Marion Harland's Page



"Zakouska" Precedes the Regular Meal.

RUSSIA

WING to the distracted state of WING to the distracted state of all ranks of Russian society few peace-loving nomads are inelined to settle even for a season within the Czar's dominions Should cariosity or expediency compel the etep, one should, if possible, pitch the family tent in the capital or in some other city where the United States Consulate and a fair sprinkling of American residents make life moderately comfortable, because measurably

In such a city one can rent a flat or upartment, where the task of keeping warm in winter is less formidable than in huge country houses, more like barracks or barns than human residences.

One's menu, also, requires less thought in a city. In St. Petersburg, especially, supplies are easily obtainable, and one may fall back on French cooking when the national diet becomes too unspeakable for American palates.

In the country, where one is frozen in for months at a time, unless a housekeeper be prudent and packs away in the underground storerooms during the summer enormous supplies of fermented cabbage, beets-roots and leaves-dried or smoked fish, ham and meats in casks, barrels of flour, bushels of carrots, parsnips, turnips, potatoes, kegs of butter and oil, cheese of every description, dried and canned fruits, and tidbits for the "zakouska"-eatables which form the staple diet of most Russians-starvation may ensue.

SERVANTS ARE HOPELESS

The servant question is likely to prove annoying, not from overindulgence, but because the Russian maid, being but a generation removed from serfdom, is hopelessly irresponsible and careless, with little regard for "meum" and "tuum." One may hire them for a pittance, but too often they are dear at any price.

The arrangement of Russian meals does not differ materially from that in other European countries. We have the early breakfast of bread, coffee and tea, and the heavier midday meal between

11 and 2, similar to our luncheon. At this last one has a soup, hot or cold; sour cabbage, mushrooms prepared with sour cream, some sort of cold meat or game, or possibly a creamed fish or vegetable salad, or a chopped-up meat in cutlet, with a sauce of vinegar and sour cream added to the fat in which the meat has been fried. The mixture is then boiled, with a sliced herring and sardine thrown in by way of zest.

Then there may be curd dumplings, a remarkable compound of rennet curds, pastry, sour cream and eggs, baked in a moderate oven and eaten with melted butter or with sour cream poured over them. Or, perhaps, one tastes "Blinis" for the first time, the Russian hot bread, which enjoys as great popularity as our

buckwheat cakes. Usually there will be "kvas," a Russian sour soft drink, to wash down the breakfast, or, perhaps, the flery and

intoxicating "vodka." The dinner hour in Russia varies from 6 o'clock to 8, and the meal itself is the most important function of

The hostess who aims to be truly Russian will begin with "zakouska." This is not the simple little appetizer of caviare on toast we know in America, but an elaborate "spread," usually served in an antechamber; if in the salle a manger, at a side table. In fact, a stranger to the customs of the by butler or footman.

ached the dinner table, so enti is the array of cold dishes, dried fruits, cheeses, wines and liqueurs offered for his selection.

At the zakouska will be found, besides caviare, potted and highly spiced chicken, ham, fish, game and thin slices of aromatic smoked Russian ham, smoked sturgeon or dried

At the dinner proper one has soup and fish, a roast and curiously prepared vegetables, a salad and dessert, for all of which the preliminary appetizers have probably deprived one of

Perhaps the soup will be the national stchi, made of pounds of fermented cabbage, an equal amount of cold boiled mutton, chopped together, and boiled with two quarts of kvas, eight ounces of butter, concentrated soup stock, salt, pepper, a little barley and various herbs.

Then one may have the highly prized roast suckling pig stuffed with black buckwheat, hulled and boiled like oatmeal and browned in the oven before it is used as stuffing. Or there may be delicious half-grown chicken squabs, long known in Russia and now popular in the United States.

