

store, she carefully laid aside one-eighth, "Cause if dem ole Israelites was tol' to give one-tenth, I'd like to frow in a little more, for good measure. Talk 'bout its bein' like a tax to put some away for such things! 'Clare! I get studyin' what each dollar mus' 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 o' Calvary!

De Lamb dat was slain, an' lives again,  
An' intercedes for me."

And now another call had come.

"Come, 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.

"Spouse I neenn't fret 'bout other folks' duty—dat aint none o' my business; yas 'tis, too, 'cause dey's good to me, an' I loves 'em. 'Taint 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 the cry:—

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

"And I?"

"And 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, busily 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 the dinner-hour arrived, both master and mistress scanned the table with wide-open eyes of astonishment, so plain and meagre were its contents, so unlike any dinner ever served in that house.

"What has happened, my dear?" asked the gentleman, turning to his wife.

"Dat's all de col' meat dar was—sorry I didn't have no more," she said, half apologetically.

"But I sent home a choice roast this morning," began Mr. Allyn, wonderingly; "and you have no potatoes, neither—nor vegetables of any kind!"

"Laws, yes! But den a body has to think

'bout it a good while aforehand to get a roast cooked, an' jist de same wid taters; an' I thought I'd give ye what I happened to have when de time come, an' I didn't happen to have much o' nuffin. 'Clare! I forgot de bread!" and, trotting away, she returned with a plate of cold corn cake.

"No bread!" murmured Mrs. Allyn.

"No, honey; used it all up for toast dis mornin'. Might have made biscuit or muffins, if I had planned for 'em long 'nough; but dat kind o' makes a body feel 's if dey had to do it, an' I wanted to get dinner for yer all o' my warm feelin's, when de time come."

"When a man has provided bountifully for his household, it seems as if he might expect to enjoy a small share of it himself, even if the preparation does require a little trouble," remarked Mr. Allyn, impatiently; but still too bewildered at such an unprecedented state of affairs to be thoroughly indignant.

"Cur'us how things make a body think o' Bible verses," said Thanksgiving, musingly. "Dar's dat one 'bout 'who giveth us all things richly to enjoy; an' 'what shall I render to de Lord for all His benefits to'ard me.' Dar! I didn't put on dem peaches."

"Has Thanksgiving suddenly lost her senses?" questioned the gentleman, as the door closed after her.

"I suspect there is a 'method in her madness,'" replied his wife, a faint smile crossing her lips.

The old woman returned with the basket, sadly despoiled of its morning contents; but she composedly bestowed the remainder in a fruit dish.

"Dat's all! De chilren eat a good many, an' dey was used up one way an' nother. I see sorry dar aint no more; but I hopes y'll 'joy what dar is, an' I wishes 'twas five times as much."

A look of sudden intelligence flashed into Mr. Allyn's eyes; he bit his lips for a moment, and then asked quietly:

"Couldn't you have laid aside some for us, Thanksgiving?"

"Wall, dar now! s'pose I could," said the old servant, relenting at the tone; "b'lieve I will, next time. Allers kind o' thought de folks things belonged to had de best right to 'em; but I'd heard givin' whatever happened to be on hand was so much freer an' lovin'er a way o' servin' dem ye love best, dat I thought I'd try it. But it does 'pear 's if dey fared slim, an' I spects I'll go back to de ole plan o' systematics."

"Do you see, George?" questioned the wife when they were again alone.

"Yes, I see. An object lesson with a vengeance!"

"And if she should be right, and our careless giving seem anything like this?" pursued Mrs. Allyn, with a troubled face.

"She is right, Fanny: it doesn't take much argument to show that. We call Christ our King and Master; believe that every blessing we have in this world is His direct gift; and all our hopes for the world to come are in Him. We profess to be not our own but His; to be journeying towards His royal city; and that His service is our chief business here; and yet, strangely enough, we provide lavishly for our own appareling, entertainment, and ease, and apportion nothing for the interests of His kingdom, or the forwarding of His work; but leave that to any chance pence that may happen to be left after all our wants and fancies are gratified. It doesn't seem very like faithful or loving service," Mr. Allyn answered, gravely. "I have been thinking in that direction occasionally, lately, but