

THE WIDOWER'S THANKSGIVING.



JUST seven years ago to-day Sweet Alice said that she For better or for worse would give Her winsome self to me.

Ah, well! It seems an age ago That we stood proudly there, And people said they'd seldom see A better favored pair.

But bitter days and bitter tears Have come to me since then; And I, alas! can never be A careless boy again!

Far out upon the hillside stands A slender stone that tells The story of my life and where My altar ego dwells.

But stay! There falls upon my ears Sweet sounds of baby glee, And here another Alice comes To lavish love on me!

So let me render thanks to-day, Although I am bereft; The Lord did give and take away, But see what He has left!

—Cleveland Leader.

A REAL THANKSGIVING.



TWO WEEKS from to-morrow is Thanksgiving. Let us go to Orley to spend it.

"Go to Orley! Why, Agatha, you must be crazy!"

Agatha Clair pushed back her unfinished cup of coffee, a decided frown on her smooth, white forehead. "Indeed, Eugene,"—there was a note of irritation in her voice—"I fail to see why a woman should be pronounced crazy because she expresses a desire to visit her home after an absence of a year and a half."

"Home!"—he echoed the word a little reproachfully, his eyes wandering around the neat dining-room. "This is home, Agatha. The first real one we have either of us had for years."

The color deepened on the wife's cheeks. Her husband's words were true; her girlhood's home, with an uncle in a distant city, had not been a happy one. This uncle had been too proud to let his sister's child earn her bread, and as there had been more pride than love or money in the home Agatha had realized the bitterness of the bread of dependence.

The cozy farmhouse, shared with the quiet man who had won her love, had seemed a haven of peace. Used all her life to the bustle of a city and to a home crowded with gay young life, Agatha began, after a time, to long for a change. Just now a letter from her cousins, telling of concerts, lectures and parties, made the uneventful winter stretching before her look very dreary.

She sat toying with her spoon until her husband had finished his breakfast. Then she looked up, a coaxing light in her soft, gray eyes.

"Why can't we go, Eugene?"

"Can't afford it," he replied, a little ungraciously, for her persistence annoyed him. "Besides, the railroad fare, there'd be a lot of new clothes wanted and—"

"Clothes!" Agatha was angry now. "Really, I didn't suppose you knew that a woman ever had to have clothes. I've seen nothing since I was your wife to show any such knowledge on your part. I'm tired of this scrimping and saving and stagnating."

There was a pause. Husband and wife confronted each other, both with flushed faces and hurried breath.

"And I'm—" he began, hotly. Then, moved by some memory, he stopped. A moment later he cried out: "Ah, Agatha, I never dreamed that you felt that way! It cost so much for us to start, and the crops have been poor. I thought you understood—" and breaking off abruptly he strode out through the kitchen on his way to the barn.

As the heroine of a nineteenth century story, Agatha should have sat down and burst into tears. But there was little of the heroic about her. She was only an ordinary woman whose temper was aroused, although not to such an extent that she could entirely forget the usual chord of pain in her husband's voice. However, she went about her work, setting down her pretty china with an unnecessary amount of energy, and saying to herself: "I think it downright mean in Eugene. I wonder how I shall ever endure this long, lonesome winter! No place to go, and no one to see."

The matter was not referred to again. But there was a cloud between husband and wife—the first since their wedding day.

The third day after the scene at the breakfast table, Mrs. Ferris, called and asked Agatha to accompany her to a meeting of the sewing society. The young wife eagerly accepted the invitation. It would enable her to forget, for a little time, at least.

Agatha went rapidly about her toilet. Her guest was seated in the dining-room, and by leaving the door open conversation could be carried on during the hair brushing and dress changing.

"Where are you going to spend Thanksgiving?" Mrs. Ferris asked, while she studied the arrangement of the violet-strewn silkolene drape on the shelf near her, secretly wondering if she could not imitate it.

"Thanksgiving!" Agatha repeated, with a hard, little laugh. "There is to be no such day in my calendar. I can't think of one thing that I am thankful for, unless it is that this dull life will soon kill me."

"Why, Mrs. Clair! I supposed that you were thankful that you and Mr. Clair were still living in the borderland of bliss that lovers imagine will last."

There was a moment's silence. Agatha was busy fastening the collar of her pretty green serge. Outside the window, opened to admit the crisp autumnal air, a white-faced man leaned against the house, the golden straw with which he had been covering the pansy bed blowing unheeded about his feet.

"I am thankful that we have merged into the land of common sense. If we had done it a year and a half ago life might still mean something for me. Now I see I have made a mistake."

Ten minutes later Eugene Clair came forward to put his wife and Mrs. Ferris into the waiting carriage. He replied courteously to the question of his neighbor, and as they were starting, said:

"Good-by, Agatha."



HUSBAND AND WIFE CONFRONTED EACH OTHER.