For an entree might be served Russian croutes, made of finely shredded smoked or spiced beef, cut into strips about an inch long and a quarter of an inch wide, and soaked for half an hour in a little French dressing. Cover the croutes, or blocks of fried bread, with a slice of hard-boiled egg, seasoned with salt and pepper. Place the strips of beef on the croutes and cover with a sauce made of whipped cream, or, better yet, sour cream, into which grated horseradish, cayenne pepper and a few drops of lemon juice

The famous Russian salad of cold boiled peas, cauliflower, potatoes cut In strips, dice of carrots, turnips and beans comes next in order. Sliced raw tomatoes, chopped pickle and truffles are arranged in distinct layers in a salad bowl or fill a mould lined with jelly. Season each layer with mayonmaise, salt and pepper, pile the salad high in the centre, cover with mayonnaise and garnish with shredded salmon and beets,

olives, capers and anchovies. After zakouska, topped by dinner, it might be thought the Russian would survive until the next day without another meal. Not he! In winter there is always a light supper after the theatre, while in summer there are refreshments at 10 o'clock, such as berries, with cream and cake, followed by tea passed at midnight. The long twilights are conducive to late

DELICIOUS COFFEE AND TEA

Both coffee and tea, by the way, are delicious in Russia, even when they are passed in great trays at the railroad stations. The samovar plays an important part in the social life, and it was from Russia we learned to use lemon instead of cream in our tea. What the initiated palate considers a rather pleasant variation in the tea served at midnight is a spoonful of strawberry jam stirred into each cup.

Russian hospitality is sometimes overpowering. A whole family will meet a guest at the door on her arrival and shower her with attentions during her stay. Frequently at the table the host or hostess will jump up and offer some extra delicacy that has been overlooked

land may find that he has unwittingly This proved rather embarrassing to made a full meal before he has ap- two young American friends visiting the Without a language in common, it was

> The half-fermented cabbage of Russia is one of the food staples. It is dressed in a variety of ways, and is much used in soups. It is prepared by chopping the cabbage, pressing it down hard in casks, and adding a little salt. In a few days it will be fermented sufficiently for the casks to be sealed and stored away for

every table and is considered a delicacy in any form in which it is used. It may be bought in all Russian dairies. Mushrooms, both fresh and dried, are

a national delicacy. A curious combination of fermented cabbage, sour cream and mushrooms is made by stewing dried mushrooms in cold water, pouring the liquid over sour cabbage and boiling for fifteen minutes. Add the chopped mushrooms and salt; stew till thick. Add sour cream, and, lastly, a tablespoonful of flour, browned in butter. Stir thoroughly and cook in a covered dish until as thick as boiled

Samovar and Tea Glasses

THE HOUSEMOTHERS'

EXCHANGE

and pour into a cask, in which the scalded mint has been placed. Cover the cask and put into a warm room over night, when it should be removed to the cellar or other cold place and bottled.

ANOTHER KVAS.

E STILL have unpublished several communications in response to the request of a

country housemother who is unsuccess-

ful in buttermaking, that some experi-

enced dairywoman would give her prac-

tical counsel on this head. One or two

of these letters are too helpful to

be laid on the table. As opportunity

offers in the form of an available corner, I shall please myself and aid the inept buttermaker by inserting them.
One paper has the attractive heading, "Perfect Butter." How many of us know it by sight, taste—and smell?

It is refreshing to see an appeal from an "ignorant" buttermaker. Most country-women are unconsciously woefully ignorant as to the process of making perfect butter. In fact, the stuff sold as "country butter" by our grocers is simply impossible.

Thus runs the preamble of our prac-

tical woman's essay. She goes on to say:

Eternal vigilance is the price of success. All utensils must be clean and sweet, and milk and cream, as well as the finished product of the work, must be protected from all odors, or the butter will be 'nat.' I skim when the milk is barely twenty-four hours old, and keep the cream (which is stirred well after each addition) in a covered stone jar in winter, and in a covered crock in the refrigerator in summer. It is churned as soon as it 'loppers.' If the cream is too cold, I set the jar in a deep pan of hot water, stirring it frequently until the right temperature is reached-say, about 60 degrees Fahrenheit. I never pour hot water into the cream. It makes the cream oily and spoils the buttermilk.

Scald the churn and rinse with cold water. Pour in the cream and churn. The butter should "come" in twenty-five minutes. Have bowl and paddle ready; take up the butter and wash with the paddle in severel waters, or until the water is no longer milky. Butter will not be well flavored unless all the butternilk is washed out. Then work in salt and make into rolls, or pack in jars with tops. The hands should not touch the butter at any stage of the process.

sponse to the request of a

Four pounds barley meal. Two pounds honey.

stir well. Place it on the back of a stove, where it should simmer but not boil for twelve hours. Strain it and let it stand five or six days to ferment slightly. Skim off the foam, strain again and bottle. This drink is non-alcoholic and refreshing.

