

TURKEY AS A SACRIFICE

In Antiquity and American Lineage the Bird Takes Precedence in Western Continent

When Thanksgiving day comes and families gather around the feast of which the turkey reigns as royal sacrifice, it is the hour to win opinion regarding the American national bird. Long has the eagle soared and screamed and flapped its wings, but no day of regard has been put in its honor in the calendar.

When it comes to antiquity and a true American lineage the turkey takes precedence. Patriotic societies are finding this out, and committees are considering the advisability of making a place for the bird among national emblems. The eagle is a cosmopolitan, the bird of Jove; the turkey—genus *meleagris*—belongs to the western continent.

The sacrifice on the altar of thanksgiving is a species distinct from winged and feathered fowl of a distant relationship found in Europe. Like the American Indian, it has aboriginal traits, and inspired by the spirit of the west and an intense love for freedom, refuses the confining restraints of civilization.

The American turkey was among the strange birds discovered by the Spaniards when they invaded Mexico. Oviedo describes it about 1527 as domesticated among the Christianized Indians of New Spain (Mexico), and being the bird reserved for festivals. Gay describes the *gallopavo sylvestris*—the wild turkey of New England—as the wonder of the pilgrim fathers, and from all this data it will be seen that the turkey has a claim to national tribute.

Virginia and Missouri historians write of turkey fowls as peculiar to their wooded hills, but Rhode Island has laid an official claim to the best bred stock that goes abroad. Little Rhody bases its traditions on the customs of the Narragansett Indians, a tribe which once ruled the entire New England area, but became extinct during King Phillip's war.

The Narragansetts treasured the turkey as a sacred bird after their days the Niantics took the matter up both for the cause of religion and for the comfort of their stomachs and thus preserved the species from extinction and brought the Rhode Island fame high on the marts that cater to feasts and festivals.

The Rhode Island turkey lives in the hills, feasts on insects and herbs best calculated to make it delectable to epicures and has become desired from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The white turkey comes from the confines of the state and for some years the presidential Thanksgiving dinner has been presided over by an immense bird of the New England stock.

As the Indian and the native customs even of Mistress Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams are forgotten by latter day Rhode Island sons and daughters, so the turkey of that peculiar breed is passing away. Reports from the state agricultural stations give dire statistics of fatal disease among the turkeys and the vanishing from the land.

In this year Missouri, Indiana and Wisconsin are banner turkey states. The uncut timber and rough ground are good roving places and the deadly microbe has not found its way to slaughter the innocents.

White with irris-tinted feathers, bronze reflecting the shades of their distant relatives the peafowls, dark hues with rainbow tints and brilliant red dew laps and head ornaments strolling along the roads in dignified flocks, perching gracefully on fence rails and sounding the piercing call—

thus they have been seen in any country byway before the November knell was sounded.—Ex.

Enforce Anti-Smoke Crusade

Washington—Steam engines will be prohibited entrance to the District of Columbia on the completion of the union station in Washington. The commissioners of the District of Columbia today took final action in an order prohibiting the use of any except electric engines in drawing trains into the new union station. This applies to all railroads entering the city and is made in the interest of the anti-smoke crusade which has been waged here for several years.

Given New Appointment

Mexico City.—Manuel Jose Vega, who has held the position of secretary of the Chilean legation and charge d'affaires in Mexico City for some time, has received an appointment as Chilean minister to Bolivia and within two weeks will sever his connection with the legation here and depart for his new post. Mr. Vega has spent the larger part of the year at Washington as charge d'affaires of Chile during the absence from that capital of the Chilean minister Joaquin Walker Martinez. Mr. Vega's full title will be envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary.

In Society

Ice Box—I hear you are entertaining a good deal lately.
Thermometer—Yes, indeed! I'm giving everybody a hot time.—Detroit Free Press.

The Dizzy Height

"You say he has attained the very top of the literary ladder?"
"Yes. He has been accused of plagiarism."—Milwaukee Sentinel.

Church—I saw several people coming down the street last night, and they were quarreling frightfully.
Gotham—Yes; they were the members of the church choir. They were only practicing!—Yonkers Statesman.

He—What are you thinking about, dear?

She—Only, how nice, I would be to have a really handsome fire screen!—Topeka State Journal.

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