

FIG CULTURE.

RAISING THIS POPULAR FRUIT IN THE FAR EAST.

Smyrna the World's Great Fig Market—A California Experiment—A Singular Property of Wild Figs.

Smyrna is the approach and the key to the small district that supplies all Europe, indeed the whole world, with the most popular of dried fruits. From the heart of the town a railway starts, running south to Ephesus and eastward to Sarakeui, and the traffic of the line depends largely on the fruit harvest. In Smyrna itself is the great market for the distribution of the figs to all parts of the world, and in harbor here may be seen a large fleet of steamers lying moored stern on to the quays, and porters, carriers, and humel busy loading them in great wooden cases. It is by this railway that you make your way into the fig district. The tract is comparatively small, when it is remembered that its produce may be found all over the world. It is, in fact, actually small—a valley of some fifty miles skirting the northern bank of the Meander, and with a width at its widest of scarcely more than five miles. Twenty years ago not half this area was under cultivation.

The soil of this tract is very deep, and has the property of retaining moisture, so necessary for the crop. The peculiarity is of special importance, as in cases of drought the fig-tree does not generally show at the time signs of drooping. The leaves retain their strength and color. It is only afterward, when the fruit should have reached maturity, that its stunted size and diminished yield show the effects of the check. Indeed, it is this quality of the soil that makes the valley of the Meander the great centre of the fig-crop. Experiments have been tried by transplanting the trees to raise a crop in the neighboring valleys, but they never have been successful. Some years ago Mr. West discovered in California a tract of soil which he believed to be almost identical. The climate also was similar. Mr. West took back with him some 300 roots. These fig-trees have done well. They have made good growth and yielded fair crops, but a sufficient time has not yet elapsed for the tree to reach such maturity as should test the value of its fruit for preserving. It is only when the trees are from five to seven years old that they begin to bear fruit useful for commercial purposes; but once that age is attained, the tree will yield its annual crop for sixty or seventy, or, with careful pruning, for eighty years. The fruit does not all resemble the ordinary black eating fig. It is a short, pulpy fruit. A large one would weigh quite four ounces. The color is a bright yellow-green, but when you cut into it the flesh is white, with a centre of dark red. The taste of these figs is poor and rather faint, but the pulp exudes an abundance of amber-colored juice; so that they seem with the slightest pressure almost to drip with honey. Their promise to the taste is more than their performance. We know how beautiful a cherry orchard, or a garden wall covered with peach-trees, can look in the early weeks of a mild spring. The fig-tree differs from almost all fruit-trees in this respect, that it seems to bear no flowers. Of course it does flower—if it did not it could bear no fruit—but it flowers invisibly. In fact the flower is concealed in what ultimately becomes the fruit. If you cut open a fig when it has attained little more than a third of its full size the flowers will be seen in full development, and it is at this stage that, if the stamens are perfect, fertilization takes place, and the fruit swells and ripens.

Walking through a fig garden in the Aidin district in the month of June, you will see a strange and almost incomprehensible operation being carried on. The trees are by this time covered with fruit, though the figs are less than half the size to which they subsequently attain. The boughs which bear them are often not more than a few feet from the ground. One of the peasants in the garden takes a basket filled with small green figs strung loosely on pieces of cord. Some of these cords will have only a couple of figs, and some as many as six. The workman flings the cords up into the branches, on the twigs of which they are caught, so that every tree shall be adorned with one of these singular necklaces. It is hard to guess their purpose. These strung figs are wild fruit, bitter in taste, and quite useless as food, but they have this singular property, that they arrest the tendency of the other figs to drop to the ground before they attain maturity. Sometimes the crop of these Capri figs, as they are called, fails, but so useful is the purpose they serve that growers will give as much as a piastre, or four cents, for each fig. This price is so high that as a rule, it will swallow up all the profits expected from the crop. From the end of June and through July the figs

swells and ripens. In its earlier stages the fruit is not very palatable, but on attaining maturity it is sweet and agreeable, juicy and much relished, though somewhat laxative. This is the season for the pilferers. The crop is so valuable that watchers are stationed in the garden, and keep guard day and night. These watchers, called bekkji, with their shelters and surroundings, might be designed for art rather than occupation, so picturesque is their appearance. Their accoutrement reminds one that Asia Minor is still a great hunting-ground for brigands. Quite a museum of knives and pistols is displayed in the belt, and a heavy iron-bound cudgel is probably rather a symbol of office than actually needed for protection. The guardian's arbor is generally located near the drying-ground of the plucked figs. It is there that the greatest value is concentrated.—Harper's Magazine.