The honey gives it a flavor not unlike that of the old English drink, metheglin.

Marine Horland

water; then scald thoroughly with really boiling water and baking soda, and leave in the sun all day.

The buttermaker who follows these directions will have no desire to use "clover estence," as the flavoring provided by nature will be retained. The buttermilk will be delicious, especially when taken at dinner as an accompaniment to corn bread.

Apropos of churns. I saw one on a suburtanite's back porch the other day which was mounted on rockers like a cradle. I suppose one might tie a string to it and work it as we used to rock our bables in former days.

ormer days.

Having traveled the same hard road as Ignorant. I hereby extend to her my sin-

A helpful, heartsome letter! Sym-tathy is never more efficient than when accompanied by the assurance, "I have

known for myself what you are now suffering." This is one of the sweetest

uses of adversity. A lively girl, upon be-

ing asked to define in a few words her

ting exactly what I want at exactly the

right time. For example, being able to

lay my hand on a blotter every time I

want it." She was not so far wrong as

might seem. It is misery, for the mo-

ment, or the hour, when mayonnaise curdles or the bread does not rise or the

curdles or the bread does not rise or the butter is a rank failure. It follows, logically, that happiness is bound up in the timely word which enables the novice to shun disaster in one, or in every one, of these cases. I wish the successful housemother would bethink herself oftener of this truth.

Wants Recipe for White

Borax Soap Will not you print for my benefit a recipe for making a white borax soap? A friend told me how to make it, but she is now in England, and I cannot recall the formula.

formula.

I have a quantity of grease that got rancid while I was absent from home, and I thought I might utilize it in this way.

Let me say here that we have some old Outlooks—1904-1905—in perfect order. Do you know of any one who would care

ideal of happiness, answered:

cerest sympathy.
A LOUISVILLE (Kentucky) SISTER.

REAL RUSSIAN TOFFEE

A Russian toffee beloved by the children is made with a pound of loafsugar, a half-pound of butter and a half pint of cream. Stir all three over the fire till the mixture draws away from the sides of the pan. Flavor with two tablespoonfuls of currant jelly, pour into buttered pans, and when cool cut

"Kvas," for which a recipe is given herewith, is a refreshing and healthful drink, and is also used in souring soups

tion in our hot breads. The moulds can be bought at Russian delicatessen shops in this country.

Russian Recipes.

BLINIS (NATIONAL HOT BREAD). One pound flour. Four eggs. One and a half glasses milk (luke-

One and a half glasses milk (lukewarm).

Half-pound rice flour.

Two ounces German yeast (or one yeast cake).

Dilute the yeast with a large glass of warm milk. Pour the flour into a bowl, make a hollow in the centre and pour in yeast. Stir in the flour gradually to a light, soft paste, and let it rise three hours. Beat the yolks of four eggs and mix with one-half glass of tepid milk. Knead into the risen paste one-half pound of rice flour; add the eggs and milk, and, when light and smooth, a glass of whipped cream and the well-beaten whites. Let the paste rise in one and one-half hours.

Ten minutes before serving, warm a dozen small blimis moulds (shaped like tartlet moulds, but larger and higher). Grease with melted butter and put into each a tablespoonful of paste. Slip a spatula under the moulds and put into a hot oven. Turn, moisten with a paste-brush dipped in melted butter, and three to five minutes later serve hot with a sauceboat of melted butter.

KVAS (A SOFT DRINK).

impossible to explain why the guests could not go on drinking indefinitely a heady wine to which they were unaccustomed. The host, thinking they disliked the brand, made an excursion to the cellar several times during the course of the dinner to bring out choice vintages in honor of his visitors, to the embarrassment of all concerned, as the guests dared not touch them.

Sour cream is also to be found on

"Blinis" would make a pleasing varia-

Four quarts of malt.

Fight pends rye flour
One and one-quarter pounds wheat flour.
Seven gailons cold water.
One and one-quarter quarts warm water.
Three-quarters gill of yeast.
Three ounces mint (scalded).
Mix the rye, malt and three-quarters of a pound of the wheat flour with boiling water to a dough and set it in a moderate oven for a number of hours to sour. Take out the dough, place is a large crock or tub and pour over the cold water, mixing till there are no lumps. Let it settle and pour off.



tar, bring only partial and temporary alleviation. Kindly tell me of some way in which I could rid myself of this norrible torture.

