny, don't play dar in de water, chile!

"Thinkgivin' an—

"Run away, now, Susie, dearie!

"Thinkgivin' an—

"Take care o' dat blessed baby! Here's some gingerbread for him.

"Thinkgivin' an' de voice of melody."

You laugh! But looking after all these little things was her work, her duty; and she spent the intervals in singing praise. Do many of us make better use of our spare moments?

So the children called her Thanksgiving Ann; her other name was forgotten, and Thanksgiving Ann she would be now to the end of her days. How many these days had already been, no one knew. She had lived with Mr. and Mrs. Allyn for years, whether as mistress or servant of the establishment they could scarcely tell; they only knew she was invaluable. She had taken a grandmotherly guardianship of all the children, and had a voice in most matters that concerned the father and mother, while in the culinary department she reigned supreme.

The usual early breakfast was over. She had bestowed unusual care upon it, because an agent of the Bible Society, visiting some of the country places for contributions, was to partake of it with them. But while she was busy with a fine batch of delicate waffles, the gentleman had pleaded an appointment, and taking hasty leave of his host and hostess, had departed unobserved from the kitchen window; and Thanksgiving Ann's "Bible money" was still in her pocket.

"Didn't ask me, nor give me no chance. Just's if, 'cause a pusson's old an' colored, dey didn't owe de Lord nuffin; an' wouldn't pay if dey did," she murmured, when the state of the case became known.

However, Silas, the long-limbed, untiring, and shrewd, who regarded the old woman with

a curious mixture of patronage and veneration, had volunteered to run after the vanished guest, and "catch him if he was anywhere this side of Chainy." And even while Thanksgiving sat in the doorway, the messenger returned, apparently unwearied in his chase.

"Wa-ll' I came up with him—told ye I would give him the three dollars. He seemed kind o' flustered to have missed such a nugget; and he said 'twas a ginerous jonation—equal to your master's; which proves," said Silas, shutting one eye, and appearing to survey the subject meditatively with the other, "that some folks can do as much good just off-hand as some other folks can with no end of pinchin' an' screwin' beforehand."

"Think it proves dat folks dat don't have no great 'mount can do as much in a good cause by thinkin' 'bout it a little aforehand, as other folks will dat has more, and puts der hands in der pockets when de time comes. I believe in systematics 'bout such things, I does"; and with an energetic bob of her head, by way of emphasizing her words, old Thanksgiving walked into the house.

"Thankgivin' an' de voice of melody,"

she began in her high, weird voice; but the words died on her lips—her heart was too burdened to sing.

"Only three dollars out'n all her 'bundance!" she murmured to herself. "Well, mebbe I oughtn't to judge; but then I don't judge, I knows. Course I knows when I'se here all de time, and sees de good clo'es an' de carr'age, an' de musics, an' de fine times—folks, an' hosses, an' tables all provided for, an' de Lord of glory lef' to take what happen when de time comes, an' no prep'ration at all! Sure 'nough, He sen' Bibles to His heathen if dey don't give a cent but den dey're pinchin' an' starvin' der own dear souls. Well—'taint my soul! but I loves 'em, an' dey're missin' a great blessin'."

These friends, so beloved, paid little attention to the old woman's opinion upon what she called "systematics in givin'."

"The idea of counting up one's income, and setting aside a fixed portion of it for charity, and then calling only what remained one's own, makes our religion seem arbitrary and exacting; it is like a tax," said Mrs. Allyn, one day; "and I think such a view of it ought by all means to be avoided. I like to give freely and gladly of what I have when the time comes."

"If ye aint give so freely an' gladly for Miss Susie's new necklaces an' yer own new dresses dat ye don't have much when de time comes," interposed Thanksgiving Ann.

"I think one gives with a more free and generous feeling in that way," pursued the lady, without seeming to heed the interruption; "Money laid aside beforehand has only a sense of duty and not much feeling about it; besides, what difference can it make, so long as one does give what they can when there is a call?"

"I wouldn't like to be provided for dat way," declared Thanksgiving. "Was, once, when I was a slave, 'fore I was de Lord's free woman. Ye see, I was a young no-count gal, not worf thinkin' much 'bout; so my ole massa he lef' me to take what happened when de time come. An' sometimes I happened to get a dress, an' sometimes a pair of ole shoes; an' sometimes I didn't happen to get nuffin', and den I went barefoot; and dat's jist the way—"

"Why, Thanksgiving, that's not reverent!" exclaimed Mrs. Allyn, shocked at the comparison.

"Jist what I thought, didn't treat me with no kind of reverence," answered Thanksgiving.

"Well, to go back to the original subject, all these things are mere matters of opinion. One person likes one way best; and another person another," said the lady smilingly, as she walked from the room.

"'Pears to me it's a matter of which way de Massa likes best," observed the old woman, settling her turban. But there was no one to hear her comment, and affairs followed their accustomed routine. Meanwhile, out of her own little store, she carefully laid aside one-eighth. "'Cause if dem old Israelites was tol' to give one-tenth, I'd like to frow in a little more, for good measure. Talk 'bout its bein' like a tax to put some away for such things! 'Clare! I get studyin' what each dollar mus' do, till I get em' so loadened up wid prayin's an' thinkin's dat I mos' believe dey weigh double when dey does go.

"Good Lamb! de lovin' Lamb!

De Lamb of Calvary!

De Lamb dat was slain, an' lives again,
An' intercedes for me."

And now another call had come.

"Came, unfortunately, at a time when we were rather short," Mrs. Allyn said, regretfully. "However, we gave all we could," she added. "I hope it will do good, and I wish it were five times as much."

Old Thanksgiving shook her head over that cheerful dismissal of the subject. She shook it many times that morning, and seemed intensely thoughtful, as she moved slowly about her work.

"S'pose I needn't fret 'bout other folks' duty—dat aint none o' my business; yas 'tis, too, cause dey's good to me, an' I loves 'em. 'Taint like's if dey didn't call darselves His, neither."

Mr. Allyn brought in a basket of beautiful peaches, the first of the season, and placed them on the table by her side.

"Aren't those fine, Thanksgiving! Let the children have a few, if you think best; but give them to us for dinner."

"Sartain, I'll give you all dar is," she responded, surveying the fruit.

Presently came the pattering of several pairs of small feet; bright eyes espied the basket, and immediately arose the cry:

"O, how nice! Thanksgiving Ann, may I have one?"

"And I?"

"And I, too?"

"Help yourselves, dearies," answered the old woman, composedly, never turning to see how often, or to what extent her injunction was obeyed. She was seated in the doorway again, busily sewing on a calico apron. She still sat there, when, near the dinner-hour, Mrs. Allyn passed through the kitchen, and, a little surprised at its coolness and quietness at that hour, asked wonderingly:

"What has happened, Thanksgiving? Haven't decided upon a fast, have you?"

"No, honey; thought I'd give ye what I happened to have when de time come," said Thanksgiving Ann, coolly, holding up her apron to measure its length.

It seemed a little odd, Mrs. Allyn thought. But then old Thanksgiving needed no oversight; she liked her little surprises now and then, too; and doubtless she had something all planned and in course of preparation; so the lady went her way, more than half expecting an especially tempting board because of her cook's apparent carelessness that day. But when the dinner-hour arrived, both master and mistress scanned the table with wide-open