

EASTERTIDE IN RUSSIA.

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THE great Eastern Church, or Russo-Greek Church, called by its adherents the "Orthodox Church," is the branch of Christendom which spiritually dominates the whole of Russia, Roumania, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Servia and Greece. It thus commands the allegiance of about 130,000,000 people. Multitudes of these are passionately attached to their creed and their church. Its cere-

monial is so exceedingly elaborate, and is so much more imposing than even that of the Roman Catholic system, that it is especially calculated to attract the admiration of the great masses of ignorant and simple peasants who form the overwhelming majority of the Slav race.

It is at the New Year and at Easter that the services in the Greek Church sanctuaries are celebrated with the greatest magnificence. Eastertide is the festival of culminating splendour. Indeed, throughout the world there is no religious event which can compare for mingled brilliance and pathos with the Russian Easter. Of course it takes place twelve days later than our Easter, because in Russia the almanack is still regulated by the "Old Style" calendar.

The grandest Easter observances of all are those arranged at the noble "Izasky Sobor," or St. Isaac's Cathedral, in St. Petersburg. This edifice is dedicated to the Russian patriarch Isaac, not to the Biblical Isaac. It is a glorious building. The great dome is the most conspicuous object in the city by the River Neva. It is covered with gold leaf, and thus flashes with dazzling lustre in the bright sunshine which makes the climate of Russia so exhilarating. It is under this great cupola that the most gorgeous ceremonies of the Easter services are conducted by a whole troop of the clergy, all clad in those splendid vestments which are never missing in any of the richer Greek churches.

The Cathedral is illumined entirely by candles. Of these there are thousands in the building, of all sizes, from the little tapers carried in the hands of crowds of ardent worshippers, to the stupendous bougies twelve feet high, and of proportionate massiveness, which stand in clusters in the huge candelabra of solid silver in various places near the altars and the iconastasis, or screen holding the ikons (sacred pictures).

The effect of the vast number of candles is unspeakably weird. The grand lofty walls, the curves and spandrels of the roof, the solemn shadows that lurk in the sublime recesses of the mighty dome, all combine to produce an effect of mingled beauty and unearthliness which must solemnise even the most frivolous soul. Russia is the land of candles. The only lights used even in the Pullman cars on the long railways are candles in lanterns. The Russian Church derives an immense annual revenue from the sale of sacred tapers at the doors of the sanctuaries. Millions are thus sold daily. Every devout worshipper purchases one and takes or passes it on to the acolyte, who stands at the candelabra and lights these tapers by the handful, speedily extinguishing them and substituting for them the next lot passed up.

The whole assembly, which literally crams the vast area in a standing mass of all classes, is hushed to absolute silence as the wonderful musical service commences. There is no music in the world exactly like that heard throughout the Russian churches. Most of it is in the minor mode, as Slavonic music usually is. The plaintive mood of the Slav soul is evidenced alike in the secular and

the sacred music of the land. The voices are only those of men and boys. Women are not allowed in the Greek Church choirs. No organs or instruments are permitted. But the singing is superb; and as the chants, very much like the old Gregorian strains of our early churches, send the reverberations through the great space, a thrill of ecstasy seizes the hearts of the congregation.

Presently the vast chandelier is slowly lifted. It contains many hundreds of flickering lights, and as it slowly rises in the great gloomy expanse above, it looks like some climbing constellation in the vault of heaven. But the crowning glory of the illumination is the kindling in the very centre of the space beneath the dome of an enormous cross. This fiery symbol gives the signal for a chorus of murmured ejaculations from all the host of worshippers. Hundreds prostrate themselves at full length, if it is possible to find room to do so, or at any rate on their knees, frantically crossing themselves in the Eastern style, and saying over and over again, "*Hospod pomecloi!*" (Lord, have mercy).

All through the service the priests, all differently arrayed in resplendent robes, are passing to and fro before the holy "ikons," those strange pictures, half painted and half of metal, which are the chief objects of reverence. Constantly the thurifers send forth volumes of incense fumes, the fragrant clouds ascending to surround the blazing cross like vapours creeping round the stars.

All through Russia the populace is excited beyond description by the advent of the Easter season. The Russians are the most sociable and the most kindly people on earth. They have a marvellous way of displaying their genial temperament in connection with their religious observances. At Easter all social distinctions literally disappear. Everybody is supposed to kiss everybody with the most gushing effusiveness at the moment when "Christ is risen." In many churches, especially throughout all rural districts, a long service is held on Easter Eve, which extends to midnight, and then immediately the signal is given that the Resurrection is accomplished. Out at once throngs the congregation into the open air, and the general promiscuous salutation begins. Masters and mistresses kiss not only each other, but peasants and their superiors freely exchange the pious osculations. There is no restraint, and the act is one of real religious fervour, intended to express the most charitable and loving assurances of forgiveness, friendship, and good-will, all in the name of the risen Christ and for His sake.

On the morning of Easter Sunday, notwithstanding all the effusiveness of a few hours before, on Easter Eve, the whole scene is enacted again in the name of love and kindness. Those who did not exchange with each other the holy kiss take the opportunity now as they meet. With fervent embrace, people of all ages and ranks greet one another, exclaiming, "*Christos voskress!*" (Christ is risen!) "*Yeesteeno Christos voskress!*" (Indeed Christ is risen!)

