

THE EMPTY CHAIRS.

I tell her it is foolish—but each Thanksgiving day she's bound to have the table set in the old-time way...

Farmer Caldwell's Thanksgiving.

BY G. B. ACUFF.

It was down in "Op' Virginia" one November morning that Toby Strange of the genus "hobo" crawled out from the burrow he had made for himself in a straw stack and looked around him.

"A cup of hot coffee would do me good," he muttered, as he glanced dubiously at a large log house plainly discernible through the bare branches of some fruit trees in the distance.

He moved forward awkwardly on the toes of one worn shoe and the heel of the other, endeavoring to keep his feet from contact with the hoar frost which had stiffened every weed and blade of grass in the field.

At the rear gate he paused as if awestruck by the sights and sounds that greeted him. In the adjoining barn loomed a great cackle among the hens, which was almost drowned by the shrill noise of a dozen guinea fowls ranged on the rail fence.

"Oh, tinner's end," he exclaimed under his breath. "Another five minutes' contemplation of such a home-like scene would spoil my appetite," and the softened expression of his face was replaced by a look of harsh indifference.

"Come in," she said kindly, "and eat your breakfast." Giving him a seat near the stove, she brought from the corner cupboard a dish of fragrant sausage in brown gravy, biscuits, and a cup of rich, creamy coffee, and arranged all on the kitchen table.

"Pumpkin pies," he breathed, "I knew that odor belonged to the old days," but the regretful pang he felt was very much softened by the substantial pleasure of the present.

"See, papa," Toby heard her exclaim, "my three years at school did not cost my special talent." "So I see," replied her father. "But why pumpkin pies, my dear?"

"Oh, papa," Any exclaimed in horrified tones, "nothing to be thankful for. How can you say so when we have so much more than we deserve?"

"Yes, Amy, in a general way that is true. But you can't understand the hard work and close management I'm bound to practice to make ends meet. This year has been a hard one altogether. One of my best horses died last spring. The frost killed the fruit crop. The pesky dogs killed several sheep, and between the drought and the insects my corn and potato crops are cut off at least half. And now to cap the climax that cattle

man offers me about half as much for the calves as I had counted on getting. No, I'm not feeling particularly thankful.

"Not have a Thanksgiving dinner, John, now Amy is at home and our only boy is coming, too!" exclaimed Mrs. Caldwell, coming into the room as her husband concluded his remarks.

"Not thankful," exclaimed Amy, a sob in her voice, "when we have good health, a home and plenty in storehouse and barn," and Amy passed hastily through the kitchen and out of sight in the yard.

"Toby, just taking the last choice bits of his breakfast, cast a furtive glance at the girl and noted the trembling lips and tearful eyes.

"Now, John," said Mrs. Caldwell in a pleading tone, "you have hurt the dear child. And she has been so happy these weeks past planning for the dinner and the guests. And besides celebrating Tom's return, it would be a most appropriate way for Amy to renew old friendships, for after an absence of three years the poor child is almost a stranger in the neighborhood."

"I'm sorry to disappoint you and Amy," returned the husband. "But I cannot afford to entertain the public this year. If you and Amy are so awfully thankful, you can have a small family dinner; one of the little turkeys, and none but home folks present."

"The idea of scripping and pinching on a Thanksgiving dinner!" retorted Mrs. Caldwell, now evincing unmistakable signs of anger; and leaving the room, she slammed the door after her.

With a sigh of mingled contentment and regret Toby slowly rose and prepared to leave the snug room which seemed a paradise to him. As he passed the dairy he saw Amy, with a jar of cream in her hand, and thanked her for his repast. Then, with a forlorn homesickness that wouldn't be shorn off, he aimlessly climbed the long, red hill, and presently finding himself in a sunny, sheltered spot, he threw himself on the dry leaves for, what he seldom indulged in, a little sober reflection.

"If I were in that farmer's place," he soliloquized, "I honestly believe I could be as thankful as he ought to be. I wish I could help that kind-hearted girl, but what can a poor tramp do?"

He was thinking of pursuing his journey when voices reached his ear, and looking up he said, sotto voce, "John Caldwell, as sure as I'm what I never meant to be. Who would have thought of seeing him after all these years? Well, it's likely he wouldn't know me if he should see me, but I'll not give him the chance." And Toby crouched low in the fence corner, while the farmer and cattle trader haggled about the bunch of plump calves in the pasture field before them.

At last the bargain being concluded, the trader paid the farmer fifty dollars and departed, while Mr. Caldwell entered the woods at Toby's back. Toby's eyes followed him thoughtfully.

"If I had that fifty dollars," said Toby, "I'd be more than thankful. And yet that ungrateful reprobate is too mean to let his daughter have a Thanksgiving dinner. I wish it was my business to kick him into a better way of thinking."

Toby, in his half-recumbent posture on the leaves, felt loth to leave a retreat so restful until his breakfast was digested; but ere the farmer had quite disappeared from sight, Toby suddenly reaching a decision, arose and stealthily followed him.

