

WILMETTE LIFE

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THANKSGIVING

(A Guest Editorial)

By the Rev. David R. Kabel

Minister, Wilmette English Lutheran church

What a significant day Thanksgiving is! The more we think about it, the deeper the significance grows. The fact that it has stored memory with choicest materials reveals its value. Israel had a day that corresponds to Thanksgiving Day, a day highly prized throughout the land, but the Christian world was long without an annual Thanksgiving Day. One wonders that it should have been so. There were occasional days by occasional people. Three hundred years ago the Pilgrims observed a day of Thanksgiving. Fifty-one out of one hundred had died during the year. Cold and disease had wrought havoc among them. But the surviving forty-nine buried their dead secretly and obscured the graves to hide their numerical weakness from the Indians. Yet the Governor called for a day of Thanksgiving after the harvest of 1621. The story of the Pilgrims who landed on Plymouth Rock in November, 1620, is an oft-repeated tale; but nothing in their history is more illuminating than that first Thanksgiving Day amid their suffering and poverty. These occasional days finally brought in the custom of an annual day of thanksgiving for the nation.

Thanksgiving is a state of mind. The very word thank is only a slightly different spelling of the word think, and so to be thankful is literally to be thoughtful. When we think upon any subject the associated ideas in the mind flock around it to intensify and enrich it, until it becomes the glowing focus in the consciousness that fills the mind and warms the heart and may set the whole soul ablaze. It is by this process that when we think upon any of the blessings of life, however common or unimportant they may seem, they begin to gather interest and to kindle our emotions, until they fill us with a new and vivid sense of their worth, and we grow thankful for them.

The Psalmist said, "It is a good thing to give thanks." It works only good. It banishes the complaining spirit. It forbids the offering of pity to one's self. It keeps the hand strong and the heart clean. It registers appreciation for benefits received. So we are urged at all times, on all occasions, and for everything to give thanks. There were ten lepers healed one day by the Great Physician, redeemed from a living death. But only one had gratitude enough to turn back and give thanks! "Where are the nine?" Let us not go with the nine.

HELP YOURSELF

The Christmas shopping season is now on, and during the next thirty-two days many thousands of north shore dollars will be spent for gifts. Already Christmas merchandise offerings have crowded the Thanksgiving turkey off the advertising pages, and from now on inducements will be offered from every quarter for the patronage of the Christmas shopper.

Local merchants have prepared this year to make a stronger bid than ever before for Christmas business, and on the basis of community interest they should have the edge. The more

money spent at home the better the home community is bound to be. Even a cursory consideration of where the Christmas dollar goes will reveal the importance of spending it with merchants whose interests in the village are identical with yours. It must cover light, heat, rent, taxes, accounting, merchandise, incidentals and, more important than all, labor. The latter item looms large in the dollar spread because through labor the purchasing power of the entire community is raised.

Obviously, the more dollars spent with the home merchants the more prosperous the village becomes, to say nothing of the fact that it means larger, brighter, better stocked stores and improved service.

Too many villagers make their purchases in other markets because they take it for granted that local merchants cannot supply their needs. A personal inspection on the part of shoppers will quickly convince them that at least a large part of Christmas as well as year around requirements can be found right here at home, and that in addition to the best in quality at fair prices will come the satisfaction that the money spent by them will be largely spent here by the merchants. That means helping yourself by helping your town.

STUDY IT CAREFULLY

On another page of this news-magazine there appears a bulletin just issued by the Suburban Area and Country Towns Association of Cook County, in which that alert organization gives in concise and easily digested form the salient features of the permanent registration act, under which future elections will be conducted.

Especially is attention directed to that clause pertaining to frequency of voting, which reads as follows:

"Voters who fail to vote at least once in every four year period (the first period being three years, from 1937 to 1940) lose their registration unless they renew it through the Village clerk or the County clerk."

The purpose to induce more voters to exercise the franchise at all elections is plain. The loss of registration penalizes the voter to the extent that he must go to the trouble of applying to either the Village clerk or the County clerk for reinstatement as a qualified elector.

