

FOREIGN FESTIVAL CUSTOMS & DISHES

Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving

by

Marian Schibsbj & Hanny Cohrsen

040180A
1204900

F O R E I G N F E S T I V A L C U S T O M S

Christmas in America - A history
Old World Christmas and some
New Years Customs
Foreign Easter Customs
Thanksgiving in Many Lands
Foreign Christmas Dishes
Other Foreign Holiday Dishes

Revised Edition
1974

by

Marian Schibsky & Hanny Cohrsen

American Council for Nationalities Service
20 West 40th Street
New York, New York 10018

NS was renamed the "Immigration and Refugee Services of America"
in 1994. It is now located at 1717 Massachusetts Ave. NW #701
Washington D.C. 20036. The International Institute of St. Louis
is a member of IRSA. * * * * *

Price: Four Dollars

FOREWORD

In 1820, when the population of the United States was less than ten million people, it began keeping records of the number of immigrants coming to this country. In the more than one hundred and fifty years since then, over 46,000,000 immigrants have entered the United States. They, as well as the colonists and settlers who preceded them have come not only from all the countries of Europe, but from all parts of the world. They brought with them a rich heritage of custom and tradition relating to the ways in which such festivals as Christmas, New Year, Easter and Thanksgiving are celebrated in other lands. Many of these customs and traditions are still observed in the United States and enrich our heritage.

The following account of these "old world" customs and traditions is based largely on the personal recollections and experience of present and past staff members of the American Council for Nationalities Service.

CHRISTMAS IN AMERICA -- A HISTORY

Christmas has had its own history in America. It is a history composed by generations of people from across the seas - from many periods in time, many countries, and many cultures. And many older Americans today, who recall Christmas of years gone by, regret the passing of the home-made toys, the weeks of baking traditional cookies and cakes, and the unhurried, calmer and less costly preparations for the holidays.

In the colonial period - say from 1620 to 1776, the year we declared our independence - the festival of Christmas was celebrated in varying manner. In the bleak settlements of New England, the Pilgrim fathers strictly forbade any celebration of Christmas. They had come to these shores as refugees from religious persecution in England; and they held to the conviction that their Puritan faith - stern and austere as it was - could not tolerate the feasts and merrymaking that had marked the Christmas season in the old country. This attitude persisted in New England until the early nineteenth century.

But a different atmosphere prevailed among their neighbors to the south, the Dutch settlers in what is now New York. Here the appointed day for the celebration of the birth of Christ, and Christmas eve as well, meant for the children a visitation from Sinterklaus, the genial and generous Saint Nicholas who was to become known as Santa Claus, and who filled their wooden shoes with gifts and sweets while they slept. And for the adults it meant church services and prayers, visits and good wishes from friends and relatives, and a feast that reminded them of the homes they had left in Holland.

All down the Atlantic coast, the observances of Christmas reflected the national origins and religions of the colonists, from the Swedes in New Jersey, the Quakers in Pennsylvania, the Roman Catholics in Maryland, to the Episcopalians of British stock in Virginia and settlements farther south. In some of the southern states, Christmas was and still is celebrated with fireworks, a custom which was introduced by French settlers in Louisiana, and Italians and Spaniards in Florida.

In colonial Virginia, Christmas was a twelve-day celebration. Following the weeks of bustling preparation of meats, fowl and pastries the gathering of greens in the woods and the selection and cutting of the great Yule log for the open hearth, the holiday began on Christmas eve. Then a great supper was spread for relatives and friends, many of whom had travelled hither for days on horseback or by horsedrawn coach.

During the late colonial years, Christmas customs were enriched and harmonized through the arrival of immigrants from the Old World, as they were also to change and blend during a century and a half of the republic. In 1741, a colony of Germans, settling in eastern Pennsylvania, founded a town on Christmas eve. They called it Bethlehem, in grateful memory of the birthplace of Jesus. And they celebrated the birth in the manger by reconstructing the ancient scene as described in the New Testament.

Thus these settlers from Germany introduced to other colonists a custom originally begun in Italy - that of setting up in miniature the creche or crib, with the holy family, the shepherds, the Magi bearing gifts from Persia for the newborn child, and the farm animals of Biblical times.

The Christmas tree itself, symbolic of everlasting light, did not make its appearance in this country until the middle of the last century. It, too, was a gift of German immigrants, whose American neighbors of many cultures adopted it and made it the focal point of Christmas festivities. Early in the present century the custom of setting up a community Christmas tree in public squares began to spread.

It was the Irish immigrants, who began to come to America in large numbers in the nineteenth century, who brought with them the custom of putting a lighted candle in the window at Christmas time. They had used such candles to light the way of the priest who had come to pray with them on Christmas eve in Ireland.

The singing of carols during the Christmas season was publicly revived - it was an old English institution - shortly after the turn of the century in Boston, that same city where for many years any celebration of Christmas had been outlawed. The Christmas carols of Europe, some of them centuries old, arrived with the people who came here to settle. From Austria came "Silent Night". England sent "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen..." France gave America the beautiful "Cantique de Noel" ("O Holy Night"). And from no one country but rather as the gift of Europe to the New World we have "Adeste Fidelis" ("O Come, All Ye Faithful"), a carol which has been translated into more than a hundred languages and dialects.

Still other carols are Hungarian, Polish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Scandinavian - and in fact they are sung in almost all the native languages of the people that make up America.

Old World Christmas Customs

Christmas is a season especially rich in meaning and in memories to the foreign born people in the United States. In their own countries it was surrounded by a wealth of traditions and was celebrated with colorful ceremonies. Most of the Christmas processions and pageants which made villages festive and united them, for the time being, into one large family have had to be abandoned as not suited to American city life, but in their homes and in their churches the foreign born reproduce many of the old world customs and rites and endeavor to bring to their American children a realization of the beauty and spiritual of their Christmas heritage. Our American Christmas festival became more colorful and beautiful as gradually foreign and traditions were woven into its fabric. As President Roosevelt pointed out, we in the United States are amazingly rich in elements from which to weave a culture. We have the best of man's past on which to draw, brought to us by our native folk and folk from all parts of the world. In binding these elements into a national fabric of beauty and strength let us keep the original fibres so intact that the fineness of each will show in the original handiwork.

Foreign Festival Customs in:

U.S.	Great Britain	Romania
Albania	Greece	Russia (Olden times)
Armenia	Hungary	Sweden
Austria	Italy	Spain
Belgium	Japan	Syria & Lebanon
Bulgaria	Latvia	Ukraine
Czechoslovakia	Lithuania	Yugoslavia
Denmark	Mexico	Croatia
Estonia	Netherlands	Serbia
Finland	Norway	Slovenia
Germany	Portugal	

Christmas in Albania

The Christmas holiday season starts in Albania like in many European countries on December 6th - Saint Nicholas Day - SHEN KOLLI. It is a special church holiday in Albania in honor of the bishop of Myra, the protector of sailors and the patron of school days.

Celebration of Christmas begins Christmas Eve, December 24th DUKE GDHIRE KRISHTLINDJET. The village men arise early in the morning and go to the surrounding mountains to start large bonfires. The children go at eveningtide with gaily decorated sticks from house to house singing songs related to the birth of Christ. They receive in turn a Kringle - a sort of bread dough with a hole in the middle, which they carry on strings between two of their decorated sticks. The evening meal consists of pancakes, baked without fat or butter and special holiday sweets. At the end of the meal each member leaves a fork filled with food on his plate, wishing for abundance in the coming year. Then they gather around the fire roasting chestnuts, eating figs and burning a branch of freshly cut cedar, which gives the Christmas scent.

Christmas Day, December 25th they spend feasting and visiting relatives and neighbors. Their Christmas meal consists of chicken or lamb and unleavened bread and a kind of meat pie called "mesnik".

January 1st - New Year's Day also called Saint Basil's Day is a church holiday observed by both the Christian and Moslem Albanians. The first visitor must bring a log for the fire. He is treated with great respect as the bearer of good luck. The New Year's cake is baked with special care and a coin or a special gold token is inserted in the dough. The mother generally cuts the cake in as many pieces as there are members of the family present and one piece for the house and one for the business. She offers the first piece to the head of the family. Whoever receives the piece of cake with the coin will prosper throughout the year. Also small gifts are exchanged.

Christmas Among Armenians

Armenian Christmas DZODNT falls on January 6th (O.S.)* or January 16th (N.S.). It is a holiday that is preceded by a week of fasting

*Since 1900 there has been a variation of 13 days between the Julian, or Old Style, Calendar and the Gregorian, or New Style Calendar. The Julian Calendar is still the calendar used by the Eastern Orthodox Church

during which the devout abstain from such foods as meat, eggs, butter, and milk. The last day of the week, the day of holy communion, fasting means to the devout Armenian abstinence from all food until the sacred rite has been consummated.

