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**NATIONAL THANKSGIVING.**

Under the Old Testament dispensation, provision was made for rendering thanks to God in return for the bounties of the harvest by the institution of the feast of Pentecost. This feast of the fiftieth day, or of the seventh week (a week of weeks), was held at the end of forty-nine days from the second day of the Passover. To this might be added the feast of Ingathering, or of Tabernacles, held in the first month of the civil year of the Jews, as the feast of the Passover was held in the first month of the sacred or ecclesiastical year. As Church and as State the Israelites were to begin the year with thanksgiving to God. The feast of Pentecost was, however, pre-eminently the thanksgiving day of Israel. After our Lord's ascension this day acquired a greater significance still. The first fruits, not of the world's material, but of its spiritual harvest, appeared in the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the assembled disciples. Henceforth the day commemorated the blessings of redemption, as well as of God's providential care of all His creatures; it called forth thanksgiving, not for mere meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life. The Israelite knew but one day of fasting, when he was specially called upon to afflict his soul, and that was the great day of atonement, typifying the time of humiliation and death, through which the Son of God passed, that He might reconcile us to the Father.