The provision may have the effect of bringing out a more representative vote at all elections. And it may not.

THE MAIN-SPRING

Without an economic system which offers rewards to those who work and create, America would not be setting the pace for the world, is the belief of Charles R. Hook, president of the American Rolling Mill company, who in a recent address said:

"When you look at your alarm clock you see only the hands and figures on the dial. You do not see that main spring, or that tiny motor, deep down inside.

"There is a main spring deep down inside America too. It is the incentive to work and create, to share in the profits of one's work.

"Without this incentive to the individual America would not have developed her natural resources; we would not have our great factories, our magnificent public institutions and our high standard of living."

As proof that the American incentive system has worked, he pointed out that the United States today has 71 per cent of the world's automobiles, 58 per cent of its telephone and telegraph facilities, 50 per cent of its radios and 38 per cent of its railroads.

So many people today who see no further than the brass plating on the clock, are wondering why it doesn't tick. If they will take Mr. Hook's suggestion and take a peek at the main-spring, they will find it so clogged with government restrictions and regulations that its resilience is gone and it can no longer function. Take government out of business and the American system will perform as of old.

A prince of Hawaii has been sentenced to prison for killing a woman. One by one man's liberties throughout the world are disappearing.

NEWS-COMMENT

If we must have February weather in November, let us hope for November weather in February.

* * *

The President has been suffering from toothache, while the rest of the country is suffering from headache.

* * *

Chicago, following the example of the federal government, is going in for public housing, having leased over thirteen million dollars worth of flat buildings. Oh boy! What juicy graft!

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If, as reported, England is ready to give back to Germany some of the colonies taken from her after the World war, it is a pretty clear indication that British diplomacy is at work.

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It's Thanksgiving, and betcha we get the turkey neck. It's generally our luck. Not so bad, though, if preceded by plenty of dark meat and some generous slices of the breast. Reminds unpleasantly of what the New Deal administration has been doing to all of us for going on five years. Seems as though all the public has got is turkey necks, and one wonders where they get all of 'em, and what becomes of the nice dark meat and the flavory slices of breast, to say nothing of the dressing and cranberry sauce. Every time the university adolescents think up some new trick to make earth a heaven and bring to us all the abundant life, they ballyhoo it as the greatest feast ever prepared for this or any other people. But every time, doggone it, all we get is necks, and mostly scrawny ones.

* * *

A former teller in the Cook county treasurer's office has been convicted of stealing \$3,200. Had the amount been \$3,200,000, he would have been acquitted and given a banquet.

* * *

Wally buying baby clothes? How scandalous! (Later: She gave 'em away.)

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Congratulations, Captain Eyston, on driving your automobile 311.42 miles per hour. And double congratulations that you are still alive. But, really, what good did you do?

* * *

Reminiscent of ye olden tyme when Farmer John kept the kerosene can near the kitchen stove to keep the fluid from freezing, on the bare suspicion that the country storekeeper might have inadvertently spilled water into it, is the experience of three motorists who last week drove into a north shore garage to find out why their cars behaved as they did. Being told that the gasoline in their tanks was frozen, they awakened to the fact that saving a couple of pennies on a gallon of gas was not such good business. After the tanks thawed out and were refilled with real gasoline, the motorists left rejoicing.

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The Brussels nine power treaty conference has broken up without accomplishing a thing. The only move they made to help China against Japan was to swear before high heaven that the latter's territory grabs would not be recognized. So Japan is worrying.

* * *

Breaking our rule of never (well, scarcely ever) making even veiled references to anything political, we repeat the report that the President is asking for an inquiry into the high cost of living. He seems surprised to learn that living costs are mounting by leaps and bounds. Yessir, he certainly is surprised that his plans of the past five years to raise prices have succeeded. Surprised, in fact, and well he may be, that any plan of his has succeeded.

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"Oh, Promise Me." And sometimes, please, keep the promise.

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