On Christmas Eve choir boys go through the village collecting bread, butter, wheat for pilaff, and other foodstuffs to be used for a communal meal on Christmas morning. Before dawn church bells summon the villagers to worship. Carrying tiny lanterns to light them on their way they hasten through the dark streets to the church which is lighted for this service by innumerable candles. Brass and silver vessels have been freshly polished, and the fragrance of flowers and incense fills the air. There is an imposing ceremonial service after which the congregation partakes of the meal which has been prepared meanwhile in the church yard. The Christmas eve supper consists of fried fish, lettuce and spinach. The saying goes that spinach was eaten by the Virgin Mary on the evening of Christ's birth.

After church it is the custom to make visits; they are known as "hand kissing visits" because the young folks are supposed to kiss the hands of the older people on whom they call. Visitors bring gifts of fruit; oranges for the women and lemons for the men. On that day also children bring gifts to their godparents, baskets with loaves of poppy seed bread, pastry, roasted chickens, etc., and receive in return some handsome present - a sum of money, or a new gown, for instance.

In general, however, the giving of gifts takes place among Armenians at New Year's, not at Christmas. New Year's Day, GAGHANT, is the occasion for much merrymaking and feasting and the Armenian Santa Claus, Gaghant Bab, plays an important role that day. No Christmas tree decorates the Armenian house; an olive branch lighted with candles takes its place. There are special Gaghant pastries decorated with figures of animals and birds or with the shape of the cross, and there are other delicacies which belong peculiarly to the Gaghant festival meal and the recipes for which have been handed down from generation to generation. Candy made out of nuts and grape juice which has been boiled down to a thick syrup is a traditional Gaghant delicacy. In the evening the children dance and sing in the streets of the village and are rewarded with gifts of fruits and sweetmeats.

Christmas in Austria

The Christmas holiday season starts on December 6th, Saint Nicholas Day - NIKOLAUSTAG. This is a day for children. Saint Nicholas, also called "Knecht Ruprecht" robed in a long sort of bishop's gown and long white beard travels from house to house leaving small gifts - sweets and nuts - for the "good" children and a switch for the "bad". In some parts of Austria his helper appears as a monster "Klaufauf"

and frightens the children. In the province "Styria" he is known as "Bartel" and in southern Austria as "Gauspus" or Krimpus". Saint Nicholas Day is also the day when the Christmas markets open with toys, gingerbreads and holiday sweets. At this time the children are taught to make Christmas tree decorations - long chains of fancy colored paper, stars and paint nuts silver and gold.

Christmas Eve - HEILIGER ABEND - is most festive. It is a special family holiday and concert and dance halls are generally closed. It is celebrated with Midnight Mass. The Christmas supper consists of roast goose and in some parts a delicate fish is served. As dessert the famous "Luizus Torte" is served, or a light pastry filled with raisins or nuts is served. The head of the family reads the story of the Kristkindl and all join in singing the well known Christmas carols. Later the Christmas presents are received.

December 25th is a quiet family day, attending religious service, and visiting families.

January 1st is New Year's Day - NEUJALERSTAG. It is a day of merrymaking. Dinner is eaten at noon and the afternoon is spent visiting. Old peasants belief is that the following twelve days prophesy the weather for the 12 months of the new year.

Christmas in Belgium

Belgians celebrate much like the Austrians. The Christmas holiday season starts December 6th, Saint Nicholas Day.- SINT NIKOLAAS. It is a joyous day of expectation for the children, when they arise early in the morning looking for goodies like an orange or a piece of marzipan brought to them by Saint Nicholas coming down the chimney and leaving it under their bed pillow.

Christmas - KERSTDAG is celebrated December 25th by wishing friends and neighbors "Merry Christmas". In some parts of Belgium the whole family gathers around the Yule log telling ghost stories and singing Christmas songs. The children look for presents Christmas morning from Christ Jesus.

Christmas in Bulgaria

Bulgarians also celebrate Saint Nicholas Day - NIKULDEN December 6th (December 19th New Style) with a special meal of Sharan served with rice and a special bread baked for Saint Nicholas. After the meal is prepared the priest of the town visits the families and blesses the meal.

Christmas Eve - BUDNIVECHER is celebrated December 24th (January 6th New Style). The main dish is Kravai, a large round cake decorated with figures of birds, a flower and a cross. It is placed at the center of the table and decorated with a lighted candle. The parents offer prayers and raise the cake over their heads saying "May the wheat grow as high as this." and break a piece of the cake. Whoever gets the largest piece will be very lucky.

New Year's Day - NOVA GODINA is a special day of celebrating and New Year's Eve groups of boys go from house to house knocking softly on the door and sing a traditional harvest song:

"Happy, happy New Year,
Corn on the cornstalk
Grapes in the vineyard
Golden grain in the bin,
Red apples in the garden,
Happiness and health
Until next year"

With the last loud knock the doors open wide and they are asked to come in the kitchen, where all the members of the household are gathered and greet every member starting with the oldest. They receive in return money and many Kolachs. With delight they wander to other houses for more goodies.

Christmas Among Czechs and Slovaks

In many countries December 6th, the Day of Saint Nicholas, DEN SVATEHO MIKULASE, the bishop of Smyrna, who became the patron of children, scholars, lonely wayfarers and many others, is of considerable importance to children, who look forward to it as an occasion for gifts. Czech and Slovak children believe that on that day Saint Mikulas, as they call him, descends from heaven on a golden rope and wanders about the earth rewarding good children and admonishing naughty ones. They hang their stockings outside the window or near the window so that when the Saint passes by he can drop gifts into them. This is in case he or one of his "representatives" does not find time to make a visit to their home, attired in bishop's robes and accompanied by his traditional attendants on such expeditions, an angel or a red-tongued devil. The devil carries a basket of switches and a long chain which he rattles significantly while the angel has toys and sweets for distribution among the good children.

The 24th of December, Christmas Eve - STEDRY VECER is a fast day⁶⁰ and many do not eat until evening. The children are urged to abstain from food till evening so that they may see the "golden pig". When the evening meal is finally served, it is well worth waiting for. Its preparation has taken days or even weeks. It is meatless; baked carp

served with a dark sauce is the chief dish. The carp must be bought alive and kept alive until it is time to clean and cook it; its preparation is of great interest and is usually watched by every member of the family. There is also a fish soup; for this the housewife is careful to select a fish with roe as she thereby secures good fortune for the family for the coming year. Then there are all sorts of preserved fruits, nuts, candies and cakes, among them apple strudel. The table is decorated with dried fruit, and with loaves of special Christmas bread known as "Vanočka" - the word for Christmas is "Vanoce" in Czech and "Vianoce" in Slovak.

After the evening meal, the family gathers around the Christmas tree and presents are distributed. Then they try to look into the future. Melted lead or wax is poured into water and from the shape it takes, fortunes are told. Apples cut across so as to show a star of kernels indicate coming events. The girls set tiny candles in nutshells and float them in pans of water; she whose candle floats upright the longest and burns to the end will have the best husband and the longest life. It is also the custom for the girls to go into the garden and rattle the ice-covered branches of a bush - preferably a lilac bush. Roused by the noise, the dogs in the neighborhood begin to bark. From the direction from which the first barking is heard, will come the girl's husband.

At midnight the Catholic family attends Mass. The church is beautifully decorated with evergreen and Christmas trees, and there is always an elaborate Christmas crib or "Bethlehem", showing the Holy Family in the stable together with the Three Kings, angels and shepherds. The Christmas celebration in Czechoslovakia lasts three days; where it is possible, both the 25th and 26th of December are kept as holidays by the Czechs and Slovaks in America. Christmas Day is usually celebrated in the home with feasting and merrymaking. On the day after, troops of children go from house to house singing Christmas carols and receiving gifts of cake, nuts and apples. Their leaders are dressed to represent the Three Kings and in some localities they carry a "Bethlehem".

The Czech greets his friends on Christmas Day with a "Vesele Vanoce" and the Slovak says "Vesele Vianoce".

Christmas in Denmark

Christmas Eve - JULEAFTER - December 24th is the time in Denmark when the Christmas holiday spirit starts, which keeps up well into the New Year. After an early evening church service Christmas Eve is celebrated by the family. The traditional Christmas Eve dinner is roast goose, stuffed with plums and with cinnamon and sugar and a large butter "eye" in the middle. A whole almond is inserted in the dough and whoever gets it receives a special gift. Birds and cattle are also

not forgotten and receive extra fodder and care. An old folk belief is that manger animals stand in their stalls at midnight in honor of the Christ child's birth.

Christmas Day - JULEDAG - December 25th is a sort of quiet day, spent attending church services, visiting and exchanging gifts among family and friends.

New Year's Day - NYTAARSDAG marks the beginning of important social events in the calendar. Men and women dress up in their Sunday best and attend church services. Later they call on relatives and friends wishing them "Happy New Year". The call extends over half an hour. Wine and cookies are served as refreshments. The festive mood and calls extend for about two weeks.

