

A SONG OF THANKSGIVING



THANKSGIVING!
Thanksgiving!
Of yore,
In the youth of the nation,
When the harvest had yielded its store
There was feast and oblation,
Or when danger had lifted its hand,
From the lips of the living
There rang through the length of the land
A Thanksgiving! Thanksgiving!

Our home was a wilderness then
With the floods to enfold it;
To-day with its millions of men,
We rejoice to behold it.
From the sea to the surge of the sea,
We have all for a treasure;
We are blest in the promised to-be
In a manifold measure.

War flaunts not a red pennon now,
For the olive is regal;
Like birds that are twin, on one bough
Sit the dove and the eagle.
The clash of the conflict that cleft
We in sorrow remember,
But the fire of the great feud has left
In the ash scarce an ember.

For the fruit of the time of our toil:
For what'er we have fought for;
Whether born of the brain or the soil
Be the need we have sought for.
For the gifts we have had from His hand
Who is Lord of all living,
Let there ring through the length of the land
A Thanksgiving! Thanksgiving!

—Clinton Scollard, in Ladies' Home Journal.

Cupid on skates.



Marysville. Old Sol had scarcely begun his daily migration toward the west ere a number of schoolboys had gathered at the millpond to see if the ice was strong enough for skating. To their great delight it proved to be very firm.

"My, won't it be fun, boys?" said Hal Anderson, as he took a long slide, both arms extended.

"Wish I had my skates here now," said Jack Dayton. "I'd go without breakfast."

"Aw, no, you wouldn't, Jack. You can't make us believe that you would miss anything to eat," said another boy.

"Well, I'd make it up at Thanksgiving dinner, if I did," said Jack, gradually. "Anyhow, I'm coming down right after breakfast, and if you fellows will all come, too, we'll have a game of 'prison goal.' What do you say?"

"We'll be here," was the universal reply, and away went the boys to eat breakfast and spread the good news that there was skating on the pond.

Jack imparted the news at the breakfast table, whereat his sister Irma, aged eighteen and very pretty, clasped her hands and exclaimed:

"Oh, jolly! I'm so glad I had my skates sharpened last week. Everybody will be out, either skating or looking on, and we'll all come home with such appetites! I just know that Jack will eat all that chicken pie that I made."

"I'll leave a piece of the crust for you, Irma," said Jack. "I'm going down to the pond right after breakfast. When can you come?"

"Oh, I suppose I'll have to go to church and help sustain the family reputation, Jack Dayton. Of course fourteen-year-old boys don't know anything about such responsibilities. But I wonder if I could carry my skates to church with me? I guess I can hide them under my cloak."

"Or put 'em on and skate up the aisle with 'em," Jack irreverently suggested. Irma declined not to notice this fling, but continued:

"I do hope Mr. Miller will preach a dreadfully short sermon. That will be one thing to be thankful for."

"Well, you'd better skip church and come out for a game with the boys."

"Mr. Dayton, I'm a young lady, if you please, and I don't play with little boys," replied Irma, with a mock bow.

"Oh! Ah! Has Mr. Archibald Hendricks been putting such notions into your head?"

"No, he hasn't," she responded, with a sudden blush, and to hide her confusion she jumped up and ran into the kitchen.

Skates over his shoulder, Jack went out the door with an Indian war-whoop and was soon hard at play with his comrades on the pond.

The village choir that day outdid itself upon the anthem, which in length and volume surpassed even the utmost anticipations of the congregation. The songsters left a small margin for the sermon, which was of moderate length only.

The Walters and Dayton families had long been on the best of terms, so Irma felt free to greet Keith very cordially at the close of the service.

"College seems to agree with you, Keith," said Irma, after the first greeting was over.

"Indeed it does—especially the junior work. Oh, Irma, you ought to be a college girl—you'll never know what fun is until you are."

"Oh, pshaw, Keith! I'm going to have some fun this very day. See my skates?" And Irma disclosed them underneath her cloak. "I'm going out to the millpond. Won't you come, too?"

"Delighted! Only I must go home for my runners; didn't know there was skating. I guess mother will let me go—won't you, mother?"

"Yes, my boy—but don't venture where the ice is unsafe. It's early in the season, you know."

"No fear of my getting drowned if Irma will only take care of me," said Keith gaily.

He left Irma at the church door, after securing from her the promise of the first skate.

"Yes, if you'll hurry," said Irma. Then turning, she saw Archie Hendricks at her elbow. She bowed calmly, but her brother's taunt of the morning still tingled in her ears, and she was not inclined to be as gracious as usual to her old friend.

Archie Hendricks was a sterling youth—physically, morally and financially. He was junior partner in the firm of Hendricks & Son, iron founders. Many a doting Marysville mother had him in her mind as a prospective son-in-law. By nature reserved, he seldom courted the society of the gentler sex, and, although he was a frequent caller at the Dayton home, he never paid marked attention to Irma. However, Irma's secret admiration for him was great, and Archie, from admiring her beauty and unaffected brightness, was drifting into a deeper feeling, which he apparently did not care to check.

