

thanksgiving ceremonies, everybody determined to outdo them by far, and to make Martin and Grace realise, if possible, how much they were beloved. The preparations went on almost day and night, all sorts of quaint devices being used to decorate the town. The farm was stocked with cattle, pigs, sheep, and poultry. Food also for the animals was carted in lavishly, everything being freely contributed, so that scarcely any money was spent at all.

At last the great day arrived, and in the open air, on the grassy hillside, where as many of the townsfolk as could come were able to witness the ceremony easily, Martin and the Maid of Lyme were made one by the venerable old Independent minister of the town. As soon as the binding words had been spoken, as if by one common impulse the whole audience burst into that magnificent song of praise, the hundredth Psalm, the stately chorus sweeping over hills and through dales, till wayfarers on distant roads paused to listen and wonder whether that burst of melody came down from heaven or no. Splendid was the feast that followed, yet without gluttony or any drunkenness. It was in truth an immense love-feast, although the central figures were so humble. And when at last the time came for departing, and all the public farewells had been said, Tom and Dame Pook looked wistfully at the newly married couple, and wondered how they should feel upon returning to the bereaved old home. But Martin, sensitive soul, saw the look, and seizing Tom and the dame by the hands, he said, "Come,