Mr. Caldwell's gloomy meditations took a sudden turn, as Toby from behind a tree sprang upon him, and before the farmer could think of resistance or defense, he lay prone on his back with a hundred and eighty pounds of tramp seated on his stomach.

"Take it easy, man," said Toby. "You needn't cut up rough, it'll do no good. I mean to hold you quiet while we have a little talk. I think I can convince you that you have several things to be thankful for. Oh, you needn't wiggle. I heard your talk to your wife and daughter, although you didn't see me, nor I you. I heard it all, while I was breakfasting on your bounty. Now, listen to me. As young men just starting in life our prospects were about the same."

"Who are you?" interrupted Mr. Caldwell, looking keenly at his captor. "It doesn't matter, I'm not worth a name. But when we left school you went back to the farm; while I, holding your choice in contempt, went to the city where in my ignorance I thought a man had a chance to rise in the world. For twenty years I knocked about, sometimes working, sometimes starving, always hard pressed.

"I lost my last job ten years ago, by striking for less work and higher wages. I couldn't get another job even at the same wages, so I turned tramp. I have not had the energy to try any other vocation since. In fact, I have come to the conclusion that I've done enough and suffered enough to have gained the independence I started out for. And now the world has got to give me the living it owes me.

"But mark you, not one ambition of my early life has been realized. And now I must travel on in search of the next meal, not knowing whether the people I next encounter will give me a crumb or not.

A LESSON IN TURKEY GATHERING.



"Just wait till one o' de pawson's turkeys git a taste o' dat bait, an' dis nigger oll hab turkey to burn."



"Lad, I've got de biggest gobblin on de place."



"Now, one mo' pull an' I'll git it."



He got it.

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"But mark you, not one ambition of my early life has been realized. And now I must travel on in search of the next meal, not knowing whether the people I next encounter will give me a crumb or not.

"Compare my lot with yours; a loving wife, a pretty daughter, a good home and plenty to eat, all your own. And in addition to all these blessings you've got fifty dollars in your pocket at this blessed

RAM'S HORN BLASTS.

Warning Notes Calling the Wicked to Repentance.

SOME pilgrims find many a worldly stopping-place in their heavenward progress.

There is no-ship without suffering. The Christian can always afford to die. Laziness always lays the blame on luck.

Where faith goes out soft famine comes in. Reflecting on God leads to reflecting Him. A good nature is not always a good character.

God's designs promise us more than our desires. Painting the pump doesn't purify the product. Good cheer puts love's gifts into caskets of gold.

Gingerbread on the steeple cannot feed the people. Toe the devil's line and you must march to his time. God's presence makes the desert a garden of paradise.

The world is not enriched by watered stock in religion. A mop is more beautiful than a fop, because more useful. Only those who work for the Lord can rest in the Lord.

A tailor-made man will satisfy a trinket-loving woman. A swindle cannot be sanctified by calling it a church fair. When you find one sharp as a needle he is all eye and no head.

Christ never offered to take smoking as a substitute for shining. Nothing is more unpractical than the neglect of the spiritual. The least prayer that reaches God's throne shakes His footstool.

When angels sing they do not have to wait for cultivated ears. Many a courtship begun in jest has ended in a divorce in earnest. He cannot trust God for his past who is trembling as to his future.

To forgive your enemy is one thing; to give him your keys is another. EXPRESSIONS THAT ARE DEAD. Things Worn Out and to Be Avoided in Ordinary Conversation.

London Tit-Bits recently offered a prize for the best contribution on hackneyed terms used in writing and speaking, and here is the winning paper: it purports to be a law against the use of worn-out expressions:

Be it enacted by the king's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the long-suffering and sorely afflicted reading public, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

First—Any journalist, litterateur, novelist, penny-a-liner or any other ink-slinger, who, after the passing of this act, shall write, print or publish, or cause to be written, printed or published, any of the following or similar hackneyed or overused phrases—that is to say, in alluding to the awful mystery of death shall refer to "that bourne from whence no traveler returns;" or, in mentioning a deceased person, shall write of him or her as having "shuffled off this mortal coil;" or shall designate the condition of the unmarried as a "state of single blessedness," or speak of a newly married couple as "the happy pair;" or of a wife as "the better half;" or shall deny by implication an indisputable scientific fact by asserting the possibility of a person's being "conspicuous by his absence;" or shall write with profane pen the expressions, "a sight for the gods," or "a sight to make angels weep;" or, in reference to physical attributes or peculiarities, shall use any of the following expressions: "The bated breath," "the human form divine," "eagle glance," "magnetic gaze," "dilated nostrils," "willow form," "arch smile," "daintily gloved hand," "flowing locks," "golden tresses," "delicately tinted lips," "the inner man," or shall speak of the "popular president," "the courteous general manager," "the genial secretary," "the charming hostess," "a few well-chosen words," "the succulent bivalve," "the psychological moment," "so near, yet so far," "last but not least," "a dull, sickening thud," "his own inimitable style," "old Sol," "the gentle light of the moon," "a cool million," or shall use any similar hackneyed expressions, such person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and, being thereof convicted by public opinion, shall be compelled to pay away half his salary to the Home for Old Jokes, and the delinquent shall offer an ample apology to the public, and agree never again to infringe the provisions of this act.—London Tit-Bits.

