

## HOMES IN ATHENS

As a Rule They Are Clean, but Bare and Comfortless.

### PEOPLE LIVE IN THE CAFES.

When They Do Get Into Their Houses Their Principal Occupation is Looking Out of the Windows—The Marriage Customs of Greece.

Home life in Greece, particularly in Athens, is peculiar. It might almost be said that there is no such thing. In Mr. Duckett Ferriman's book on "Greece and the Greeks" the manners and customs of the picturesque Hellenes, which are little known to the average English reader, are described at length. Mr. Ferriman states that the Greeks do not know anything about the art of making a home.

"One may meet with exquisite cleanliness," he writes, "with beautifully embroidered bed linen scented with rosemary, but never with what we mean by coziness. The Greeks are far less in their houses than we are, and when they are at home they appear to spend most of their time in looking out of the window. They are not given to inviting their friends to their houses. It is not that they are rigidly, for they will gladly entertain you at a restaurant at far greater cost to themselves. But it does not enter into their ideas to ask you home to dinner, even after an acquaintance of many years.

"They do not ask each other, so it can hardly be expected that they should make an exception in the case of foreigners. The cafe is a second home to them. There they meet friends and gossip. That is one reason perhaps why they dislike country life.

"It offers no alternative to the home: there the hearth is the social center, while in town it is the cafe. In Athens those who do not own the house they dwell in seldom remain long in the same abode. Two or three years is quite a long tenure. Many people make a point of moving every year.

"The imposing facades of Athenian houses conceal, for the most part, a bare and comfortless interior, and a well kept garden is rare. A garden is not made in a year, and a person who changes his residence every twelve months does not want to be troubled with much furniture, nor is he particular as to its arrangement, seeing that it will be carted away in a few months.

"Home life has no resources for the Greeks, as it has for us. It affords them little occupation and no amusement. They like to eat and drink in crowds, where there is noise and movement. Their instincts are too gregarious to allow them to appreciate the domestic intimacy which we prize.

"The day chosen for marriage in Greece is usually Sunday, but the day of all days in the year is the Sunday preceding the Christmas feast. It is not fashionable now to be married in church. In Athens the ceremony takes place in the house of the bride's parents. A temporary altar is set up in the middle of the room.

"At the conclusion of the ceremony the priest and the couple join hands and walk three times round the altar, the guests pelting them with comfits. The most important part of the ceremony is the crowning of the bride and bridegroom with wreaths of orange blossom; hence a wedding is popularly called 'the crowning.'

"Love marriages are rare exceptions. The match is made by the parents and relatives rather than by the parties principally concerned. There are certain established usages which, though not legally binding, are not to be contravened with impunity.

"Then it is considered wrong for brothers to marry until their sisters have been wed. Again, girls must marry in order of seniority. It would not be right for a girl to be married while she had an elder sister who remained single. The men of a family are thus naturally anxious to see their sisters settled, and as a dowry is indispensable its provision is often a matter of serious anxiety and the fruit of great self denial on the part of the brothers if the parents are dead.

"There are cases in which brothers have remained unmarried for years and have devoted all their hard earned savings to the dowries of their sisters. Among the poorer classes emigration is resorted to, not infrequently solely with this object, and many a dowry comes to a Greek maiden from across the Atlantic."

**What Was Lacking.**  
The Hobo—Please, mum, I'm a sick man. De doctor gimme dis medicine, but I needs assistance in takin' it. The Lady—Poor fellow! Do you want a spoon and a glass of water? The Hobo—No, mum; I wouldn't trouble yer. But dis medicine has to be took before meals. Have yer got a meal handy?—Cleveland Leader.

**Fame.**  
Fame is easily acquired. All you have to do is to be in the right place at the right time and do the right thing in the right way—and then advertise it properly.—Puck.

**Ennui.**  
Tommy—Pop, what is ennui? Tommy's Pop—Ennui, my son, is a disease that attacks the people who are so lazy that they get tired of resting.—Philadelphia Record.

**Death expecteth thee everywhere;**  
be wise, therefore, and expect death everywhere.—Quarles.

## PAPUAN COURTESY.

Husbands Beat Each of Their Wives With a Different Club.

