

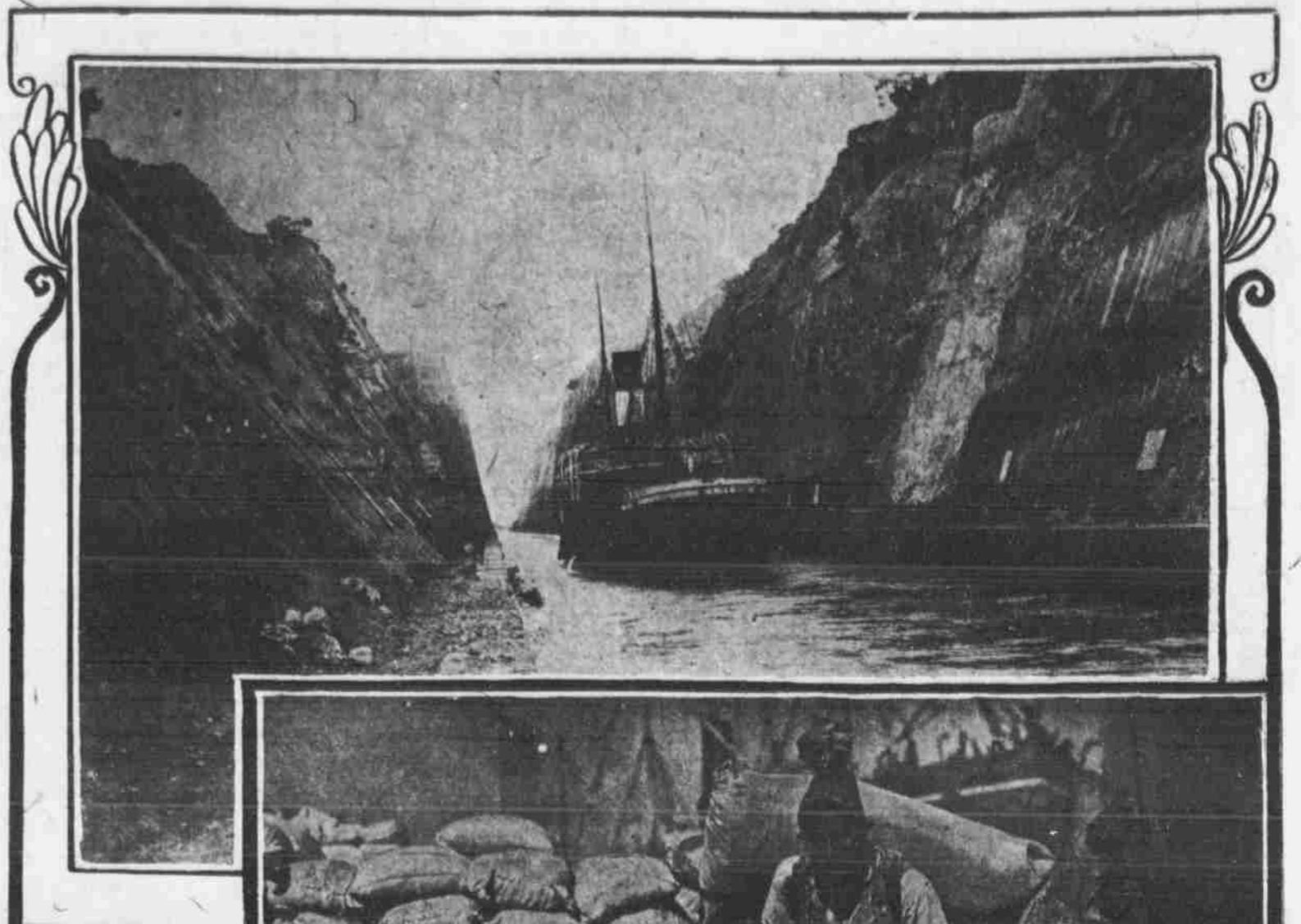
Succulent Stuffing for American Puddings Raised in Greece