Christmas in Estonia

Christmas Eve - JOULU LAUPAEW - December 24th almost everyone attends church services. The farmers ready their sleighs with straw to keep the family, old and young, warm on their ride to church. The churches are beautifully decorated with candles on a tall Christmas tree. After coming home out of the cold air they enjoy the holiday doubly. It takes the housewife weeks to prepare for this festival meal, consisting of a roasted pig's head, or blood sausages, boiled turnips and potatoes, which are considered a delicacy in Estonia. At one time during Estonia's independence, one would find them listed on a menu as "Potato Republic". As dessert coffee cake is served with cranberries and apples. Vodka is served - made from potatoes in Estonia - and is considered the finest in the world.

Christmas in Finland

Christmas starts as in all Scandinavian countries on Christmas Eve - December 24th - JOULUSATTO. Everybody takes a sauna bath and dresses in spotless holiday clothes. The Christmas tree is lighted and the head of the household reads the Christmas story from the Bible and only then is the holiday meal served consisting of all kinds of hors d'oeuvres, the Christmas fish - Lipeakala, ham - Joulukusku, rye and white bread and a plum cake - Tortuja, the traditional rice pudding and black coffee. An almond is hidden in the rice pudding and the girl or boy who is lucky finding it, will surely be married before the next Christmas.

Christmas Day - JOULUSPAIVA - December 25th is a quiet day - people arise early and attend Christmas services at five or six o'clock. In rural areas one hears sleigh bells ringing and the tramping hooves of the Finnish ponies. Christmas day is spent feasting and visiting. The Finnish Christmas greeting is "Hanska Joulua".

New Year's Eve in Helsinki starts formally with a concert on the steps of the Great Church - Suurkirkkku at the Plaza. At midnight church bells ring and ships in the harbor give whistle salutes welcoming the New Year in. At midnight young folks throw melted tin into a bucket of water and read in the curious forms of the hardened metal predictions of good or bad things to come in the New Year.

Christmas Among Germans

In Germany the Christmas celebration may be said to begin on the first Sunday in Advent. On that day it is a widely observed custom to hang up a wreath wound with evergreens and bright ribbons and decorated with four candles or to have a special Advent "Kranz" on the table. One of the candles is lit on that Sunday and another on each of the three successive Sundays so that by Christmas all four are burning brightly. (This is today a custom in many American churches especially the Lutheran.)

Like the children of several other European countries, the German child expects gifts on December 6th, St. Nicholas Day. The night before he hangs up his stockings or places his shoe in front of the window and in the morning he finds in it marzipan, nuts, cookies and other sweets. As a general rule, he ascribes these gifts to good "Sankt Nikolaus" though if he happens to live in certain sections of Germany, it may be "Knecht Ruprecht" to whom he feels indebted. "Knecht Ruprecht" is said to be a survival from pagan times. By some authorities he is identified with the ruler of the old Teutonic gods, "Wotan", one of whose names was "Ruchtperaht", which is said to mean "der Ruhmglanzende" ("the all-glorious one"), according to others, the name Ruprecht means "rauhher Percht" and signifies kinship to the "rauhhen Leute" or "wilden Leute", the spirits or demons which according to folklore are especially active and powerful from December 25th to January 6th and which must be exorcised in various ways.

In some sections of Germany, Sankt Nikolaus is accompanied by masked figures clad in straw and brushwood also survivals, it is claimed, from pagan days. In Berchtesgaden there takes place on December 5th a ceremony which derives even more clearly from pagan times, the so-called "Butt'nmandel Laufen". The "butt'nmandel" accompany St. Nicholas on his rounds. They are fierce looking creatures, masked and with rams' horns on their heads. Jingling cow bells and chains and tooting horns - they prance through the streets and finally out into the fields where the procession turns into a dance in which old and young, all masked, take part,

Berchtesgaden is also famous for its "Weinachtsschiessen." The firing of guns was, according to popular superstition, an excellent way of exorcising the evil or mischievous spirits which are powerful at Christmas time. The custom was formerly observed in several sections of Germany but it has for the most part been abandoned. It is a matter of record that in 1534 the "Furst Probst" of Berchtesgaden bought eapons for use on this occasion and there is evidence that the rite itself dates back to much earlier days when fires on the mountain tops and loud rejoicing hailed the winter solstice. The following excerpt from an article in the Pittsburgh "Sontagsbote"* describing the Berchtesgaden festival will be of interest:

"Anyone who has ever attended a 'Weinachtsschiesen' in Berchtesgaden will remember it all his life. On this occasion the natural gayety of the Bavarian people and their deep love for their mountains and beautiful surroundings find expression. Toward twilight, after the Christmas Eve festivities in the farmhouse are over, about a thousand 'Schützen' (sharpshooters) set out from home, clad in the picturesque Bavarian costume and carrying a knapsack containing "Handboller" (hand mortars) ammunition, etc....From remote farms, hidden in the deep valleys of the mountains, these 'Schützen' hasten to Berchtesgaden. For many it is a journey of three or four hours. It is the custom to meet at designated spots along the road in order to 'einschiessen' the homes of friends and neighbors. Sometimes the wives and daughters of the farmers will join in the shooting; they also wish to contribute to the noise and tumult which, according to popular belief, will protect human beings and cattle, fields and other possessions, from the evil spirits which are abroad on Christmas Eve; some two thousand years ago, their German ancestors held the same belief and acted in the same way....

"On mountains, along roads and lanes, guns and hand grenades volley and thunder until about eleven o'clock when the thousands 'Schützen' congregate on the fourteen mountains surrounding Berchtesgaden. Each community in the district has

for centuries had its designated place on one of the fourteen mountains; they are so stationed that the fiery circle around the city is unbroken. Exactly half an hour before midnight all fire their guns and hand mortars simultaneously; fireworks are set off and bonfires kindled on the highest mountains. The sky is brightly illuminated by the encircling fire and the snowy fields reddened by its glow; the sound of the firing echoes from rock to rock. Then at twelve the church bells ring out. At once the shooting ceases; the fires are extinguished and the smoke drifts slowly away. The 'Schutzen' put away their weapons and descend into the valley to the Christmas mass. Meanwhile Christmas trees have been lighted in the church yards; it is another Bavarian tradition that a Christmas tree must decorate the grave of each dead member of the family as well as the home of the living."

Such shooting parties are held on New Year's Eve in the Bavarian Alps as well as on Christmas Eve and for the same reason, namely, that demons and evil spirits may be routed by din and noise.

Christmas Eve is a great occasion in Germany and in German households everywhere. Roast goose or duck is the traditional dish and green kale or sprout. As in Czechoslovakia carp is also traditional Christmas food and the finding of roe in the fish, an omen of good luck. Carp, by the way, is also eaten in many German households on St. Sylvester's Eve, December 31st; it seems to be considered a sort of "good luck" dish. German Christmas cakes are famous, especially the Bremerkloben, springele, spatzele, lebkuchen and spekulatius - biscuits in the shape of animals or human beings. Equally famous is the candy made of almond paste, marzipan.

The Christmas tree custom originated in Germany; to Martin Luther is ascribed the idea. Practically every German home lights a tree on Christmas Eve and then the family gathers about it singing the Christmas songs of which Germany possesses an unusual wealth. Some of them are of great antiquity, such as "Es ist ein Reis entsprungen aus einer Wurzel zart" (A sprig sprang from a tender root) a quaint medieval text sung to a deeply moving old tune.

There are Christmas services in German churches on Christmas Eve and Christmas day. In this country the Christmas Eve service is, as a rule, held at five o'clock and is usually in German where still the English and German languages are used. On each side of the altar stands a Christmas tree. They quite frequently are decorated entirely in white and glisten with snow and silver and candles. Christmas cribs are found both in the churches and in the homes and evergreens are used lavishly for decorations.

"Frohliche Weihnachten" is the German Christmas greeting.

New Year's Day - Neujahr - according to old tradition should be lived as one would like the whole year. Most everybody wears one new garment and must have money in their pockets for good luck. Unpleasant work is avoided. With a start like this the New Year will be happy and prosperous. The exchange of New Year's greeting cards is universal.

The postman and family servants receive gifts of money. January 6th Festival of the Three Kings - Die Drei Konige - is the last day the Christmas tree is lighted and it marks the end of the festivities.

Christmas in Great Britain Yuletide is celebrated December 25th around blazing logs, holly, mistletoes and carols are sung. A Yuletide feast is prepared and varies in different parts of England. Toasted apples and hot ale is served with a toast such as : "Love and joy may come to you and your wassart - too." Plum pudding is traditionally served, but it should not be eaten before Christmas, which brings bad luck.