The marriage customs of the Papuans are somewhat similar to those of many other savage races. The ceremony is largely a matter of purchase. The men marry when they are about eighteen years of age and the girls at fourteen or even earlier.

When a young lake man desires to get married he visits the father of his prospective bride and puts forward his personal belongings as an inducement to the father to consent to the union.

If a man has a gun he is a great personage and can demand anything, but besides their bows and arrows and spears most of the the Papuans have very little. Even agricultural produce is scarce, the only cultivation undertaken being on a very primitive scale.

A little clearing is made by both men and women, and the women then grow bananas and sweet potatoes. The men are always armed, and when the women go to the patch to attend to their crops or gather the produce the men go with them as a protection. The women, however, do the work.

Many families have a bundle of ancient Portuguese cloth centuries old, and when a young man is seeking a bride one of these heirlooms is generally part of the deal. The youth and the girl's father haggle over the marriage until eventually they agree to terms, and then the thing is done. The men are not limited to one wife, and once a girl is married she is subject to her husband in everything and is practically his slave.

"In another part of New Guinea," says a writer in the Wide World magazine, "I remember a distinctly strong confirmation of the custom which places a woman at the entire mercy of her husband. At one house I visited I saw standing outside the doorway three huge stone clubs, each large enough to fell a bullock.

"On making inquiries I found that they talked with the number of wives owing allegiance to the householder. The clubs were used by the man to beat his wives with if they annoyed him. The quaint part of it was that while the women seemed to raise no objection to being flogged unmercifully by their lord and master they would not be beaten with the same weapon as that used on another woman, so the native kept a separate club for each wife."

## DEATH IN THEIR WORK.

Dangers That Beset Those Who Toil In Alkali Factories.

Do you like your work? When you are inclined to be discontented with it think of the alkali workers. They die by inches from the moment they enter the factories. Things are not so bad now as they once were, but they are bad enough still.

In what is known as the "black ash" department in chemical works big open vats of caustic are used. The splashing of this caustic sends drops of the burning fluid flying through the air. A drop falling upon naked flesh causes a bad burn. A drop in the eye will blind it forever if the stuff is not removed within a few seconds.

A black ash worker in a Welsh alkali factory, toiling at the caustic pots, received an invisible globule of this deadly spray in his eye. There was no water at hand with which to wash out the caustic. It seemed that he must surely go blind. But one of his mates seized on the injured man, who was quite frantic with pain, lifted his eyelid with forefinger and thumb and with his tongue licked out the caustic. He burned his tongue badly, but he saved the other poor fellow's sight.

Another of the dangers that beset the alkali worker—and the worst of them all—is poisoning by chlorine acid gas. This gas, which comes off the lime in this green fumes, is known to the men and joked about as "Roger." A full draft of the gas kills a man in an hour.—Pearson's Weekly.

### End of the Trail.

"I lost a pocketbook with a roll of bills in it a few weeks ago," Charlie Gibson told us. "I didn't make a fuss about it and tell the papers, but it was more than I could afford to lose. So I put a detective on it. He asked a lot of questions, looked wise and said he'd report in a day or two. Well, about three days later I found that pocketbook where I had mislaid it. I rejoiced exceedingly, and then I called up the detective agency to confess. The sleuth seemed disgusted.

"'Mighty careless of you,'" he said. 'And I'd just found a darned good clew too!'—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

### Sydney Smith's Criticism.

The story is told in Mr. Barry O'Brien's book on John Bright how on one occasion Sydney Smith, while looking critically at the unfinished portrait of a celebrated nonconformist divine, said to the artist, "Do you not think you could throw into the face a stronger expression of hostility to the established church?"

### Conscience.

There are moments when the pale and modest star, kindled by God in simple hearts, which men call conscience, illumines our path with truer light than the flaming comet of genius on its magnificent course.—Mazzini.

### Pretty Slow.

Senior Partner—Our new office boy seems rather diffident. Junior Partner—What makes you think so? Senior Partner—He has been here three days and he hasn't called me by my first name yet.—New York Press.

To accept good advice is but to increase one's own ability.—Goethe.