THE GREEK WOMEN HAVE CURIOUS COSTUMES



A GREEK FARMER



THE CORINTH CANAL



LOADING GRAIN AT PATRAS

(Copyright, 1911, by Frank G. Carpenter.)
PATRAS—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—The Greeks of today are a nation of farmers and sailors. The cities are few and there are only twelve towns which have more than 10,000 inhabitants. The most of the people live in farm villages, from which they go out daily to their work in the fields. The holdings are small. The farms on the plains are from ten to fifty acres in size and there are very few in the country which have more than 200 acres. I have spent the last week in riding through the chief agricultural districts and pen these notes at Patras, the chief port of the west. It took me a day to reach it from Athens, and there were vineyards and farms all the way. I first crossed the plains of Attica; the trees and vines are bare, but the buds are swelling and they will soon be covered with emerald leaves. The soil is rich, reddish brown, which shines like velvet under the rays of the sun. The mountains are blanketed with robes of silver gray plush, the dusty grass, upon which flocks of sheep and goats are feeding.

As I crossed these plains I stopped at Eleusis to attend the spring festivities of the Greeks preparatory to planting, and thence came on to Corinth, which in the days of Christ was as large as Boston is now; it has shrunk to less than 4,000 and is mainly made up of farmers. The town has not been bettered by the Corinth Canal, which there cuts its way through the isthmus. The traffic is small and most of the ships still go around to the Piræus by sea. There was a ship in the canal as I crossed it.

From Corinth on westward the railroad passes for miles through great vineyards. The vines have been cut back, and they are now nothing but stumps as thick as my leg and as high as my knee; they are budding and will soon put out the new sprouts for the year.

Millions in Currants.
 As I looked at the stumps a Greek official with whom I was traveling said:
 "It is these vineyards that give us our living; they produce the chief crop of the country, bringing in from \$5,000,000 to \$10,000,000 a year."
 "Indeed," said I. "I did not know that Greece was a great exporter of wine."
 "It is not," replied the Greek, "but these vineyards are not grown for wine. The grapes they produce are known as currants, and they are shipped all over the world for making plum puddings, fruit cake, buns and mince pies. We send thousands of tons of them to Europe and from 15,000,000 to 20,000,000 pounds to the United States every year."
 "But the bushes are not like our currant bushes?"
 "They are not currants in that sense of the word; they are a seedless grape as big as a marrowfat pea and as sweet as sugar; they are dried and sold as raisins; they get their name, currant, from the fact that they were originally grown near Corinth. We have, all told, about 150,000 acres devoted to them, and we regulate the crop so as not to cheapen the price. This matter comes up in Parliament and it is one of our political issues. We have a currant bank, organized to aid the Greek farmer, and other banks help them in handling the crop. At one time the currant bank bought up the poor currants on the market and sold them to local distillers for brandy; this was because it was feared they might injure the reputation of the Greek currant in the markets of the world."
 "From where are the currants shipped?"
 "The most of them are sent to Patras, and thence to the different countries by sea. The export is sometimes as much as 3,000,000 pounds per annum."

A Crop for America.
 Since this conversation I have made some inquiries about the Zante currant, as it is called, and am wondering if it cannot be produced in America. We are now taking about 13,000 tons every year, and this is about one-twelfth of the whole crop. We have all sorts of climates, and some which correspond to that of Corinth. Parts of California and Arizona must be of that nature. I am told that the currants often produce a net of \$40 per acre and that a currant vineyard will sell for \$400 or \$500 per acre. The vines begin to yield in their fourth year and are in their prime at twelve years. They will keep on bearing for fifty years, and vines are shown here which are said to be 100 years old. The vines are planted and cared for as in most grape-growing countries. The currants are ripe in August and are easily dried and packed for shipment. I am told that the inferior

part of the crop now goes to Marseille, where it is used in making the cheap French wines, being mixed with grapes for that purpose.

In addition to the Zante currant Greece produces fine muscatels and sultans, and also grapes, which make excellent wine. The native wines are so cheap that the common man has wine at his meals. Many of the farmers make their own wines after the old style, in which the juice is trodden out by the bare feet of the girls of the family.