The Terrible Tcherkesses.

The Tcherkesses—the term now most used in Europe to designate the different Caucasian tribes—are a wild, bellicose and rapacious nation. The Tcherkess is a warrior in his very soul, sly, cruel and blood-thirsty. The sufferings of an enemy awoken in him only a smile of enjoyment. He tortures his prisoner, kills him and mutilates him terribly. The Tcherkess is not a fanatic, but he is a great fatalist; and now he is in the Russian service he attacks with the same ruthless ardor and blood-thirstiness the Mussulman with whom thirty years ago he used to fight side by side against the Russian. He always seeks to attack his enemy on the sly, but when he does not succeed in surprising him, he dashes upon him and displays prodigious courage. Tcherkess boys are trained from their tenderest years to ride and handle weapons. The Tcherkess horseman will rush at full gallop into a small court-yard, and not turn his horse until he strikes his nose against the wall. In the same way he will gallop toward a precipice, and turn his horse only when his forefeet are over the abyss. All the Tcherkess games and dances are of a warlike nature. One of the most picturesque sights one can imagine is a Tcherkess fete, when these tall, dark-skinned men, handsome and muscular, with their swords and poniards drawn, execute their favorite dance, the "Lesginka," around a fire, which, with its red glare, lights up their strong features and illuminates the surrounding woods and rocks. A favorite game is to leap on horseback over the fire when the flame is at its highest. All the natives of the Caucasus carry arms up to the present day, and the Russian Government finds it prudent not to interfere with this usage. Still it must appear strange to one who travels for the first time in the Caucasus to find himself surrounded by people who are all armed to the teeth. Doubtless the Caucasus is pacified, but traveling there is not completely safe. The Tartars and Kurds in southern Caucasus, and the Jangouches in the northern districts, often indulge in brigandage.

In European warfare the Tcherkesses are very useful on outpost duty and as skirmishers. Even in open battle they can make very useful charges. In the last Turkish campaign it happened once that a trench occupied by the Turks was attacked by a battalion of infantry, but the deadly fire preventing them from reaching the intrenchments, order was given to the Jangouche militia to mount to the attack, and they simply dashed upon the enemy like a hurricane, leaped over the defenses, and massacred the Turks inside.—Harper's Magazine.

The Location Too Many.

Ex-Judge Noah Davis was always noted, while he was on the bench, for his pertinent questions to witnesses. One day a suit was tried before him in which a steamship company was required to show cause why it should not pay the damages to certain goods which had been destroyed by the incontinent actions of truck horses, frightened, as it was claimed, by the horrible and unearthly whistles of the steamship which was about to depart from the pier. One of the witnesses was Michael Sweeney, an Irishman, who was present at the time of the accident.

Stephen F. Nash, the counsel for the plaintiff, asked Mr. Sweeney if his horse were frightened by the whistle of the boat.

"They were not, sor," he said.

"But what kind of an ear have your horses, Mr. Sweeney?" said Mr. Nash.

"They have good ears, sor," he answered.

"Do you hear the whistle yourself?"

"I did, sor."

"But," said Judge Davis, turning to the innocent-looking Irishman, "what kind of a cart or truck was it that you drove, Mike?"

"A hand-cart, sor."

"Ah," said the Judge, turning apologetically to the discomposed Mr. Nash, "we have asked one question too many."

Getham's Youngest Editor.