However, many localities have their own traditional yuletide food. In Cornwall a sort of currant cake is baked for each member of the family. In Shropshire caraway buns are dipped in ale at Christmas Eve with a toast to the Christ child.

New Year is celebrated January 1st as a great traditional holiday in Scotland. The first New Year's caller should bring a gift of wine or ale for good luck. In some places boys masquerade from house to house enacting a folk play in which Galashan is the hero and they receive gifts of money for their performances.

Christmas Among the Greeks - In Greece as in several other countries in which the Eastern Orthodox Church is the established church, the Christmas festival has not the importance it has in North and West European countries, for instance. The Easter season for these countries has a deeper, more spiritual significance. Their Christmas celebrations accordingly do not show that wealth of traditional rites and customs found among certain other peoples.

On Christmas Eve carollers go from house to house in the Greek village and are rewarded with coins or gifts of food. The Christmas dinner must include roast pig, "cheridion". If a family cannot afford to buy it, usually relatives or neighbors come to their assistance. After dinner, the Greeks greet each other with the salutations "Eli Pola" (a long life to you) or "Kala Christogene" (beautiful birth of Christ). After dinner there is music and dancing. Only children and the poor receive gifts at Christmas, St. Basil's Day or New Year's Day is the time for the exchange of gifts among grown-ups. St. Basil, "Hagios Vasilios", is the Santa Claus of the Greek children.

Greece having been from ancient times a maritime nation, it is not surprising that the blessing of the waters is an impressive feature of the Christmas celebration. As in other Eastern Orthodox countries it takes place on Epiphany Day, that is, January 6th - old style- or January 19th - new style.

At high noon on that day the Archbishop, Bishop or if neither is present the priest of the highest rank in that locality leads a procession from the church to the water front. He is clothed in magnificent vestments; his mitre gleams with jewels. He holds aloft before him a crucifix, sometimes of gold, sometimes of ebony with a silver image of the Saviour. Acolytes and the lesser clergy, all clad in gorgeous vestments, accompany him, chanting as they march. Behind follows the congregation, not in formal order but "as sheep follow their shepherd".

At the water's edge the procession halts. The priest intones a prayer of dedication and then after tying a scarf around the cross hurls it into the water. From the shore and from boats boys and men dive after the cross. The one who succeeds in capturing it, receives a special blessing from the priest and also usually, a money gift from the bystanders.

In the United States, wherever there is a sizable Greek colony, the ceremony of blessing the waters is likely to be celebrated. At Tarpon Springs, Florida, where many Greeks are engaged in the sponge fisheries, it is a yearly celebration. For many years, the Church of St. Nicholas, a Greek Church located at 155 Cedar Street in New York City, has arranged such a ceremony at Battery Park, where the swimmers must plunge into the icy waters of New York Harbor after the cross.

"Kala Christogene" says the Greek to his friends on Christmas Day.

On New Year's Day - Protochronea - also celebrated as Saint Basil's Day special masses are held in the churches. Parents give money to their children. Greek families in the United States also observe the ancient custom of "cutting the Peta" - New Year's cake. The cake is round, flat and thin. A coin is baked in the cake and the finder will be blessed with good luck. The first piece of cake is set aside for the Lord Christ, the second for the Holy Virgin, the third for Saint Basil, the fourth for the home, the fifth for the head of the household and the remaining pieces for different members of the family. Relatives and friends of a person named Basil visit. The guests are served wine, pastries and coffee.

Christmas Among Hungarians

As in several other European countries, December 6th is the original Santa Claus Day for children in Hungary. In some villages St. Nicholas in bishop's robes, goes about with an attendant - a devil - and distributes rewards to good children and admonitions to naughty ones but usually the children place their boots or shoes on the window sills and as he passes by, the Saint leaves small gifts or birch rods in them.

Christmas in Hungary lasts two days, each day a legal holiday. During this period church bells ring almost continuously. Christmas Eve is an occasion of great festivity. When the first star appears, the evening meal is served and the traditional dishes are cabbage soup, fish, cakes shaped as horseshoes and filled with poppy seeds or walnuts, strudel, nuts, special twisted Christmas bread and small dumplings sprinkled with poppy seeds and sugar and known as "Bobajka". Before the evening meal, the family assembles around a Christmas tree and after a short prayer gifts are distributed. Among the delicacies on the tree "szalon cukor" is sure to figure largely; it is a home-made candy much like fudge in consistency and very popular among Hungarians.

When midnight comes the villagers in their colorful costumes flock to the church, which in an Hungarian village is usually set on top of a hill, and on this occasion is brilliantly lighted. There mass is celebrated amid a profusion of flowers and evergreen. There is always an elaborate and beautiful Christmas crib. The scene at Bethlehem is reproduced and the Three Kings, the shepherds, the angels, as well as the Holy Family, are represented.

During the Christmas season, groups of gaily dressed children go about the village streets singing carols. They usually carry with them on a tray a miniature manger or "Bethlehem". Sometimes the figures in the "Bethlehem" are marionettes which reenact the famous story. In many villages there are outdoor performances of simple passion plays and on January 6th the Three Kings follow the star through the Hungarian countryside. They wear white robes and white mitres and in their hands they carry long sticks with bells with which they beat time as they walk onward singing. King Balthazar's face is always blackened, in startling contrast to his white garments. The star, carried before them on a long pole, is made of transparent paper and is illuminated from within. Usually it is boys who represent the Kings but in certain parts of Hungary girls go about with the star instead.

To touch a pig on Saint Sylvester's Eve (December 31st) brings good luck, according to a Hungarian superstition. In the principal restaurants and cafes of Budapest a live pig is turned loose at midnight and much confusion and merriment ensues as the guests scramble after the animal.

The Hungarian Christmas greeting is "Boldog Karacsonyi Unnepeket".

On New Year's Day - Uj-Ev Napja the chimney sweeps with brooms go from house to house singing New Year's songs and are receiving gifts of money. According to an ancient custom, one must try and break unnoticed twigs from the brooms. The lucky one ties the tiny twigs with ribbons and keeps them for "good luck". The dinner consists of a young roast pig with an apple or a four leaf clover in its mouth, which is said to bring good luck when eaten on this day.

Christmas Among Italians

Among Italians a Novena of religious preparation precedes Christmas. On the first day a manger or praesepio, is prepared in the home and every morning for nine days the family assembles before it and recites special prayers. This custom is observed in practically every section of Italy and also among Italians in the United States. The mangers are as beautiful and elaborate as the means of the family permit. Italy they are, as a rule, home-made and wee candles supply illumination; in the United States these simpler ways have been abandoned and those who can, purchase beautiful images and elaborate decorations and use colored electric bulbs instead of candles.

The "praesepio" (or "presepe" in dialect goes back many centuries for its origin. Over seven hundred years ago, St. Francis of Assisi and his friend Giovannia Velita are said to have fashioned a group of marionettes for the purpose of making vivid the story of the birth of Christ to their uneducated followers. The group was first shown in Greccio in 1223 and its success was so marked that other Nativity groups were set up throughout the country, They are mentioned in notarial records of the fifteenth century in Naples and there is evidence that the custom was by then widespread, Great care was given to the construction of the little figures. They were usually made of wax or terra cotta but sometimes papier-mache or wood was the material used. It is said that today there is only one person left in Naples who can fashion the old style dolls or repair them, but there have been famous Praesepio artists in the past, notably Giuseppe Sammartino (1720 - 1793), his follower Giuseppe Gori, and Francesco di Nardo who was famous for his skill in fashioning animals. At first the praesepio was simple and limited to a few figures, but gradually its scope became more ambitious and included marionettes representing the Holy Family, the three Wise Men, angels, shepherds, peasants, fishermen, beggars, soldiers and the animals of the stable. One especially famous praesepio which is now in a museum near Naples was constructed about 1760 by Charles III, King of Naples, and his queen. The set is said to be forty feet wide, twenty-five feet deep and fifteen high and there are five hundred figures and two hundred animals beautifully fashioned out of wood or wax. The University of Kansas owns a praesepio, part of the W.B. Thayer Memorial collection, which is reported to be the finest specimen in the United States.

In Italy during the nine days of the Novena, bagpipers "zampognari", go from house to house and play before the mangers, In some sections of Italy they are dressed as shepherds and sing the shepherd song "cantata dei pastori". They are rewarded by the houswives with gifts of food or money. The "zampognari" are more frequently met with in southern Italy than in the north.

The real merrymaking for the Italian comes on Christmas Eve and much more is thought of Christmas Eve than of Christmas Day itself. As the 24th is a fast day, the evening meal must be meatless, but it is nevertheless very elaborate. In the humblest homes it takes the aspect of a banquet. In certain sections of Italy, particularly in

Sicily and Calabria, the housewife prepares twenty-four different viands for this meal. As none of them may contain meat, their preparation requires much ingenuity and care.

