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Christmas in Russia

By ELSIE GUTHRIE and GAYLE PUGH

The finest fir tree available is chosen for the Christmas tree. After bright days are past, the expression of love and good cheer are sent out. The table is piled high with quantities of good things to eat: stuffed poultry, roast pig, leg of mutton, ham cakes, pastries, and fruits. Each guest is invited to sit down and eat no matter how much he may previously have eaten, or at what hour he comes. The same sort of an entertainment is provided at Easter, and during other festival seasons of the year.

The climate of Vladivostok is not, as we may judge, as cold as in some parts of Russia. The lowest temperature in winter is fifteen or sixteen degrees below zero on a Centigrade thermometer or 90 degrees Fahrenheit, which we commonly use. The weather is rather moderate in that there are no sudden changes. During the winter the country side is covered by snow, which usually amounts to about three or four feet of snow.

The country about this city is the richest agricultural part of Siberia. There are great mineral resources, coal, zinc, lead, salt and silver which are well developed industries and known throughout the world. Coal is sent to Japan and China. The oil reserve is also great, but as yet has been left in the raw state. The oil industry is still in its infancy. The forest contains the loveliest of hard woods and is one of the sources for Chinese and Japanese lumber. Before the late war much veneer was shipped to the United States.

They grow all kinds of vegetables and have hundreds of pounds of snow to do or make into jams. This preservation is all for home use as each family stores the supplies of this sort in a basement constructed especially for this purpose. Vegetables under the ground and covered with hay and soil thus using the principle of the root cellar of other countries. Mushrooms, a pro- 

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while for you to learn to throw your shuttle just hard enough with one hand and catch it with the other. You soon learn to find the treadsles with your feet and even though you may have four or six treadsles, you never make a mistake. And so you work, on and on, fascinated, regardless of time, until you are satisfied with your work, then you stop. You are eager to start again.

Coverlets are about the most difficult thing to make. Two or three shuttles are used, one for each color of thread. The weaving must be started all at once to make a seam down the middle, but if the pattern is carefully worked out, the two patterned pieces may be made in different plaids. There is an endless field in handwoven fabrics. A whole house, from the window drapes to the rugs on the floor, could be furnished with handwoven textiles. In many homes one room is furnished with handwoven fabrics, but we need not go as far as that. A pair of lovely towels in the bath room, a dainty linen luncheon set, a coverlet, bright drapes in the living room or quiet rag rugs may be the bright spot in any one room.

Whatever it may be, or wherever it is used, anything handwoven has a sentiment attached which helps to make a house more of a home.

Date Snowballs

Stone ¾ pound of dates and put them through the foodchopper alternately with ¾ cupful of shelled peanuts. Add ¼ teaspoonful of salt and make into balls about the size of butter balls. Roll in confectioner’s sugar.

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one year in the preparation school, and six years in the high school, but this is not the case now. Also, there was no compulsory education. In the face of the fact that Russia has for so long been oppressed, we cannot but admire the steps she has taken in such great advancement.

Modern improvements approximate those of most countries. The city of Vladivostok which was founded in 1861 is quite modern and progressive. The population ranges between 400,000 and 500,000, a great number of these are of Oriental stock. There are approximately 25,000 to 30,000 Chinese and 2000 to 3000 Koreans. These latter people live in segregated districts.

Homes are built for permanency, being frame structures made of heavy timbers. They are carried with the building, beams or planks ranging from 6 to 10 inches in thickness. A sort of stucco is sometimes used on the outside, but the inside walls are never plastered. The average house is of five or six rooms, sometimes there is a second story or attic which is used only for a storeroom. The heating system consists of a built in stove at the junction of four rooms. There is a space in each room so each receives its share of heat. The fuel of coal or hard wood which ever the case may be is replenished every twenty-four hours.

Though the ceilings are painted, wall paper is the usual wall finish since they think paint fills up the pores of the wood so that air cannot circulate through the wood, thus causing a lovely harboring place for insects. The French windows always being lace curtained, have sills a foot wide to provide ample space for the flowers which are found in every home. The rooms are often filled with such plants as oleander, lemon trees, and maples. Hyacinths and roses are the Easter flowers. The “camellia”, a Japanese flower, looks much like the rose, but lacking the characteristic perfume is often substituted. They also have outdoor flowers such as sweet peas and lilacs.

The Russian dress is modern. Only a very few of the peasants wear the garb of the native.

Since we have found that these two countries are so alike it seems that this same Christmas spirit which prevails only at holiday time might be carried over to last throughout the entire year. And, as it was said many years ago, let it now predominate our national and international relationships.

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