New York has many editors apparently twelve years old, but only one actually of that age. This little fellow has made a great success of his magazine, the *Sunny Hour Monthly*, just now safely through its first year. The lad is Tello D'Apery, whose father is a Greek and has attained proficiency in forty languages. Tello's magazine is an outcome of the boy's ambition to help other youngsters less fortunate than himself, by tempering the hardships of poverty. The profits of his magazine are used for that purpose now. The December number contains the portrait of the Prince of Montenegro and a fac-simile of an autograph letter by him, a translation of which is also given. Some of his correspondents are Ferdinand de Lesseps, Prince Jerome Napoleon, General Beauregard, Ghazi Osman Pasha, Sir Julien Pauncefote, Dr. J. P. Profas Paul, President of Venezuela; Mr. A. Arel, President of Bolivia; Rafael Nunez, President of the United States of Columbia; Baron Rothschild, the Marquis of Salisbury, General Schofield, M. de Giers, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs; Marshall MacMahon, Marshal Sapounjaki, of the Greek army, and a lot of others of the same kind. The young editor has received two letters from General Boulanger since the General went into exile at Jersey. Sig. Crispi, of Italy, is one of the latest contributors. Last Tuesday Tello received by mail a handsome decoration sent by the President of Bolivia. The *Sunny Hour* has a paid circulation of 2000 copies, but a much greater edition is printed usually in order to call attention to the barefoot work. The current edition is 15,000 copies. Since it was established the net profits have been sufficient to buy and distribute 500 pairs of shoes.—Chicago Herald.

The Hardest Worker in Jamaica.

Everywhere (on the island of Jamaica), where the water is quiet in bays and harbors, one sees the mangrove at its silent, ceaseless work. The parent trunk, growing from a little pink stem, shoots up into a low shrub with wide-spreading branches, clothed perpetually with glossy green leaves. From these branches long slender roots drop into the water beneath, where, in the muddy soil at the bottom, they themselves take root, and in turn become trunks and trees. And everywhere under the snake-like network of roots which rise out of the muddy soil, and in the tangle of branches above, life is pulsing and rustling. Innumerable crabs, with long red legs and black bodies peppered with white spots, scurry and crawl in and out upon the rank mud beneath the arching roots, and droll hermit-crabs draw themselves with a click into their borrowed houses—strange-looking shells with long spines, curious spirals, mottled with blue and gray and yellow. In the days of the Spaniards vessels used to sail up the Rio Cobra to Spanish Town; now it is well nigh choked with the wash of centuries. To enter it you pass around a long spur of sand that stretches far out into the bay, a roosting-place for sleepy pelicans resting from their fishing—"old Joes," as the islanders call them. The channel, barely deep enough for the light canoes of the fishermen, is tortuous and winding, and further up along its course is nearly roofed in by overarched trees, and bordered by impenetrable thickets that now forever shut out the life that used to come and go between the harbor and San Jago de la Vega.—Harper's Magazine.

The dentist of the Queen of Italy is an old Maine boy, Dr. Albert Henry Chamberlain, who wore blue and carried a musket a quarter of a century ago. He is rich as well as famous nowadays.

Are any of the new-fashioned washing compounds as good as the old-fashioned soap? Bobbin's Electric Soap has been sold every day for 24 years, and is now just as good as ever. Ask your grocer for it and take no other.

The fashionable finger nail is said to be longer and more pointed than ever.

Pains and Aches

In various parts of the body, more particularly in the back; shoulders and joints, are the unwelcome indications that rheumatism has gained a foothold, and you are "in for it" for a longer or shorter period. Rheumatism is caused by lactic acid in the blood, and is cured by Hood's Sarsaparilla, which neutralizes the acidity and eradicates every impurity from the blood.

"I suffered from acute rheumatism induced by a severe sprain of a once dislocated ankle joint which caused great swelling and intense pain. One bottle of Hood's Sarsaparilla restored circulation, cleansed the blood and relieved the pain so that an hearty well."—T. H. HUNT, Springfield, Mo.

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The Grip Grips the Rich Folks.

Speaking of the grip, a railroad man says: "The men and women who take the cheaper classes of accommodation are not infected to the same degree as those who travel in the costly cars. I don't mean that the contagion makes any speedier progress in the latter, but that the suggestion that the grip is to some extent a disease monopolized by wealthy folk is borne out by my observations along the line. I came through from Pittsburgh two nights ago. They were twenty-two people in the sleeper, and twenty of them were sufferers. In the morning I went forward into the cars where the passengers who could not afford to pay for berths half dozed away the night. It struck me that it would be interesting to make a comparison, and among seventy-eight travelers I could only determine that nineteen were grip victims."—New York Tribune.

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FRANK J. CHENEY makes oath that he is the senior partner of the firm of F. J. CHENEY & Co., doing business in the City of Toledo, County and State aforesaid, and that said firm will pay the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS for each and every case of Catarrh that cannot be cured by the use of HALL'S CATARRH CURE.
Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence, this 6th day of December, A. D. 1888.
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