On the Shelf. A youthful but very animated little lady was enjoying her first visit to church. It was in an Episcopal Church, and the choir boys and the form of service interested her greatly. But after the sermon had begun her attention was directed from the pulpit to other parts of the house, and in the course of her inspection of things she suddenly discovered the gallery filled with people in the rear of the church.

"Mother," she whispered, excitedly, "are those the wicked back there on the shelf?"—Harper's Weekly. If a man has the cheek to ask a girl to marry she seldom has the face to refuse.

WINTER STYLE TIPS.

PICTURESQUENESS IS TO BE THE WATCHWORD.

Old Fashions Are to Be Raked Up and Adapted to Modern Use—Velvet Named as Favorite Material for Modish Gowns.

New York correspondence.

WINTER fashions are to be strong in the element of picturesqueness. The period from which designers are choosing is hardly more marked in this quality than were those from which the styles of spring and summer were taken, but that is a point easily gotten over. The fashions just passing were, for the most part, the result of the freest adaptation. Rarely was there more left of the original than its look of quaintness, so many and so thorough were the changes. Often the relation to old-time styles was not recognizable until after close consideration of the model. There is to be change in this respect. Gowns from the beginning of the nineteenth cen-

will rule for dressy costumes, at least. Those put here, then, are not complex, by comparison with much that is offered, but are to be graded as moderate, so abundant are the highly wrought effects. In the first picture is a brown voile trimmed with darker brown velvet bands and fancy buttons. Showy buttons, by the way, are to be a feature of winter trimming. In the second picture are a tau zibeline, a goods actively revived, with bandings of darker tau leather having applique embroidery headings. A dotted white lace vest set off the bodice. Beside this the artist shows a dark blue henrietta cloth trimmed with lace of the same shade embroidered in gilt. And next to this see a brown voile, with openwork medallions over a darker brown silk foundation, with velvet vest and girle of the darker shade. Medallions are to hold for winter, especially the open work sort. A row of them about the hips is new use.

In the second group there is at the left an example of the winter's continuance of the blue and green combination that was so stylish in summer. This gown was blue zibeline, with green strappings and buttons, vest and lower sleeves green broadcloth knotted with blue. Then comes a black grenadine over black silk with lavish black lace applique. Last is a dark olive green broad-loth, with pleated skirt tucked at the bottom, with box-pleated coat having fancy buttons and black braiding. Little will be found in the designs put forward to illustrate new fashions that is of simpler manner than this is.

Recent taste in millinery was preparation for a season of showy headgear. Wide brims and graceful plumes will be



DECORATIVE TRICKS FOR WINTER.

in evidence, and paradise feathers will be in demand—such demand that few ordinary folk will employ them because of their cost. A more positive change will come in crowns, which are to compete with, though not at once to displace, the flat affairs in vogue for so long. But hats of moderate size and character will be numerous, and they will meet with cordial admiration because of the immense variety in them. Even in the small ones there is absence of types much duplicated, or recognizable in numerous sorts different one from another only in slight changes. Much chenille and felt head is seen. Brown is as impressive here as in dress materials and trappings. Bonnets are in revival, and strings are to be a feature that will help

ture or from the last of the previous one are not to be transferred by wholesale, but the processes of adaptation will leave some features of the old modes untouched or so little altered that they can be readily traced. The accompanying touches of the current time will be less assertive and, so far as most model gowns now indicate, they will be in harmony with picture effects raked up from the past.

There will be more velvet in the winter dressmaking than there was last year. Some of it will be put in the showy coats fashioned from long ago. More will be used in trappings, and it is indicated that the velvet gown will be much more numerous than it has been of late. The very thin weaves will be especially favored

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MORE PREPARATION FOR COLD WEATHER.

ored, such goods being far better adapted to shirring, gathering and the like than the heavier qualities. Skirts of such materials are to be made tremendously full, and with puffing, shirring and other trimming will be elaborate enough. A coat bodice usually will accompany them. Velvet of heavier quality will be used for walking suits, corduroy weaves coming in here for great favor. A stylish wrinkle will consist in trimming such suits with cloth bands.

All the talk of severity that was heard more or less all summer is still. Little sense will be given to suit yourself, and some very simple dressing will result, but it will be difficult to be picturesque and simple at the same time, so elaborateness

youthful faces, perhaps some not so youthful.

Fashion Notes. Glaced kid is considered smart on outing hats. Wide plaited ruching is very unbecoming to many.

With a knockabout coat a woman is ready for anything. Make up your mind to the waistcoats; they have come to stay.

Gilt braid and buttons still give evidence that the war is not ended. Zibelines are coming in strong for half dress coats, and are very smooth and silky.