The cordial greeting between Keith and Irma had nettled Archie, he knew not why. So his manner was cool when he lifted his hat and said:

"Off to the pond?"

"Yes; they say the skating is splendid. Are you going?"

"I think I shall, as soon as I can get

versed in all the latest figures and fancies of the skater, and he found Irma an apt scholar.

They crossed the pond with the "Dutch roll" in a most finished manner. They "cut the grapevine," trellis and all; they skated alternately backward and forward, but the admiration of the spectators knew no bounds when the graceful pair "did the Mercury," that difficult figure that must be done well if done at all.

Archie soon found excuse for relinquishing Belle Parker, who was not his ideal of a skater belle. The only girl he cared to skate with was monopolized by Keith Walters.

Archie was aggravated. Once Irma separated from her partner and skated to the other side of the pond, Archie was about to follow, when her brother Jack took her in hand, and Archie's hopes again were blasted.

Archie's mental thermometer now registered one hundred in the shade. He skated fiercely. He performed marvels. He entered a game of "tag" and led the entire horde of boys an exciting chase before he allowed himself to be caught.

His flashing steel was never quiet. Now it was the "back roll," now the "outer edge." He cut wonderful devices upon the icy slide, and then acknowledged them by signing his name with a mighty flourish, which so awed the younger boys that they forgot to skate.

Then he wandered off to a deserted part of the pond to brood upon his misery.

Keith and Irma, tired of admiration, had skated up the frozen stream and away from the crowd.

"Isn't this great fun?" said Keith.

"It's just too splendid for anything," responded Irma, who was wishing, nevertheless, that Archie would ask her to skate. Why was he so stubborn?

"Irma, can you keep a secret?" said Keith.

"Try me."

"Well—I'm engaged."

"Keith Walters, you don't mean it!"

"Yes I do. But you're the first one I've told."

"Oh! Tell me all about it, quick! I'm dying to hear!"

"Well, she's a college girl—one of my classmates—a lovely girl. I wish you knew her. We are keeping quiet

"Can you hold on a minute longer, Keith? Somebody's coming."

That somebody was Archie Hendricks. He had been near enough to hear Irma's first cry of distress and he was coming now with furious speed. Yet the seconds seemed like hours to the waiting pair.

Archie took in the situation at a glance. Without stopping to say a word, but shouting: "Hang on!" he sped to the bank and landed, skates and all, at the nearest fence.

It was the work of an instant to tear off two long boards and return to the river. He went as near as he dared to Irma.

"The ice won't hold me there," he shouted. "Take these boards and lay them in front of Keith; then pull him up."

He slid the boards across the ice to her. She did as directed.

Cheered by Archie's words and aided by Irma and the faithful boa, Keith crawled forth more dead than alive.

It did not take long to get him away from the air-hole, and between Irma and Archie he was conveyed quickly to the pond, where there were plenty of wraps to cover him. In spite of Keith's protestations that he was "all right" and "only a little moist," he was bundled off home, looking more like a mummy than a human being.

The excitement of the day had culminated with Keith's adventure. Archie and Irma stood talking together.

"Irma, how did it happen you and Keith got so far away? Didn't either of you think of the danger?"

"Oh, Archie, he was telling me all about his ladylove—there! I've let out a secret—but I know you'll never breathe a word of it, will you? Because he asked me if I could keep a secret and I told him I thought I could. So I was asking him questions and I guess we didn't notice where we were. And, oh, Archie! if you hadn't come when you did, I just know Keith would have drowned!"

"Oh, you would never have allowed him to sink before your eyes. But I'm glad it was no worse."

"So am I, but you haven't skated with me any to-day, Archie."

"Well, it's not too late yet. We can take a turn around the pond before dinner time, I guess."

And off they went. They knew that Keith was well cared for, yet neither spoke for a few moments. Suddenly Archie said:

"Irma, a secret is no good unless it's divided, is it?"

"I never heard one that was," said the pretty girl, looking up at him.

"Well, I'm going to divide mine with you—one I've been keeping even closer than Keith kept his, for I have kept it entirely to myself. Do you want to hear it?"

"Yes, Archie."

"It is this: I am in love."

Irma did not reply. She merely looked away.

"Do you care to know the young lady's name?"

Irma nodded.

"Well, it is—I'ma Dayton."

Archie looked down at her.

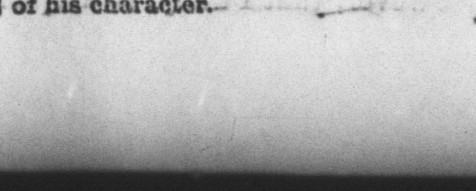
"Now, are you going to rescue me, too, on this eventful day? Yes or no?"

"Yes, Archie."

Nobody was near them. Archie kissed the happy face turned up to his as he said:

"Then this will be the happiest of Thanksgiving days!"—Keyes Becker, in Chicago News.

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