

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 der 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' 'bout; so my ole massa he let 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, an' den I went barefoot; an' dat's just de 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; 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 Israelites was tol' to give one-tenth, I'd like to frow in a little more, for good measure. Talk 'bout it's bein like a tax to put some a-way for such things! Clare! I get studyin' what each dollar must 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.

'O de 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.

"Spose I needn't fret 'bout other folks' duty—dat ain't none o' my business; yas 'tis too, 'cause dey's good to me, an' I loves 'em. Tain't 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."

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

"And I?"

"An' 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, busy 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 dinner-hour arrived, both