But Agatha was too busy covering her dress with the robe to do more than nod in reply.

The sun, red and angry-looking, was just disappearing behind the forest-crowned hills west of Agatha's home when Mrs. Ferris left her at the gate. The wind wailed loudly around the house, and the young wife shivered as she hurried up the path.

"I hope Eugene will have a fire," she said to herself. "He always remembers such things."

For once he had not remembered. The house was empty and cold. On the table lay a letter addressed: "Agatha."

Chilled by a nameless terror she carried it to the window and, by the dim light, read:

"Dear Agatha: I have a chance to go with Fowler to Chicago with a carload of horses. Must start at once and be gone a week. Harkness is coming in the morning to see about Nannie. Tell him he can have her for \$125. He will pay you. Take the money and go to Orley, you can get your new clothes after you get there. Stay as long as you like and enjoy yourself, I'll get along nicely, and if Fowler makes me a good offer I will go directly to the lumber camps for the winter. Ever yours, "EUGENE."

"Sold Nannie!" Agatha gasped. "Eugene gone for a week and I am to tell Harkness that he can have Nannie!"

Nannie was a beautiful black colt. Agatha knew how proud her husband was of the intelligent animal's beauty and grace. She had often heard him declare that money could not buy her. And Harkness was noted for his cruelty, the last person into whose hands Eugene would be willing to place Nannie.

Then that mention of the lumber camps and the hints that he might not return. What did it all mean? Was it because of her words that morning that he was trying so hard to secure money?

When the hired man, who lived in the tenant house, brought in the milk, Agatha learned that Eugene had made

arrangements in case he did not come back.

"He asked me if Margie and me would sleep here," Tom concluded. "Said it would only be a few days as you was goin' away. Margie, she'll take the milk then."

Instead of sleeping that night, Agatha Clair thought. One result of her thinking was that when Harkness came in the morning she told him he could not have Nannie.

"I hardly expected Gene would part with her," the man said, good-humoredly. "Would another ten be any inducement?"

Agatha shook her brown head decidedly. "Nothing you can offer will induce us to let Nannie go."

Fowler was to return Thanksgiving morning. Would Eugene come with him, or would he go north? There was no way of communicating with him. There was nothing Agatha could do. Nay, there was one thing—she could pray. Sometimes she would fall upon her knees and assail Heaven with prayers that were demands. Again the peace that had filled her heart when a child at her mother's side came to her, and she trustingly asked that Eugene might come home to find a different wife from the one whose discontent had driven him away.

Thanksgiving came. The sky was gray and lowering, while the east wind brought, ever and anon, a gust of snow.

The train would reach the village a mile away at 11. Before that time Agatha's arrangements were completed. In the oven a turkey was browning, vegetables stood in readiness for the stove. The table was bright in its best array of linen, china and silver. There were quivering molds of amber jelly, a dish of oranges garnished with green leaves, and at Eugene's plate, a cluster of pink carnations.

The whole house was bright and cozy. Agatha, in the gray dress with scarlet

SHROUDED IN MYSTERY.

The Origin of the Mound Builders of North America.

Were They Perchance One of the Lost Tribes of Israel—Some Facts in Support of This Theory.

[Special Washington Letter.]

Where did the Indians come from, and who were the mound builders? Men and women who read and study the history of the continent have absorbed and originated all sorts of theories concerning the aboriginal inhabitants of the new world.

The bureau of ethnology has worked on this problem for the last 20 years with great energy and earnestness.



FINDING SKELETON OF GIANT.

The work has been thoroughly done, and leaves no room for doubt as to the accuracy of its results. It has utterly exploded old theories as to a more ancient race of superior civilization which was imagined to have been responsible for the creation of the monuments in question. It has been demonstrated that the objects yielded by the tumuli, which are not of unmistakably Indian manufacture, were obtained from the whites.

Maj. Powell, who was for many years in charge of the geological survey, has said that this investigation was as much of a blind study as the original efforts to decipher the inscriptions upon the stone wonders of ancient Egypt.

One of the quiet students of the survey says: "The most interesting works of the mound builders are the so-called effigy mounds, representing birds and many kinds of mammals, which are confined almost wholly to Wisconsin and a small part of Iowa. The whole of the valley of Prairie du Chien township is dotted with these ancient animals in droves, all heading to the southwest like the river. They are enduring evidences of a dense population and long occupancy in past time. Some of the birds have a spread of 250 feet from wing tip to wing tip."

It is a matter of official record that in digging through a mound in Iowa the scientists found the skeleton of a giant, who, judging from actual measurement, must have stood seven feet six inches tall when alive. The bones crumbled to dust when exposed to the air. Around the neck was a collar of bear's teeth, and across the thighs were dozens of small copper beads, which may have once adorned a hunting skirt. The latter were formed by rolling slender wire-like strips of metal into little rings. One skull obtained from a mound in Alabama was completely filled with snail shells.