Most Italians eat eel at the Christmas Eve meal; a certain large species known as "capitone" is especially favored. It is a costly fish, usually selling at a dollar a pound at Christmas time. But it is traditional for the Italians to eat eel on this occasion and they will pay any price they have to. Another dish usually served at Christmas Eve is "cardoni"; Jerusalem artichoke cooked with egg. There are a great variety of sweets in the meal; "torrone", caramel nut cake, and "cannoli", pastry stuffed with cream cheese, are especially favored. They may be purchased in almost any Italian "dolceria" (pastry shop) in the United States. The Tuscans have a Christmas sweet which is particularly their own and which is unknown elsewhere in Italy. Probably because it was originally made in Sienna, it is called "Panforte di Sienna". It is a delicious but very complicated confection. No Tuscan considers Christmas complete without it and many Italian shops in this country cater to his needs.

Christmas trees are not used in Italy, nor do evergreens decorate the homes and churches. The use of evergreens for this purpose originated in connection with pagan festivals and though the Church in the North did not oppose the introduction of this custom into the Christmas celebration, in the South it was prohibited. Nor is gift-giving a prominent feature of Christmas in Italy, though the Italians have adopted it in this country. In Italy at this time only children and old people are given presents and these, as a rule, are inexpensive and simple. The Yule log takes the place of the Christmas tree and Santa Claus in Italy. It is customary in almost every home to burn a Yule log on Christmas Eve. Before it is lighted, all the children are gathered around the fireplace and blindfolded. Each child from the oldest to the youngest, must recite a "sermone" (a verse of poetry) to the Christ child. Then the blind is removed and each child finds before him a small heap of gifts which he is told the Christ child has brought. In certain sections of Italy the children tap the Yule log with a wand and ask for the gifts they want.

Though among the Italians the Christmas Eve festival is considered a family affair, it often takes on the appearance of a party, as anyone in any degree related is invited. The Christmas Eve supper lasts for several hours, usually until it is time to go to midnight mass. After mass there is merrymaking until the morning hours.

Christmas Day is a holy day. The people flock to the churches in which beautiful and impressive services are held. In the Franciscan church of Ara Coeli in Rome the famous Bambino, or statue of the Christ child, to which miraculous healing power is ascribed, is placed in a magnificent praesepio.

The Christmas season extends to the Day of Epiphany, January 6th, Not till then are the mangers dismantled. It is a time of much festivity, dancing and games. In certain sections of Italy, Twelfth Night, January 5th, is the time for the giving of gifts. The Befana, an old

woman of witch-like appearance and in black robes, visits the homes on that evening and, like Santa Claus, distributes presents to the children. She is usually represented as carrying a broom; according to legend she was busy with her sweeping when the Wise Men asked her to join them in their quest, and so refused the invitation and the opportunity. The children anticipate her coming with mixed emotions; their mothers frequently warn them of what Befana will do if they are naughty. They hang their clothes around the hearth, being careful to empty all pockets. If they merit reward, Befana leaves gifts in the pockets; if not, switches, or bits of charcoal. In some sections of Italy bonfires are kindled on Epiphany Eve. From the direction the smoke blows, the weather for the New Year is predicted

"Buon Natale" says the Italian to his friends on Christmas Day.

New Year's in Japan

In Japan January 1 - New Year's Day - Oshogatsu is a great national holiday. The Imperial Household officially opens New Year's Day at the Imperial Sanctuary, the religious site of "Shihohai" worshipping in four directions. All executive offices observe this solemn New Year ceremony. Houses are prepared for this great holiday, entrances are scrubbed and sprinkled with purifying salt. Gateways are decorated with pine and bamboo branches, which symbolize prosperity. Shimenawa - ropes of twisted rice straw symbolizing strong ties are hung from gates. Inside the houses are decorated artistically with sprays of pine, plum and bamboo. Large rice cakes are laid one upon the other with an orange on top as favoring offerings for the Kitchen God and other household personnel.

People rise early in the morning and take their "first cleaning" of the year and make offerings before ancestral tablets and family shrines of pink and white rice cakes with oranges and other fruits. After these early devotions everybody eats Azoul, a favorite soup with tiny rice cakes floating on top; or beans symbolizing good health; fish roe for prosperity, dried squid for happiness and rice cakes. New Year's calling begins early with the traditional greeting "May your New Year be happy. Thank you for your kindness during the past year and may your good will continue throughout the year that is to come." Cards and gifts are exchanged among friends and relatives. During the first three days of the New Year, shops and places of business are closed and streets are deserted.

Christmas Among Latvians

On Christmas Day - Fiemas Svetten Diena in Latvia gifts and cards are exchanged. It is the beginning of a very joyous season for all and continues through the second day of Christmas. Church services are attended in the late afternoon. Roast pork, goose and bear's head are served for dinner. After dinner the candles on the Christmas tree are lighted, old time hymns and carols are sung and each member of the family greets his neighbor, wishing a happy Christmas.

New Year's - Jaungada Vakars - and New Year's Day traditional foods are served - suckling pig in aspic and dried fruit compotes. An unscaled fish, symbolic of good luck and plenty has a place of honor on every Latvian table. The evenings are full of gaiety, with eating, drinking and laughter they welcome the New Year. At midnight chimes are rung and pistols are fired

Christmas Among Lithuanians

In Lithuania Christmas is celebrated for several days; even in this country of rush and hurry Lithuanians try to observe at least two days as holidays. The festivities begin on Christmas Eve, as soon as the first star appears in the sky. Each person is given a brightly colored wafer, "plotkeles", which has been consecrated in church and which he shares with everyone present, a symbol of good will and harmony. After that all sit down to the evening meal.

As December 24th is a fast day, no meat is served at this meal. The fish most commonly used is pike; the meal also includes a fish soup, fried cabbage, and a traditional dish called "kiesielius", made from oatmeal and served with cream and sugar. The table is covered with immense loaves of bread, sprinkled with poppy seed and stamped with the image of the Christ child. Under the tablecloth hay is placed in memory of the night at Bethlehem.

In the United States, Lithuanians attend Christmas mass at midnight but in the old country this mass was celebrated at five o'clock on Christmas morning. Both here and in Lithuania, the churches are beautifully decorated with evergreens and flowers. There is always a Christmas crib in the church and usually it is shown against a background of rocks, trees and houses representing the town of Bethlehem. At the mass are sung old Christmas carols which have been handed down from generation to generation and which are held in high esteem and reverence. In the United States the Lithuanians have adopted the custom of giving presents at Christmas, but in Lithuania such is not the case. As in several other European countries, it is on St. Nicholas Day, December 6th, that the "Kaledu Diedukas", an old man corresponding to Santa Claus, makes his appearance and distributes gifts to the children.

Christmas Day is usually spent quietly with the family, but the second and third days, St. Stephen's Day and the Day of St. John the Baptist, are the occasion for much gaiety. In certain sections of Lithuania, on December 28th, Holy Innocents Day, there are puppet shows representing King Herod passing sentence on the children of Bethlehem.

To commemorate the visit of the Three Kings to Bethlehem, three crosses usually made of evergreen, are fastened above the door of the Lithuanian home, where they remain until January 6th, the Day of Epiphany, and also of the Three Kings. In the evening of that day, men in costume representing the Kings go from house to house and once more there is feasting and gaiety.

There is in Lithuania an amusing New Year's Eve custom. After the evening meal, two or three masked men and women, carrying flaming torches, call at some house in the village. They are entertained with the best the house affords; there is music and dancing. Then they leave and their host and hostess, also masked, accompany them to the next house. In this way the torchlit procession grows apace, eventually including most of the inhabitants of the village and the people living on nearby farms.

The Lithuanian Christmas greeting is "Linksmu Kaledu".

Christmas Among Mexicans

Unless he is very much Americanized the Christmas tree is unknown to the Mexican child. Mexican parents search the markets for little trinkets, toys and sweets for the Pinata - a jar made of coarse, red earthenware and shaped usually like a clown or dancer or other amusing figure or object. On Christmas Day the Pinata is suspended from the ceiling and the children of the household, blindfolded and armed with long sticks, try to strike it. Pinatas are made to break easily; a light blow usually brings down upon the lucky child a shower of little packages whereupon a general scramble to share in them ensues.