Grain Farming.
 I saw but little wheat on my way across Greece, although I am told both wheat and barley are grown. The most of the wheat used is imported from Russia. Some is still raised on the plain of Thessaly, which in the past was the bread basket of the country. This plain is now divided up into estates owned by a very few people, who rent the lands for two-thirds of the crop. The government proposes to buy the larger farms and sell them off to the peasants on long time at low prices.

Another increase in the farming lands of Greece will come from the draining of Lake Kopsalis; this will add about 70,000 acres, and I am told that there is more which may be brought into use. As it is now, less than one-fifth of the country is cultivated and only about one-tenth is used for grazing. The only farms of any size are those in Thessaly and in the Kopsalis basin.

Poor Agriculturists.
 The Greeks are very backward as to their farming methods; they are now using the same tools their ancestors did when old Athens was in the height of its glory. The wheat is cut with the sickle and bound with the hand. The threshing is done with flails, or the grain is trodden out by bullocks. Much of the work is done by women and girls. Oxen are used for plowing, and the plow is a forked stick with a rude share at the end. Fertilizers are almost unknown and no rotation of crops is practiced. The people plant the same grain year after year, until the fields are worn out, and then let them lie fallow until they recuperate. The soil is thin and light, but if irrigated it produces bountifully. One of the great troubles is lack of water.

How the Farmers Live.
 In the summer many of the farmers sleep out of doors and live largely in the open air. The country houses are almost everywhere poor and rather mean in comparison with those of other European countries. They have stone floors and the poorer ones have neither windows nor chimneys. Some of two stories have a stable on the ground floor, and the people live above, going up by a stairway from the outside. There is almost no furniture and a little stone stove or an open fire often forms the cooking arrangements. In the smaller houses the pigs are sometimes taken inside. A little low wall is built across one side of the room and there the people sleep at night.

The Greeks live simply. I did not see a drunken man during my stay in the country, and there cannot be much gluttony in a place where bread, wine and onions make up the average dinner. But little meat is eaten by the farmer, goat's cheese and dried olives taking its place. Olive oil is used for butter and is eaten upon everything. Farm hands are usually fed upon bread and olives, with mutton or goat's flesh upon feast days. One of the great feasts is at Easter. This holds the same place as Thanksgiving with us, a roast lamb taking the place of our Thanksgiving turkey.

The Honey of Hymettus.
 You have all heard of the honey of Hymettus, which was so celebrated by the old Greek poets. That honey is sold throughout Greece, although it is claimed that honey from other places than Hymettus is equally good. All Greek honey has a fine flavor, which is supposed to be due to the thyme which grows everywhere. An American woman who has made a fortune in bee-keeping in the United States and who understands all about flowers as honey producers has just made a tour of Greece. She says there is no land on earth so well fitted for the bee farmer nor any which has as many honey-producing flowers. She found fifty different varieties of blossoms on a tramp of one day and discovered that each contained honey. She thinks Greece might supply much of the honey of Europe if its bees were handled after modern methods. As it is now the hives are mere baskets, plastered with mud, and the bees are smoked out when the honey is taken. Many are killed and the cutting is so rudely done that the honey must be

pressed from the crushed comb and strained for the market.

A Queer Costume.
 I wish I could lift half a dozen of these Greek farmers up by the napes of their necks and drop them down on the main street of an American city. You would not know whether they were men or women until you saw the beards on their faces. They seem to be dressed for the stage and to be posing as ballet dancers. They wear knee breeches and leggings, and above them a dozen or less short white skirts, which are so stiffly starched that they stand out from the waist like those of the maid in the flesh-colored tights who dances about on the bareback horse of the circus. Above the skirts is a vest, covered with embroidery, and a fez cap tops the outfit. At the other end of the man is his shoes; these are of red leather, turned up at the toes like old-fashioned skates, with a fat, red, woolen tassel on the tip of each shoe. Such dresses are always worn upon Sundays and feast days, when the men strut about and talk of the greatness of Greece present and past.