In another mound in Iowa was found a central chamber containing 11 skeletons, which were arranged in a circle with their backs against the walls. In their midst was a great sea shell, which had been converted into a drinking-cup. Smaller cavities in the same tumulus were filled with a fine copper-colored dust, which, when first uncovered, gave out such a sickening odor that operations had to be suspended for awhile. The dust was supposed to be the ashes from burned flesh—perhaps that of the individuals in the central chamber. Many tribes of Indians in ancient times made a practice of removing the flesh from the bones of the dead.

But all of these studies and discoveries have not given us anything really historical concerning the people who did these things. The officials of the geological survey, of the Smithsonian Institution, the National museum, and other centers of science and philosophy at the national capital, all agree that the question as to whence the Indians originally came is still in dispute, and likely to remain so. There is no truth in the attractive notion that once a mighty nation occupied the valley of the Mississippi, with its frontier settlements resting on the lake shores and gulf coast, nestling in the valleys of the Appalachian range and skirting the broad plains of the west—a nation with its system of government and religion, which has disappeared, leaving behind it no evidence of its glory, power or extent, save the mounds and what they contain.

One thing is certain, and that is that the mound builders continued their work for some time after the European discoverers and adventurers came to the shores of this continent and penetrated its terra incognita. It is officially recorded that agents of the bureau of ethnology have explored and made ex-

cavations in more than 2,000 of these mounds. Among the objects found in them were pearls in great numbers and some of very large size, engraved shells, bracelets of drawn wire, silver brooches, pins, needles, a silver plate with the coat of arms of Spain, a gun barrel, a Roman Catholic medal, a copper kettle and a fur-covered, brass-nailed trunk. Of course, many of these articles were obtained from the whites. They demonstrate that mound building and burial in mounds went on for some time after the whites landed on the shores of America. In fact, agents have seen such mounds in process of construction by Indians.

The scientific discovery and disclosures of ancient Troy developed no things more wonderful than these scientific explorers of the mounds; although the developments at Troy have been of more historic value, because they verify well-authenticated historic data. But some very interesting material for historic development has been found in caves. Tracing the Mississippi river, six miles south of New Albin, is a great cavity in the vertical face of the sandstone bluff, 50 feet long and 12 feet high. The walls and ceilings are literally covered with rude etchings representing quadrupeds, birds, bird tracks and symbolical or fanciful objects. The floor is spread to a depth of two feet with the bones of fishes and beasts, fragments of pottery, charcoal and ashes. Even more remarkable is the cave near Guntersville, Ala. Evidently it was utilized for many generations as a cemetery, and the number of dead deposited in it must have been very great. Though much of its contents has been hauled away in sacks, for fertilizing land, the floor is yet covered to a depth of four feet with material composed chiefly of fragments of human bones. In Tennessee and Kentucky the flesh of bodies stored in caves centuries ago is sometimes remarkably preserved.

On a farm in Bollinger county, Mo., is an area of considerable extent surrounded by an ancient wall of earth about three feet high in places. Inside of it, formerly, were many remarkable mounds used for burial places by the Indians of prehistoric times, but 40 years of continued cultivation of the soil have nearly leveled them. Plowing over one of the mounds a few years ago the owner struck something, and, on digging further in the earth, discovered two stone coffins each containing a skeleton. In one of the coffins he found a gourd-shaped vessel filled with lead ore, so pure that he afterwards turned it into bullets.

In 1879 people in the neighborhood of a town in Mississippi discovered the pottery, in which the mounds of that region were unusually rich, had considerable commercial value. The specimens obtained were sold to merchants, who in turn furnished them to museums, scientific institutions and relic hunters.

That the mound builders were great smokers is proved by the large number of pipes found in their mounds and



BRICKS WITHOUT STRAW.

graves. So numerous are these and so widely distributed that pipemaking and pipesmoking may be considered as a marked characteristic of that ancient people. This will serve in a way as supplementary evidence that they were Indians; for the Indian is par excellence the man who smokes, and the pipe is essential to his happiness.

The correspondent neither a scientist nor a philosopher, and yet may make a suggestion. Maybe nobody will ever be able to correctly conjecture, much less prove, where the mound builders came from, nor who they were. But is it not a singular fact that they bulged mounds just as the ancient Egyptians bulged pyramids? Has anyone ever investigated the similarity of the methods of the two races? May not these mound builders have been descended from or related to the Egyptians?

What became of the lost tribes of Israel, after they had learned to build pyramids, making bricks without straw?

The mound builders, by their work, manifestly were more like the pyramid makers of Egypt than like any other people. When we wonder why pyramids were built, should we not at the same time ask why the mounds were built, and whether or not they were built upon the same scientific, superstitious or religious theory, and for a similar purpose? SMITH D. FRY.

—True Worst is the name of a Maryville, Mo., drummer