In Mexican villages and undoubtedly in many a Mexican colony in the United States, certain simple miracle plays known as "posadas" are celebrated on nine successive evenings, beginning December 16th. They represent the quest of Mary and Joseph for lodging - posada mean inn. Each posada begins with a ritual of worship and ends in gay festivity. At nightfall a candle-lit procession - chiefly composed of women - appears before the house chosen for that evening's posada. Sometimes it is headed by a man and a woman or by two children, representing Joseph and Mary; they carry a small platform on which are wax or paper figures of the Holy Family. They beg admission which is refused; parley ensues and finally permission to enter is granted. Then follow prayers and songs before an improvised altar on which the images have been placed. Suddenly the prayers cease and the gay pinata song is heard whereupon the husbands and sons of the worshipping women who have been waiting outside are invited in. Refreshments are passed around and finally a pinata is broken after customary fashion and gifts distributed among the guests. Very often there are posadas in the churches also. On Christmas Eve, La Noche Buena, when the last posada is held, the women prepare for the birth of Christ. A shrine is fashioned of flowers and cedar boughs and at midnight the image of the newborn Christ - a small doll usually - is placed within it. On Candelaria (Candlemas), on February 2nd, candles are burned in many a Mexican home before the manger, "nacimiento", in which the image of the Christ child lies. A godfather and godmother are appointed and bring for it such gifts as are brought at the christening ceremony of a human child. A dinner of rice, mole poblano (turkey with a special sauce) and beans is served, the traditional meal for birthdays and

"sacamisas" - the day the mother takes her baby to mass for the first time, usually forty days after its birth.

Los Pastores is another traditional feature of the Mexican Christmas celebration. It is a pageant representing the story of the shepherds who followed the Star to the stable in Bethlehem and found the Christ child. For weeks beforehand the actors are trained for this performance and are taught certain old Christmas songs handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. At midnight on Christmas Eve they pass singing through the streets towards the church, carrying long poles on which are fastened stars of transparent paper illuminated from within by candles, and beating time to the singing with shepherds' staves ornamented with jingling bells. In the church they continue their singing until almost dawn while the devout kneel around them in prayer. On January 6th, the day of the Three Kings, Los Pastores sing traditional songs before the images of the Kings. Children that day stuff their shoes with hay and place them on their balconies in anticipation of the coming of the Three Kings whose horses are supposed to eat the hay, in return for which the Kings fill the shoes with toys and sweets.

Christmas in Norway

It starts with Christmas Eve - Julaften - December 24th when in the early evening with the ringing of church chimes. All businesses are closed and the peace of Christmas enters the homes. The head of the family generally reads the Christmas story. Most Christmas trees are decorated with white candles and all kinds of home-made cookies, gilded nuts, gingerbread figures etc. The Christmas presents under the tree are opened and the whole family joins hands and walks around the tree singing old, familiar Christmas carols. Afterwards supper is served.

Juledag - Christmas almost everybody attends the morning church services and is celebrated in a quiet family day. The second day of Christmas relatives, friends and neighbors drop in and many festive hot and cold dishes (lutefisk) are served accompanied by Akvavit and all kinds of strong drinks. It is really a gala occasion. Festivities continue until January 13th.

The Norwegian Christmas greeting is "Gladelig Jul".

New Year's Eve - Nyttaraften - December 31st is mostly celebrated by young people who go in groups of ten or more from house to house, dressed in various costumes and many wearing masks stopping for refreshments and dancing. The evening ends often with a morning breakfast at a friend's house.

Christmas Among Poles

St. Barbara's Day, December 4th, is watched carefully in Poland. If that day comes with rain, Christmas, according to popular belief, will come with ice; if it comes with ice, Christmas will come with rain.

Christmas in Poland is a very important and beautiful time. The celebration may be said to begin on December 6th, with St. Nicholas Day. On that day in the villages of the old country, St. Nicholas, dressed in the robes of a bishop and attended by an angel and a devil who rattles chains and has a long red tongue, goes from house to house. He tests the children's knowledge of the catechism of their prayers and inquires about their behavior. If they come up to his requirements, he rewards them with small presents and promises them others at Christmas. Children whose conduct has been unsatisfactory are admonished and are put on probation until Christmas. In the United States the custom of having St. Nicholas actually visit the family, is not usually observed. Polish children write letters to tell St. Nicholas what they want for Christmas and place them on the window sill or by the fireplace where he can get them easily.

Christmas Eve is of great importance and Polish housewives prepare for its supper, "Willia", with much care. Certain traditional dishes are served on this occasion; chief among them are fish soup or mushroom soup, fish with stewed prunes, a dish composed of cabbage and mushrooms, a dessert of noodles, honey and poppy seed, pastry like the German apfel strudel, and a variety of fruits, fresh or cooked. As in many European countries, cakes in the shape of animals are much used. Before the meal prayers are said. Then wafers, "oplatki", which are stamped with Christmas emblems and which have been blessed in church, are distributed. Each one shares his wafer with everyone else present, at the same time wishing him health and prosperity during the coming year. When the first star appears in the sky they begin to eat. It is very important that an even number of persons sit down at the table. If for any reason an expected guest fails to come, a passing stranger will be invited in. Like the Lithuanian housewife, the Polish woman places straw under the tablecloth. After the meal, the girls tell fortunes by means of the straw. Anyone fortunate enough to find an unthreshed ear of grain, will be married soon and will be prosperous. In Poland as in several other countries, Christmas Eve brings feasting to the farm animals also, to commemorate the fact that animals were present at the birth of the Christ child. The belief is current among Polish peasants that at twelve on that holy night animals have the power to speak and are able to foretell important events.

The Christmas tree is widely used in Polish Christmas Eve celebrations. The gifts are distributed by the Good Star, impersonated by a woman with white robe and veil. Father Star accompanies her but he is not so welcome to the children. The children must kneel by the tree and say their prayers and sing their songs after which Father Star dispenses praise or blame for their performance.

At midnight on Christmas Eve, the pasterka, or Shepherd's mass, is celebrated in Polish churches both in Europe and in the United States. The songs sung at this mass have a strange and very moving joyousness and beauty. The churches are decorated with Christmas trees and are brilliantly lighted. In each church there is a Christmas crib which is not dismantled till the day of the Three Kings, January 6th. Throughout the whole period the churches remain open all day and there are frequent masses. In Poland on the day of the Three Kings, the priest of the parish goes to the houses of his parishioners to bless their homes with holy water. Above the entrance he writes the initials of the Three Kings, a ceremony which carries a blessing for the New Year. This celebration is known in Polish as the "kolenda".

During the Christmas season, groups of boys, in costume and carrying a Christmas crib, go from house to house singing Christmas carols; sometimes they masquerade as birds and animals - an allusion to the worship of Christ by the animals in the stable. Marionette shows are frequent in Poland at Christmas, the principal characters being a Jew, a Jewess, Herod and Death, the latter a hideous skeleton who at the end of the play decapitates Herod. In Pennsylvania and in the Middle West second generation Polish children carry on this custom. There is also the Polish Christmas folk play known as "Jaselka". It is a Christmas story based on the New Testament. It invariably consists of three scenes: first, the shepherds sleeping on the hillside; next the Three Kings visiting Herod; and finally a strange procession wending its way to Bethlehem - the shepherds, the Three Kings and peasants, all bringing gifts varying from field flowers to the priceless offerings of kings. Originally the lines of the Jaselka were improvised by the actors but in recent years Polish poets and dramatists have become interested in writing formal lines that carry out the spirit of the old folk plays, Polish carols of great beauty being woven into the story.

The Polish equivalent for "Merry Christmas" is "Weselych Swiat Bozego Narodzenia".

New Year's Day in Portugal

The Portuguese celebrate New Year's Day - Anno Novo - with special church services and visiting from house to house wishing each other "Boas Festas". The village band plays in the streets and play extra airs before friends' houses. Peasants believe a person will behave during the coming twelve months as he does on the first day of the year. Children are especially reminded of their manners.

The Portuguese also celebrate January 6th - Day of Kings - Dia Dos Reis. Peasants perform in all parts of the country in honor of the Magi. Groups of carolers go from house to house singing greetings and beg gifts standing at the door and also beg for admittance to sing for the Christ child. The guests are entertained with wines and sweets. Gifts are exchanged on this day. Special parties are held for

children who are treated to "Bolo-Rei", an Epiphany ring cake. All kinds of fortune telling trinkets are baked in the cake and a single dried lima bean. The child who finds the bean is crowned king and must promise to bake the cake for his friends next year.

New Year's Day in Romania

In Romania on January 1st - Saint Basil's Day - Sfantul Vasile and New Year's Day - Anul Nou - are celebrated. Children welcome the day with an ancient fertility rite - Samanatul - sowing corn which they carry in their pockets while they visit from house to house in the villages - whenever they throw the corn at people, they wish them a long life, fruitfulness like the trees in early spring and abundance like "the wealthy autumn". In some parts the sorcova is used instead of corn, which is a stick to which flowers are tied. These flowers must be picked from trees on Saint Andrew's Eve and coaxed into blossom by Christmas or New Year's. The boys greet the people by brushing their faces with the sorcova. This custom probably survived from the Roman times, when people greeted each other with branches of laurel. Money gifts are given in return for the greetings and also presents are exchanged.