H. M. (Camden, N. J.). I hope you believe that had I known of anything which promised even an hour's mitigation of the "torture" I should have written to you by return snould have written to you by feturn mail. Yes, and put a special-delivery stamp upon the letter! I beg, now, that if any reader can speak of a "certain cure," he or she will communicate it to me, accompanied by a stamp for forwarding it to the sufferer. Were I in your place I should at once consult the warding it to the sufferer. Were I have your place, I should at once consult the best specialist in such maladies that I could find in Philadelphia or in New York. It seems horrible that one should endure what you describe for ten weeks

Fried Johnny Cakes

enough for them to take the trouble to call for them? O. W. H. (Edgewood, R. I.). or them? O. W. H. (Edgewood, R. I.).

I have no recipe for white soap that contains borax. But I pass on the request to those who have. You will hear from them through the Exchange in good season. Be patient! I pass along, also, your generous offer of one of the best magazines in the country. I hold your address.

Russian Gentlemen Pay their Respects at the Table

Asks Cure for Frostbites

-much less, for that number of years.

Will you please give me a recipe for fried ohnny cakes—one that requires no egg?

M. J. F. (Buffalo, N. Y.). Johnny cake never requires an egg. Wet a quart of Indian meal with a cup of sweet milk and the same of buttermilk. Beat into this dough a table-

dissolved in a little boiling water. Sth long and hard. The dough should be stiff enough to roll into a sheet less than half an inch thick. squares or rounds; flour these well; let them stand in a cold place for fifteen minutes to stiffen, and fry in deep, beiling fat, as you would crullers.

Oh, Do You Knowsalt and pepper and a little chopped parsley. Have ready two tablespoonfuls of butter that have been rubbed into a tablespoonful of flour. Stir into the boiling soup and cook three minutes to thicken it. If too thick, add hot milk.

of hour. Str mo thicken it. If too thick, add hot milk.

In serving the soup, send around a dish of Parmesan cheete to be sprinkled on the surface of each plateful.

Bat and be satisfied!

That you may clean any carpet on the floor by wiping it off with a sort, clean cloth dipped in tepid water, to which you have added a little household ammonia in the proportion of a tablespoonful to a quart of water? Change water and cloth at every yard. You will see the necessity of this precaution when you observe how grimy the water becomes as you go on. Prepare a large tubful and dip out a small quantity in a bowl as you need it, throwing it away as it gets dirty.

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY.

Who always brings his welcome with

Who always brings his welcome with him. For that he is of the stronger sex we are assured over his own hand and seal. Likewise—and this is more and the being the best heart as healest. some "sweet gri-graduate" who is not ashamed to declare that she knows nothing—"upon my word, absolutely nothing! of domestic affairs, and I have no bent for kitchen work!"

A TALK ON THE SERVANT PROBLEM

CLIP the following paragraph from a popular daily:

"A correspondent suggests that mistresses would have less trouble with domestics if they showed more consilation for the hirelings' comfort.

"Why not," she asks, "add to the enterimment of the maid by a pretty little sitration, with something to amuse her agreem, with something to amuse her

ting room, with something to amuse her there always, such as books, magazines and

tainment of the maid by a pretty little sitting room, with something to amuse her there always, such as books, magazines and the daily papers?" Lady of the Loving Letters," as one of our masculine correspondents calls you, what do you think of such stuff? I believe in treating my maids as human beings. Mine have comfortable rooms, good beds and other furniture, and their parents eat. When they are sick, I have them tended by my own physician, and I look after them myself as I would any member of my family proper. When they get well, I see that they are not overwrought until they are strong again. I am reasonable in my demands upon them at all times. I never scold, considering it illbred and unchristian.

This is not self-flattery, but simple truth. But I do not allow my maids (who are better ledged, better fed and in all respects a thousandfold more comfortiole than they ever dreamed of being in their own homes and country) a private sitting room, fitted up as a library. Nor do I believe it would be for their best good if I cid it. They are not my equals, socially and intellectually, and I should do them a positive wrong were I to put such an idea into their heads. They are as respectable in their position as I am in mine—while they do their duty in that station—and keep in it.

