

appearing to survey the subject meditatively with the other, "that some folks can do as much good just offhanded as some other folks can with no end of pinchin' an' screwin' beforehand."

"Think it proves dat folks dat don't have no great 'mount can do as much in a good cause by thinkin' 'bout it a little aforehand, as other folks will dat has more, and puts der hands in der pockets when de time comes. I believe in systematics 'bout such things, I does;" and with an energetic bob of her head, by way of emphasizing her words, old Thanksgiving walked into the house.

"Thanksgivin' an' de voice o' melody,"

she began in her high, weird voice; but the words died on her lips—her heart was too burdened to sing. "Only three dollars out'n all her 'bundance!" she murmured to herself. "Well, mebby I oughtn't to judge; but then I don't judge, I *knows*. Course I knows when I'se here all de time, and sees de good clo'es, an' de carr'age, an' de musics, an' de fine times—folks, an' hosses, an' tables all provided for, an' de Lord of glory lef' to take what happen when de time comes, an' no prepration at all! Sure 'nough, He don't need her help. All de world is His; an' He send clo'es to His naked, an' bread to His hungry, an' Bibles to His heathen, if dey don't give a cent; but den dey're pinchin' and starvin' der own dear souls. Well—'taint *my* soul! but I loves 'em, an' dey're missin' a great blessin'."

These friends, so beloved, paid little attention to the old woman's opinion upon what she called "systematics in givin'." "The idea of counting up one's income, and setting aside a fixed portion of it for 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. 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' much 'bout; so my ole massa he lef' 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', and den I went bare-foot; an' 't's jist the 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; and another person another," said the lady smilingly, as she walked from the room.

"Pears to me it's a matter of which way de Master 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 old 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 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 of Calvary!

De Lamb dat was slain, an' lives agsin,
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. "'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 a'l 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?" "And I, too!"