Christmas Among Russians in Olden Times

The Russian's Christmas is closely associated with his Church. It is preceded by a forty days fast, which the orthodox Russian observes strictly. On the day before Christmas even children must not eat anything until the first star appears. Then a bountiful feast is spread largely consisting of traditional dishes such as kutya, boiled rice or boiled whole wheat grains with poppyseeds and nuts or jam and nuts, pirojki, small pies filled with rice and chopped mushrooms, with mashed peas or beans, or with preserves, apples or poppy seeds; roast goose and ham.

The Russian Christmas is in many respects like the Ukrainian, which is described below. There is a Santa Claus, known as "Dedushka Moroz". Traditional Christmas gifts are red boots for children and gold slippers for young girls. In certain parts of the country "Baboushka" (Grandmother) is the legendary dispenser of gifts. According to one story, she repented of unkindness and has ever since tried to make amends by distributing gifts to children on Christmas night. Another version is that she was offered an opportunity to accompany the Three Kings on their journey but refused it. Later she regretted this and on Christmas Eve she goes about searching for the Christ child whom she has never found and bestowing gifts on the children she meets.

In pre-Revolutionary Russia, the Blessing of the Waters at Epiphany was a ceremony of great pomp and splendor. Led by their clergy in magnificent vestments the congregation proceeded to a nearby stream where the ice was broken, a crucifix lowered into the water and the water blessed. Anyone jumping into the icy water to recover the crucifix received a special blessing.

"S Rojdestvom Xristovym" is the way the Russian wishes you "Merry Christmas".

Christmas in Sweden

The Swedish Christmas celebration begins on December 13th on St. Lucia's Day. By that day in thrifty households the year's threshing, spinning and weaving is finished and the Christmas preparations completed. One of the daughters of the family represents St. Lucia, a medieval saint famous for her generosity to the poor. Clad in a white gown with crimson sash and with lighted candles in her crown, St. Lucia serves a breakfast of coffee and newly baked bread and buns to the members of the household. Traditional for this meal are buns shaped like cats, with raisin eyes.

Christmas lasts two days in Sweden; Christmas Eve is the time of greatest festivity and the evening meal is the beginning of the celebration. At this meal the family eats goose and red cabbage or ham and rice cooked in milk. A solitary almond is stirred into the rice and the lucky finder is awarded a prize of some sort. The famous "lutfisk", dried codfish, is served in Sweden. The meal also usually includes "smorgasbord". While Swedes in this country translate this word into "hors d'oeuvres", they stipulate that the latter phrase gives only a meagre picture of the feast denoted by the Swedish term. A traditional Swedish Christmas drink is "glogg", a punch concocted of rum, spices and sugar and served very hot.

In Sweden it is a custom to place a sheaf of grain outside the window or in the snow-covered yard so that the birds may also feast at Christmas. For the same reason pieces of suet are often hung on the trees in the garden. There is another custom dear to the children. According to folklore, a little gnome-like creature, known as "Julenissen" or "Jultomten", lives in the household invisibly, watching over its interests and helping with the work. In reward for his services, children place delicacies about for him on Christmas Eve and after everyone is asleep, he comes out of his hiding place to eat them. Rice pudding or cooked rice is supposed to be his favorite food.

There is a Christmas tree in every Swedish home which can possibly afford one. More frequently than is the case in most countries nowadays, the ornaments are homemade, and hours are spent gilding nuts and making baskets and cornucopias for candy out of brightly-colored, glazed paper. Pictures and images of "Julenissen" or "Jultomten" are everywhere. The convenient electric lights are used for illumination less frequently than elsewhere; old-fashioned Christmas

candles are preferred and every year a large supply of them are imported into the United States for this purpose. In the old country the Swedish child does not, as a rule, know Santa Claus; "Julenissen" or "Julgubben" (Old Man Christmas) or "Julbocken" (the Christmas goat), brings him his gifts. In Sweden the Christmas tree is kept for some weeks, usually till January 13, Canute's Day, when the children in the neighborhood are invited to "plunder" it. It is a matter of great pride to the average youngster to have attended a large number of such "plunderings".

There is no midnight service in Swedish churches. There is, however, an early service, usually at six on Christmas morning; it is known as "Julotta". Lighted candles are placed in the windows of the houses to guide the churchgoers on their way and each sleigh is lighted by a torch. On arriving at the church yard the people throw their torches into a bonfire. The churches are illuminated by a myriad of lighted candles.

The Christmas greeting in Sweden is: "Glad Jul".

New Year in Spain - Ano Nuevo

New Year's is celebrated on January 1st. Money in the pockets means plenty of money during the coming twelve months. Empty pockets mean lean months ahead. A good meal and drinking wine are the symbols of abundance of food and drink all year around. After church services the people enjoy family reunions, feasting and holiday cheer. Coming face to face with a beggar is considered bad luck but with a rich man - good times.

January 6th is the Day of Kings - Dia de los Reyes Magos - Epiphany. The children are told on this night the Three Kings - Gaspar, Baltazar and Melchior travel through Spain and present good children with sweets. At night they stuff their shoes with straw and leave them outside and by morning the Magi horses have eaten the straw and the Three Kings have left toys and sweets.

Christmas Among Syrians and Lebanese

In Syria and Lebanon the Christmas season begins on December 4th, St. Barbara's Day, and lasts until Epiphany, January 6th. On St. Barbara's Day a table laden with sweetmeats and other delicacies and decorated with small colored candles is prepared in the Syrian home, even in the United States. It is a day on which the poor are

remembered and given help. It is also a day of memory for the dead.

Christmas Eve is not jolly and gay in Syria as with us; it is a season of prayer and worship. Pilgrimages are frequently made from Syria to Bethlehem to attend the impressive midnight service there. Christmas Day itself and the day after are observed as holidays but quietly and chiefly in the home. It is New Year's Day that is the time for merrymaking. On that day presents are exchanged and children go from door to door with New Year's greetings and receive candles and money in return. The Syrian child does not look to Santa Claus for favors; the camel is his gift bearer and before going to bed on New Year's Eve, he sets out a bowl of water and a dish of wheat for its refreshment. According to legend this camel was the youngest of those bearing the Wise Men to the cradle of the Infant Christ and it fell down exhausted by the strenuous journey. But the Christ child blessed it and conferred immortality on it. In the Lebanon district it is called a "Magic Mule" which brings gifts to the children. Rihbany in "A Far Journey" mentions a New Year's ceremony in which he used to take part as a child. When on New Year's Day he and his sisters went to the fountain to get water for the household they would take with them a few handfuls of wheat and cereals which they would cast reverently into the water, saying "Good morning fountain! Bless and increase our grain." "So did we", Rihbany comments, "ignorantly practice the modes of worship of our remote Oriental ancestors who poured their gifts to Astarte into the streams of Syria ages before Christianity was born."

There are several interesting Syrian legends connected with Epiphany Eve, "Lailat-al-Qadr", Night of Destiny, as it is called. According to one of them which is widely accepted, at twelve on that night the trees bow in adoration before the Christ child. Rihbany thus describes his boyhood memories connected with that legend: "But what was that compared with the Feast of the Epiphany, which we celebrated in commemoration of the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan twelve days after Christmas. It is known to the people as "El-Gitas" (the dipping in water). I was taught to believe, and most joyously did believe, that the rivers and fountains of the entire world became suddenly holy about sunset on Epiphany Eve. Wild beasts left not their dens the entire night and were all rendered harmless as doves because the Christ was on his way to the Jordan. The trees knelt before the passing Saviour with the exception of the mulberry and the fig which saucily remained standing. It was explained to me in this connection that the mulberry tree was too proud to kneel because it produced silk and the fig had a grudge against the Master because he once cursed it. And how I would go out on that blessed night and peer into the darkness to see a kneeling tree. But I was always told that only a saint could see such things."

One devout member of his own clan, Rihbany was assured, had actually beheld a kneeling tree. This man, Abu-Simaan, at midnight on Epiphany decided to bathe in a nearby stream, thereby according to popular belief, renewing his baptism and securing closer fellowship with the Saviour. Removing his garments, he hung them on a low tree or bush near the bank and then plunged into the water. When he emerged, he

could not see his clothes anywhere but finally he spied them hanging in the top of a lofty poplar, some distance from the edge of the stream "With great joy Abu-Simaan realized that when he threw his clothes over its branches the tree was kneeling and that he had the great fortune to be 'baptized' just at the most blessed moment when Christ was walking the earth in the mystic shadows which veiled him from mortal eyes."*

An old tradition has it that on this night of destiny the gates of Paradise are open and wishes, made at just that moment, are sure to be fulfilled.

Christmas Among the Ukrainians

As the Ukrainian churches, both the Greek Orthodox and the Uniate, adhere to the "old style" calendar, their Christmas celebrations occur thirteen days after ours, on January 6th according to our reckoning. With the Ukrainians as with most other European groups, Christmas Eve is of peculiar importance and is observed with much traditional ceremony and festivity.