I am not an aristocrat, but a woman who taught for a living until ther marriage, and whose husband is well-off, but not rich. But, thewing the subject dispassionately, I consider advice such as I quote hermitul to mistress as to meid. What do you say? Have you ever known of a family in which the experiment was made? If so, with what result? And will you call for a coraparison of experiences on the part of other housemothers?

Am I inhuman, or is the so-called philanthropist who recommends the private sitting room and library unpractical? If the maids have a musical bias, why not have e plano, a guitar and mandolin for their delectation?

Before calling together the experience meeting of which our very clever mem-

Before calling together the experience

meeting of which our very clever member speaks I will answer briefly two questions she put to myself. I have "known a family" in which an experiment similar to that proposed by the philanthropist was made. Many years ago I fitted up a room adjoining the kitchen in a city house as a parlor for the use of my three maids. It was for the use of my three maids. It was carpeted; the furniture was new and pretty; the windows were curtained; a drop light hung above a centre table, on which lay books and magazines; the place was warm, light and more cheerful than the kitchen, which had a northern exposure. The gift of "the pairlor" was received—not gratefully, but graciously—and I was assured that it would be a "great incurridgemint" to the laciously—and I was assured that it would be a "great incurridgemint" to the la-borers in my home tract. One of the maids was engaged to be married to a decent young fellow, whom I allowed to visit her in the evenings. I supposed, naturally, that they would take advan-tage of the room for tete-a-tete talks. In fact, I found that they had actually sat together there on two stormy nights. sat together there on two stormy nights. At the end of a month I learned that the maids preferred to gather in the old familiar kitchen when it was "red

up" and the day's work done. When Ellen had her "Jo" the others sat in the same place and took a hand in the talk or went off to walk. All shunned the "pairlor" by common consent. When I inquired into the reason, Ellen, then in her seventh year of service-rejoined, hesitatingly: "It's all very nice in that room, ma'am, but we girls feel sort of lonesome-like in there, and the kitchen seems more natural, somethe kitchen seems more natural, some of our acquaintances as has anything of the kind, and some of them do laugh at us about it. Maggie and me was sayine last night it was a wonder you didn't make a storeroom of it, bein' more convenient to the kitchen nor the celar."

The walls of the despised "pairlor" were painted, and a pretty frescoed frieze ran up to the ceiling. At the end of the second month I had the carpet taken up, the curtains taken down, the furniture stored in the attic and the books sent to keep it company. Maggie

forth yet more strenuous endeavors to forth yet more strenuous endeavors to make my maids as comfortable '(according to my standards) as myself. To this end I had a veranda, overlooking lake and mountain, built under the kitchen windows. It is heavily draped with honeysuckle and furnished with rocking chairs—as cozy and inviting a retreat as a weary woman could desire on a summer evening or in the August poontide when vegetables and fruits are ntide when vegetables and fruits are to be pared. Perhaps the bower is octo be pared. Pernaps the bower is oc-cupled, on an average, once a month during the warm weather. For the rest of the time the maids and "followers" prefer kitchen and laundry.

KITCHEN "SEEMS NATURAL"

And why not? The kitchen "seems more natural somehow." The niche in which I would set them does not become the maids, nor do they become it. As the learned archaeologist, Dr. Mernow our Consul at Jerusalem, says

of the restoration of the "ancient people" to the Fatherland: "In a word, the Jews are not ready for Palestine, nor is Palestine ready for the Jews." Something like this may account for what puzzled me long and sorely. Yet I do my maids but partial justice in saying that they are, as a rule, refined beyond the rank and file of their class. They are exemplary in the discharge of their respective duties, and have a habit of staying with me until they marry. If they do not take readily to "pairlor" and leafy veranda, do not I consult their welfare in allowing them to be happy in their own way?

"Why not?" I repeat. Carlyle was never so nearly content as when his better-born wife let him spend the evening with his pipe in the basement kitchen while she sat in the drawing-room above stairs. kitchen white sales.

room above stairs.

Now for a consensus of opinion on the matter that has taken up so much the matter that has taken up so much the sales and the sales are sales as the sales are sales are sales are sales as the sales are sales are

of our space today. Will housemothers relate their several experiences, and the convictions based thereupon? Tell the story briefly and clearly.