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# No Furnaces in New Zealand Homes

By DR. LILLIAN B. STORMS

Home Economics Director of American Bottlers of Carbonated Beverages

"THESE Americans do keep their houses hot," is what my friends from New Zealand say, and I confess I have said it a good many times since I returned the first of October. After living in the anything-but-hot houses in New Zealand for three years, I am not sure but I can sympathize with them on their estimate of our buildings. You cannot be uncomfortably cold for three years and then take to the comforts of our particular type of civilization all at once. They get used to cold bedrooms and bathrooms and only a fireplace in living rooms, where most of the heat goes up the chimney and there is only sufficient to heat the part of you which faces the fire, and of course they think our houses are very unhealthy. Perhaps so, but it is what we are accustomed to and I do not see that we suffer from any more winter colds than they do. They have epidemics of flu every year as we do.

Dunedin, New Zealand, where I was teaching in the University, is about as far south of the equator as Minneapolis is north, both near the 45 degree line, but New Zealand is made up of three islands and the widest place is only 180 miles, so the climate is much milder than on a continent. The islands stretch out over a length of 1,000 miles and are about the same acreage as the states of Wisconsin and Illinois combined. I shall have to admit that in Dunedin the thermometer even in the winter time only went from five to seven degrees below freezing, 25 to 27 degrees F., but try living here in an unheated shed when it is that temperature outdoors. In the North Island, nearer the equator, the climate is much warmer, but I advise tripping down there in the summer time rather than the winter.

Since New Zealand is south of the equator, the sun rises in the east and sets in the west all right, but instead of shining in the south windows it shines in the north ones. So when you rent a room, you choose one on the north side with no trees shading your window, because the sun on the window glass is like a life preserver thrown to a drowning man, or so it was to me. As far as I could tell, for all practical purposes the moon acts the same in the southern hemisphere as it does in the north.

Another difference which is really quite upsetting, is that Christmas comes in the middle of summer and plum pudding is just out of place. The poor children in school learn poetry about roses that bloom in June and the sad truth is that winter is beginning and most of the roses are gone; the month of roses is November. And July and August are the middle

of winter. You wear woolen union suits (or I did, much as I despise them) from about the first of April until October and some people wear light weight wool the year around. For months at a time I have worked at the house or at the University building with a wool union suit, woolen dress and a wool sweater on, day in and day out.

Every house, even the most humble one, has a lovely flower garden. There was only one month, never more than two months, in Dunedin, when there was not something blooming in the public and in many of the private gardens. The spring flowers, fields of daffodils and a number of flowering trees, which start the last of August, are followed by rhododendrons and the roses the last of September and the roses bloom right through the summer and into July. The chrysanthemums come in June.

Down through the length of the South Island is a range of mountains called the Southern Alps. The highest mountain, Mt. Cook, is only 12,450 feet, but the peaks are all covered with snow the year around and are very beautiful. There are government huts open during the summer months and many well worth while walking trips are possible for those who are equipped to do some "roughing it". The accommodations are crude, but the charm of "unspoiled nature" makes up for the absence of comforts. The hotels are not good nor are the railroads, but New Zealand is only eighty years old and has but a small population scattered over considerable territory. Like every place in the world with which I have come in contact, the people think they have the only spot of the earth's surface which is desirable for permanent residence. When you travel to other lands it lends interest to find things different from "Home", even though you may not like what you find. One must remember that much of New Zealand is still pioneer country.

In the "back blocks", away from the larger centers of population, are farms and ranches, especially sheep ranches, where the women, many of them, work under very difficult conditions, with but few comforts or conveniences. And some of them work as did the women under the pioneer conditions in this country, unbelievably hard. On the other hand, there are districts where electricity is available and cheap and every farm home has a fine electric range and other electric equipment. They do not know it, but Home Economics Extension Service would make the lives of the women on the farms of New Zealand a vastly different matter, not only in helping them solve their working problems, but in help-

ing them and through them their families to live fuller and happier lives. I trust the way will be found to place Miss Catherine Landréth, a New Zealand girl who has recently completed a year and a half of training at Ames, in charge of starting home economics extension in New Zealand.

Life among English speaking people in many ways is the same the world over, but there are differences, in the same way that the food, conversation and interests of women differ in cities from those of country districts and as they differ in various sections of our own country. The food in New Zealand is like that in England; the consumption of tea and meat is far higher than ours. They eat less candy than we do, but the per capita consumption of sugar is 150 pounds per year, while ours is 100 pounds. Part of that difference is due to the large amounts of jam and marmalade eaten and to the fact that many men and women in New Zealand have tea seven times a day (sometimes more than one cup at a time) with sugar in it. They do not eat salads, nor ice cream nor vegetables as much as we do. I know women there who insist they can eat and enjoy boiled cabbage every day in the week and when I have been traveling and eating in different places each day I have had boiled cabbage served me seven times a week. They do not like corn; I suppose because they do not have it, and corn seven times a week would be just as hard on them as boiled cabbage was on me.

Another difference I have noticed is in the conversation of women when they congregate. In New Zealand, over the afternoon tea cups, women talk about their homes, of course, but they are apt to talk most about their flowers and their gardening difficulties and triumphs. Here, the other day, a group of women were talking about the milage done on their auto tires.

There are many interesting things about New Zealand which I do not have time to mention. However, one I must not neglect is that there are some very fine people there, good English and Scotch people, who are friends worth having.

## Among Friends

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September. Both are intensely interested in Iowa extension work and many club girls will have the opportunity of meeting them when they visit some of the counties.

Miss Josephine Arnquist, State Girls' Club Leader, was on the program of the New Jersey State Extension Conference January 2 to 5. She is also meeting with the New York State Club Department.