The Greek women have curious costumes which

Nevada Murderers Given Choice of Death

SOCRATES, in 399 B. C., drank the hemlock, and his act has since stood forth as something quite heroic. And there have been other notable examples of self-destruction; but it remained for Nevada to give murderers the choice of being legally killed or killing themselves. The new criminal code of the state contains this section:

Section 431.—The punishment of death shall be inflicted by hanging the defendant by the neck until he is dead, or by shooting him, or by allowing him to voluntarily take a sufficient quantity of hydrocyanic acid to produce death. The judge at the time of pronouncing sentence upon the defendant shall allow the defendant to designate which of the methods of death provided for herein shall be administered by the physician of his sentence, and notice of such designation shall be given to the warden of the state prison. If the defendant shall elect to voluntarily take hydrocyanic acid, then he shall be provided by the physician, by order of the warden and in his presence, with a sufficient quantity of such acid to cause instant death.

This new code of the state of Nevada with its ghastly choice of acid and lead and hempen cord seems a step backward of 2,000 years, says an article in the Chicago Tribune. But for all that it appears to be in line with present day sentiment toward the death penalty. In older times the gallows was a place of public amusement. Men hung on Tyburn trees, dangling in their chains. But hangings have almost ceased to be a public spectacle. There has been a revolution. Many contend that crime is not prevented by hangings, that the public is merely brutalized. States and nations have done away with it. The death scene has been robbed of much of its spectacularism. And with the hydrocyanic acid of the Nevada code, there need be not even the noise of scaffold building; four men together in a little room, a tiny cup, and then—

This code marks the first thought in modern American justice for the feeling of the dying man. Tons of argument have been printed on the death penalty pro and con; but it has all considered only the effect upon the public and the prevention of crime. This is the first time the murderer himself has been allowed a choice, that he may name the death which seems to him least horrible. When sentence is passed in Nevada the murderer shall name the manner of his death. He may be hanged, or he may be shot, or, if he prefer to end the ghastly business by his own hand, he may place on the tip of his tongue a single drop of hydrocyanic acid and, upon the instant, fall dead. He may commit suicide by poison under the law, the officers of the state standing by. The prison doctor, under direction of the warden, shall warn him just what will follow, and shall then hand him the poison cup upon which he shall read, printed, this authority the state confers for his self-destruction:

There is contained herein a sufficient quantity of hydrocyanic acid to cause speedy death. You are authorized to take the same for the purpose of carrying into execution the sentence of death heretofore legally pronounced against you.

If the miserable victim of passion and justice shall fall at the last moment and his hand refuse to carry to his lips the cup, he shall forthwith be led out and hanged from the gallows until he be dead, or be stood up and shot.

German Snuff-Takers Particular
THE snuff-taking habit prevails to a considerable degree in Germany, although it seems to be on the wane in other parts of the world. The explanation of this is said to be due in a measure to the fact that in some parts of Germany, where the land is largely covered with trees, smoking is prohibited and the snuff habit is looked upon as a substitute.

There are several factories in Nuremberg that make a specialty of the so-called Brazil roll tobacco, made ready to be ground up for snuff. In Landshut and Regensburg are half a dozen factories that have a very considerable output of an especially favored brand of snuff known as schmalzler, undoubtedly so named because the main ingredient after tobacco is grease (schmalz).

Landshut is the center of the schmalzler snuff industry. It is still the custom for the old forest dwellers—that is, the Bavarian highlanders—to prepare their own snuff, which in the language of the people is known as schmel or schmal, and almost every old snuff-taker has a special recipe of his own.

Tobacco usually forms not more than half the body of this snuff. The tobacco is the so-called Brazil rolls; these are formed of tobacco leaves, first soaked in a syrup, strongly impregnated with various spices, and then twisted into hard rolls of about one and a

half inches in thickness. These rolls can be bought from every village merchant. The old snuff-taker adds to this tobacco, according to individual taste, beef tallow, a little lime, a small pinch of very fine pulverized glass and such flavoring matter as his experience has found most pleasing.

