

Thanksgiving Day in Washington

by Edward D. Clark

PRESIDENT TAFT'S method of celebration of Thanksgiving Day is in keeping with the traditions of his New England ancestors. The substantial which find Thanksgiving Day place on the president's table are New England products. Rhode Island turkey, Cape Cod cranberries, and Massachusetts pumpkin pie, three absolutely necessary adjuncts of the holiday's keeping, form a part, perhaps the chief part, of the president's feast day's provender.

The president has eaten many Thanksgiving dinners in Ohio, at least two in the Philippines and if memory is not at fault, he ate one in Cuba. He never has missed his turkey, for he is known that persons of New England ancestry, no matter where they live, always take precautions to see to it that when the last Thursday in November comes, turkey, cranberry and pie shall have a place within the larder.

Holiday at the Capital.

Washington's native population does not make as much of Thanksgiving day as it does of Christmas, for Christmas is the great day in the south and a large part of the capital city's population is composed of southern people. It is a general holiday, however, and it is marked in every home by what the children of the family call a "big dinner." The markets of the city are filled with game, and in fact, game in many households which can afford the luxury, takes the place of turkey.

The cook at the White House excels at southern dishes. It is a good many years since a southerner sat in the chief chair of state, but northerners coming to Washington to live always have a first desire to taste the famed cooking of the south. So it is that whether Ohio or New York, or Indiana or any other state north of the line is represented in the White House a goodly share of the dishes



President Taft Likes His Holiday Game of Golf.

prepared for the three daily meals have the flavoring of Virginia, South Carolina, and Louisiana. But on Thanksgiving day everything but food and cookery which have the savory essence of New England in them, is put under the ban and the president and family eat what the Puritan fathers ate in the days which now are only memories.

Thanksgiving day is a good deal of a church-going day in Washington, notwithstanding the fact that the holiday is regarded largely, as it is in fact, a New England institution. The president is a Unitarian, but last Thanksgiving day he attended a great Thanksgiving service in St. Patrick's Catholic church, where there were gathered all the representatives or countries where the Catholic religion prevails and nearly all the representatives of the other countries as well. Episcopalians, Methodists, Catholics, Congregationalists, Unitarians, Lutherans, and all the rest had Thanksgiving day morning service in the capital, and let it be said that while the holiday is in every respect one surcharged with New Englandism the church attendance in this part of the country is larger than it is in many places in the land where Thanksgiving was instituted. The southern and semi-southern people are greater churchgoers than are those of the north.

Soon Learn to Cook Turkey.

Some of the foreign ambassadors and ministers bring their own chef

cooks to Washington with them, and one of the first lessons which the kitchen artist must learn is how to cook turkey in American fashion. A Washington story is that President Arthur once broke a White House rule and dined with a European minister who happened to be an intimate personal friend, on Thanksgiving day. Mr. Arthur told his host that the turkey tasted as if it had been cooked in the kitchen of a New England housewife of unmixed Plymouth de-



Chief Executive Has Eaten Thanksgiving Dinner in the Philippines.

cent. He was told that it was cooked by a man who had come from Austria within three months and that he had never cooked a turkey before in his life. This story is told in Washington as an example of the adaptability of foreigners to America's ways, even to the ways of the kitchen.

There are comparatively few senators and representatives in Washington, although the opening of congress is but a few days in the future. The home instinct is strong at Thanksgiving time and it keeps most of the national legislators away from the capital at this early holiday season. The New England states are represented in the departments of Washington in the ranks of the clerks just as numerous as other states are represented. New Englanders always go home to spend Thanksgiving day, if they have the money, and if father and mother, or either, brothers and sisters are living in the old homestead to prepare the old Thanksgiving day dinner and to welcome the wanderer.

Presidential Game of Golf.

President Taft likes his holiday game of golf, and his Thanksgiving day appetite is whetted by a journey over the links in company with Secretary of State Knox, Brigadier General Clarence R. Edwards, or some other official golfer of renown. From the golf links the president, if he looks far off across the Potomac, can get an occasional glimpse of the redcoated fox-following members of one of the great Potomac hunting clubs. Thanksgiving day in Washington is marked as the day of the opening of the fox-hunting season in Virginia, which lies just over the river.

The old-time Virginians still follow the fox, and the ranks of the natives have been augmented in recent years by northerners who have come south to make their winter homes. Along the Potomac westward and a little northward from Washington a good many "great houses" are in process of erection. They lack the age and distinction of the old-time residences of Virginia and it may be that the native born ones resent somewhat this intrusion of the wealth of the north, wealth accompanied as it is frequently by an ostentation that is nothing short of vulgar. The new rich element, however, which is erecting homes in Virginia, is confining itself largely to the section of the Old Dominion near the capital and there it does not intrude to any considerable extent upon the time-honored reign of the old families who have lived in the state themselves and through their ancestry for hundreds of years.

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