Then, as the day wears on, comes out the display of the weaker side of the Slav character. The whole population, with few exceptions, will take to feasting, and by the end of Easter Sunday the great majority will be found to have lapsed into various stages of intoxication. Fortunately the Russian is good-tempered in his cups, and the women are not in general given to inebriety as are the men. But the spectacle in a Russian village on the afternoon and evening of Easter Sunday is a very singular one to a visitor. An English tourist arrived one Easter Sunday rather late in the afternoon in a *derevnya* (village). Sitting down outside the village *trakteer* (drink-shop), he presently asked a peasant sitting near him, "Why are all these people intoxicated on Sunday?" The simple rustic looked at him with unfeigned astonishment for a moment, and then said, "Why, *barin* (sir), do you not know that Christ is risen?"

As might be expected, Easter is a favourite period for marriages and christenings in Russia. The ceremonies connected with all such occasions are very peculiar. In this article I have space only to allude to the baptisms of the babies. The strange thing is, to a western mind, that the infants who are baptised are brought immediately to the Lord's Supper. The baptismal ceremonies are most elaborate, and so are those connected with the Communion which follows at once. The baby is dipped three times, once in the name of each of the Persons of the Divine Trinity. Often on an Easter Sunday a dozen infants are brought to church for this ordinance, and then at the

Communion these little subjects are presented *at the altar*, where the priest with a golden spoon puts into the child's mouth a sop of the sacred bread and wine mixed together. The adults are obliged by law to partake of the Communion at least once a year. Those who fail to do this incur public displeasure and are not eligible for any office. They expose themselves to a sort of ban. Easter and New Year are fashionable times for crowds to make up for their delinquencies by flocking to Communion. But the newly-baptised babes must be brought to this feast every Sunday for a year. That is essential, and it is generally practised.



HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

SEVILLE oranges come in in the month of February, but I never recommend housewives to make their marmalade till March or April, as the later consignments of oranges are often both cheaper, and I have found from experience they are sweeter and more juicy.

But before commencing to make the marmalade I should like to give you a few hints about your preserving-pan. Be most careful to see that it is scrupulously clean. Preserving-pans are often made of copper, and if they are not quite clean a small deposit left in any interstice quickly turns to verdigris, and this is often the cause of much trouble from poisoning.

This is the best way of cleaning your preserving-pan. Half fill the preserving-pan with cold water, and add to the water a small piece of washing soda. Allow the water to boil quickly for about twenty minutes. This softens any grease or sugar there may be on the sides of the pan and makes it easier to clean. Empty the water away. Take a used lemon skin—this reminds me to tell you never to throw away lemon skins—dip it in a little fine sand and well scour the preserving-pan. Rinse the pan thoroughly to free it from any sand, then dry it and polish it with a clean chamois leather.

Now get out your pots and bottles from the store-room. Wash them clean, and put them to dry either in a cool oven or on the plate-rack, but be sure they are absolutely dry before using them, otherwise your marmalade will become mouldy.

Here is a recipe for orange marmalade which I have tried and found excellent.

ORANGE MARMALADE NO. 1.

Eighteen Seville oranges, nine quarts of cold water, best preserving sugar.

Method.—Cut the oranges into quarters, scoop out the inside from the peel, removing the pips, cut the peel into thin strips as finely as possible; place it all in a large basin, and pour the cold water over it. Cover the basin with a clean cloth, and allow the whole to soak for forty-eight hours. At the end of this time place the mixture in the preserving-pan. Boil the contents for two hours, or until the peel is quite tender. Then allow it to get cold. When it is quite cold weigh it, and to every pound of fruit allow one pound of sugar. Put the sugar and pulp again

into the preserving-pan and boil the whole for one hour. If liked, add the juice and pulp of one lemon to the pulp, while soaking, in the proportion of one lemon to eighteen oranges.

This is another recipe for orange marmalade which is very good and does not take so long to make.

ORANGE MARMALADE NO. 2.

Equal quantities of Seville and China oranges, best crushed lump sugar.

Method.—Wash the oranges and dry them, cut the peel lengthways in four, remove the peel in quarters, place the peel in a saucepan with sufficient cold water to cover it, and boil it slowly till the peel is quite tender. Divide the oranges into their natural sections, and with a teaspoon remove all the pulp from the skin. Place the pulp in a basin, put the pips and skin (not peel) into a saucepan with sufficient cold water to cover them, and boil the whole for half an hour. Now take the cooked peel, and scrape away the pith from it, shred the peel very finely, strain off the liquid from the pips and skin, and add it to the pulp in the basin. Allow for every pound of pulp, peel, etc., all weighed together one pound of best crushed lump sugar. Boil all together for half an hour, or until the marmalade will set. Put it into the previously dried pots. Next day cover it down and store in a dry place.

I was given the following recipe by a very old friend who was a firm believer in "kitchen medicine." She assured me that it was a capital way of taking a mild tonic, and I can certify that it is a very pleasant way.

SEVILLE ORANGE JELLY (A mild and pleasant tonic).

To every pound of Seville oranges allow three pints of cold water. Wash the oranges and dry them, cut them into small pieces, peel and all, remove the pips, place the cut-up oranges in a preserving-pan, and add the cold water to them. Allow the whole to boil slowly for six hours, or more, till it is reduced to one-third the quantity. At the end of that time run it through a jelly-bag, and to every pint of juice allow one pound of best loaf sugar. Place the juice and sugar in a preserving-pan, and boil the whole very slowly for twenty minutes, or until a small quantity will jelly if put on a cold plate. Keep the jelly well skimmed while it is boiling. Put it into small jelly-pots, cover them down the next day, and store in a dry cool place.