The ingredients are well mixed in a wooden bowl with a wooden pestle, the rubbing process being continued until the required degree of fineness is reached. Pine needles or other similar ingredients are often added as flavoring. The schmalzler thus finished is usually carried in pouches made from hog's bladder or in wooden boxes. When the old Bavarian mountaineers meet each other the first thing after they have said "Gruess Gott" (God greet thee) is the presentation of the snuff box or pouch. A refusal is always regarded as an unfriendly act.

In the district about Landshut the habit of snuff-taking is almost universal. The children learn it early and the women not infrequently contract the habit. Foresters sent here from districts where the habit is not known are said to acquire it very quickly, and its use and the strength of the habit have received official recognition in the instructions to wardens of prisons and similar institutions in south Bavaria that confirmed snuff-takers must not be suddenly and entirely denied its indulgence. In the forest districts snuff-taking is universal.

has been arranged for or even proposed. Such skirts are homespun linen, heavily embroidered with silk. I bought one in Athens, which had a band of silk thread, worked in curious patterns running a foot deep along the edge of the skirt. The silk alone weighs several pounds.

A Dance at Eleusis.
 The Greek country girls have their national dances. It saw one at Eleusis, within sight of the ruins where were celebrated the mysteries, in the famous temple where Demeter was worshiped and where the art of agriculture had its start. You may remember the story. Pluto, the god of Hades, had carried off the beautiful Persephone, the daughter of goddess Demeter, and Demeter was hunting her. She came to Eleusis disguised as an old woman, and the king there entertained her so well that she gave seed corn to his son and taught him to farm. She finally found Persephone and arranged with Pluto that the latter might stay with her outside Hades for two-thirds of the year, while during the other third she would remain in darkness, like seed corn in the ground. It was on account of this legend that the Greeks held their farming festivities here, and here they have them today.

At this dance the girls were dressed in costumes of silk embroidered with gold. Their heads were covered with veils of fine silk, the ends of which were striped with gold. They wore the long gowns which I have described, and on their breasts were squares of gold coins so strung that they extended from one side of the body to the other. These breastplates were their fortunes, each girl carrying on her person the dowry which she brings to her husband in marriage. The Greeks have no marriages without dowries, and the bride is expected to add her share to the fund which the groom has laid up for starting housekeeping. In some parts of the country I am told that the boys of the family have to wait until the girls are provided with husbands.

Weddings in Greece.
 Weddings are usually held in churches and the priests perform the ceremony. According to the rules of the church, a boy cannot be married until he is 14, and the girl bride must be at least 12. In many places the girls are not married until 15, and in some not until 18. The dowry is fixed before the wedding, and if it has not been paid the bridegroom may demand the cash before the ceremony takes place. Many of the marriages are a matter of business and divorces are not uncommon.

The farmer's daughter is supposed to have a trousseau consisting of at least three costumes. One is for everyday wear, one for Sundays and the other for festivals. In going to the church the wedding party is usually mounted on mules, with a man going in front playing the bagpipes. After him come the bridegroom and his friends and behind him the bride, who must be silent all the way. Following the bride are the mules bearing her dowry. The bridal gowns differ, according to the locality, and also the wedding trousseau. In one province the bride wears a gauze veil of old rose and in some other places the veils are white.

As the married couple leave the church their friends throw candles at them and accompany them to the house of the groom. Here the groom enters and shuts the door, after which the bride is led up. She first smears the closed door with honey and then throws a ripe pomegranate at it. The pomegranate is filled with seeds, and if it breaks and the seeds stick to the honey it is thought to be lucky and her married life will be happy. As she does this her husband opens the door and offers her bread and salt. She dips some bread into the salt and eats it, and then touches some water and oil. After this her husband lifts her inside the house and puts her in a corner, with her face against the wall. Here she is supposed to stay while he and his friends are eating the wedding dinner and as long thereafter as there is a guest in the house. When the last stranger leaves and her new lord gives her permission she may turn around and make herself at home. This is the one time of her life when every Xanthippe is silent.

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