## DEADLY MINE GASES.

Their Action Upon the Flame of the Safety Lamp.

The safety lamp, a heavy metal lantern, shaped object with a circular globe of heavy plate glass, is the only light other than electricity that can be safely carried into a gaseous mine. The lamps are lit before they are taken into the mine and, in addition, are securely locked, that no accident or ignorant intention may expose the open flame to the gases of the mine. Over a small sooty yellow flame which gives a light less bright than that of an ordinary candle are two wire gauze cones fitting snugly inside the heavy globe, and it is through these cones that the flame draws the air which supports it. The presence of black damp, or carbon dioxide, can easily be detected, if not by its odor, by the action of the flame, which grows dim and, if the black damp exists in any quantity, is finally extinguished. White damp, the highly explosive gas which is most feared, has, on the other hand, a totally different effect. In the presence of this gas the flame of the safety lamp becomes pointed, and as the gas grows stronger the flame seems to separate from the wick and an almost invisible blue cone forms beneath it. If the miner continues to advance into the white damp he will pass through a line in which there are nine parts of air to one part gas (the explosive mixture), and the lamp will instantly register this explosive condition by a sudden crackling inside the gauze and the extinguishing of the flame. Were it an open lamp the explosion ignited by the flame would sweep throughout the entire workings, carrying death and destruction before it, but by the construction of the safety lamp the explosion confines itself to the limited area within the gauze cones, and unless the lamp is moved suddenly and the flame is dragged through the gauze at the instant that the explosion occurs within the globe it will not extend beyond the gauze.—Atlantic.

## SPHERICITY OF THE EARTH.

"Parallax" Bet Against It, and He Lost His Wager.

The straightest canal in the world is in England and runs from Erith, in Cambridgeshire, to Densers Sluice, twenty-two miles away. It was here that years ago a decisive experiment was conducted to prove the sphericity of the earth. At that time, says "Highways and Byways in Cambridgeshire," a deluded gentleman, who called himself "Parallax," was obsessed with the notion that the globe was a flat disk and used to go lecturing with great vigor on the subject. After these lectures he invited questions, none of which was able to shake his belief. When asked, for example, "Why does the hull of a ship disappear below the horizon while the masts remain visible?" he would answer, "Because the lowest stratum of air is the densest and therefore soonest conceals objects seen through it." Finally he showed his whole hearted belief in his absurd views by laying a heavy wager that no one would disprove them. The stakes were deposited in the hands of judges, and the trial, under agreed conditions, took place upon the New river, as part of the canal is called. Three boats were moored three miles apart, each provided with a cross-tree of equal height. If the earth was spherical the central cross would appear above the other to an observer looking through a telescope leveled from the cross-tree of the boat at either end; if it was flat he would see both the other cross-trees as one. "Parallax" declared that he did see them so, but the judges unanimously decided against him, and the poor man lost his money.

### We're All Actors.

Mme. Alexandra Viards, the Polish tragedienne, once propounded the following:

"It is a strange thing, but ask a man to mend a rip in his coat.

"No; he is not a tailor.

"Ask another to stop the faucet from leaking.

"No; he's not a plumber.

"Or another to do a bit of cabinet work.

"No; he is not a carpenter.

"But ask any one of the three or all of them to enact a little part in a play and each will smile in fatuous confidence and instantly acquiesce.

"But watch him act!"

### Saintliness Unpopular.

That state of mind which let us call the ignominy of the virtuous is not entirely confined to boys of nine years. I have seen grown men and women, being accused of saintliness, over whose faces passed an expression of mortification. They would accept with more complacency the tribute that they were getting to be devils in their old age.—Atlantic.

### Lack of Tact.

"That man is about the most tactless person I have ever known."

"I agree with you. He would have no more sense than to ask a barber to subscribe to a fund for the purpose of providing a monument for the inventor of the safety razor."—Chicago Record-Herald.

### She Knew Her Dad.

Smithers—Do you know any one who has a horse to sell? She—Yes; I suspect old Brown has. Smithers—Why? She—Well, papa sold him one yesterday.—London Punch.

### Not Homemade.

Defending Counsel (to witness in bandages)—Are you married? Witness—No; I was knocked down by a rab last week.

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