Though Christmas Eve belongs in the forty-day fast period which precedes Christmas in the Greek Orthodox Church, the meal, *Swiata Wecera*, or Holy Supper, served on that occasion is very elaborate. In the old country it invariably consists of twelve courses in memory of the twelve apostles; here it is as bountiful as the family income permits. Fish, jellied and baked and broiled, of course takes the place of meat. *Bortsch*, a beet soup, is usually served, and "*holubtsi*", cabbage stuffed in the old country with millet, but here with rice. "*Vareniki*" resembling the Italian "*Ravioli*", also form part of the meal; on this occasion they are stuffed with sweets like honey or jam, or with fresh peas, mushrooms or other vegetables. For dessert, there is "*kutya*", a pudding made of poppy seeds, honey and whole wheat; Christmas would not be Christmas to the Ukrainian without *kutya*.

The Ukrainian housewife strews hay or straw on her dining table and spreads her best embroidered tablecloth over it. She also strews it on the floor and places a sheaf of wheat in the corner of the room. These rites are very old; they may be in commemoration of the humble surroundings of Christ's birth, but they are more probably incorporated into the Christmas celebration from the pagan harvest festival. When the first star appears in the sky, the family sits down to dinner. During the meal, someone throws a handful of *kutya* to the ceiling. If it sticks, the coming year will be a prosperous and happy one. After the meal is over, the *kolach*, or braided bread, which, set between two lighted candles, has served as decoration, is left on the table. There is a superstition that the family dead return at midnight on Christmas Eve and partake of this bread. According to many legends, animals have

* "A Far Journey", by Abraham Mitrie Rihbany.

the power of speech and of prophecy on this night. That they may also share in the Christmas festivities, a feast is prepared for them also.

Later the Ukrainian family walks through the snowy night to the old wooden church to attend mass. Invariably a Christmas crib has been constructed in the church for this occasion; images of the Christ child, St. Joseph and the Virgin Mary, and possibly, of the shepherds are used. In this country, evergreens are used for decorating the church at Christmas, but such was not the case in the old country. The church is fragrant with incense; voices are raised in song and prayer.

Among Ukrainians in Europe, the Christmas festival lasts three days; the celebration has been curtailed here to fit industrial conditions. In the Ukrainian villages, during these days, singers known as "Kolyadniky" go from house to house singing the "Kolyadky", folksongs which tell of the birth of Christ and the events of his life. They usually carry a manger with them, and in some villages they perform miracle plays. They are rewarded by gifts of food and money. These processions have been amusingly "Americanized". In the United States during Christmas week representative men visit the Ukrainian households and collect money for the support of the educational and political enterprises undertaken by the Ukrainians here and abroad. After the fashion of the "Kolyadniky", they preface these requests with a few bars of song.

In the Greek Orthodox Church, on the 6th of January (or 19th of January according to the old calendar), occurs a ceremony known as "the blessing of the water". Among the Ukrainians it is called "Bohoyavlennia"; in common speech it is also known as "Jordan". In the old country on that day the priests lead a procession from the villages to a nearby stream. There the ice is broken and the water is blessed with impressive ceremony. Meanwhile, special songs are sung. They are strange and wild; they are said to be the oldest in the Ukrainian language, so old that the meaning of some of them today is no longer clear. Each person is given some of the water which has been blessed and it is highly valued by the devout. In the United States, as far as is known, no such processions are held, but in the Ukrainian churches water that has been blessed is on that day distributed to the congregation.

Christmas in the Netherlands

The festivities start with "Sint Nicholaas" December 5th when the good saint, accompanied by "Zwarte Piet" - Black Peter the Moor, who carries a rod and a big bag. The children at home sing little songs and when the door suddenly opens a shower of goodies fall from the bag. December 25th - "Erste Kerstdag" - Christmas and the second day are family reunion days and quietly spent at home. A special kind of raisin bread is served with coffee, hot chocolate or tea. The children play around the decorated Christmas tree.

Christmas Among the Yugoslavs

Each of the three principal racial groups constituting the population of Yugoslavia, the Serbs, the Croats, and Slovenes had Christmas customs of its own before the union took place, and had likewise borrowed customs from its neighbors. The Serbians, who belong to the Greek Orthodox Church, borrowed from their co-religionists in the East and the Slovenes and the Croats from their German and Italian neighbors. Consequently, though there are a few customs chiefly derived from pre-Christian times which are common to all three groups, or at least to two of them, Christmas is celebrated in diverse ways in Yugoslavia.

December 6th, St. Nicholas Day, is, as in most central European countries, the day for gifts in Slovenia. St. Nicholas, with a devil in attendance, distributes presents to the children. Gifts and Christmas trees are not customary at Christmas except among the wealthier people. The Slovenian housewife, however, prepares assiduously for Christmas, cleaning and baking for several weeks beforehand. She does not provide evergreens and holly for the decoration of her house; as in Italy, that custom does not obtain. But she prepares a Christmas crib, or manger, with skill and care. Every Slovenian household must have one, and it is also found in many Croatian homes. Expeditions to the forests to gather moss with which to line the crib are a Christmas custom widely observed. The cribs are usually elaborate; there will be a background representing Bethlehem, and images of the Christ child, the Virgin, and St. Joseph, and sometimes also of the shepherds the Three Kings and the animals. Quite frequently there will be an old fashioned music box which plays Christmas carols.

At Christmas the Slovenian housewife bakes a large loaf of poppy-seed bread. It is consecrated with certain traditional rites. It is then kept carefully throughout the year and is cut on festival occasions, serving as a symbol. The Christmas meal is meatless as in other Catholic countries; on the menu will be fish, stuffed cabbage and "politza" a cake made of honey, nuts and flour, which has won considerable popularity in certain American cities. On the morning of Christmas Day, and also on Easter Sunday, the traditional breakfast consists of ham served with horseradish.

The Serbian strews his table with hay or straw at Christmas time. At the Christmas Day dinner he and also his Croat brother is likely to eat roast suckling pig. Weather permitting, a fire is built outdoors on Christmas morning and the pig is roasted over it on a spit. A dish peculiar to the Croatian Christmas is the "Kolach", a ring shaped coffee cake. Three candles are placed within its hollow. The first is lighted on Christmas Eve; the father of the family makes the sign of the cross with it saying "Christ is born", the others responding, "He is born indeed." The second candle is lighted at noon on Christmas Day; after a prayer it is blown out. Where the head of the family is a farmer, he hastens to his granary and sticks the still warm candle into the grain. From the amount of the grain adhering to the candle, he can estimate the crop for the following season. The third candle is not lighted until New Year's Day and the cake is not cut until the Three Kings Day, January 6th, when each member of the family gets a slice to symbolize his share in the good fortune of the coming year,

The Croats and the Serbians have several Christmas customs in common. Both plant wheat on a plate on December 10th. By Christmas Day there is a miniature field of wheat which serves as decoration; it is usually placed on the window sill. They also have a Yule log custom, which is not found among Slovenians. Before sunrise on Christmas morning, the men of the family go into a nearby forest to fell a young oak tree. It is selected with great care, and traditional rites must be observed in cutting it down; it must, for instance, fall toward the East and at the moment of sunrise. It is brought home in state and lighted candles are held on each side of the door through which it is carried. Corn and wine are sprinkled on the "badnyak" or Yule log, while wishes for abundant harvest next summer are uttered; sometimes the log is wreathed with garlands. As soon as it is burning brightly, a neighbor "polaznik", chosen beforehand for the ceremony, enters the house to bring Christmas blessings. He strikes the log sharply with a rod of iron or wood and as the sparks fly from it, he chants his wishes for the prosperity of the family; may they have as many horses, as many cattle, as the sparks, may their harvest be as bountiful; and other wishes of similar sort. Then he pours a little wine on the log and places a coin on it, a symbol of prosperity for the coming year.

The day of the Three Kings, January 6th, is observed by Yugoslavs with feasting and merrymaking- Three crosses are marked above the entrance door and sometimes also the initials of the Three Kings, Balthazar, Gaspar and Melchior. On the evening of January 5th, groups of men and boys go from house to house, often costumed to represent the Three Kings, and sing carols. They are given presents of food or money. The day of the Three Kings is looked forward to in Yugoslavia with additional eagerness because when it is over, the Carnival season, which lasts until Ash Wednesday and which in most sections of the country is a period of great gaiety and festivity, begins. Serbian Orthodox communities perform the ceremony of the blessing of waters on January 6th (old style) in much the same way as do the Ukrainians (see above).

According to Croatian folklore, angels pass over springs on Christmas Eve touching their waters with their wings to make it pure. Drawing water on Christmas Day is accompanied by certain traditional rites. Before filling their pitchers at the spring that morning, the girls throw fragrant herbs and grain into the water. The Croatians also attach special significance to the drawing of water on New Year's Day. As in Syria, gifts and sacrifices are offered to fountains, wells and springs to insure their purity and increase the fertility of the fields which they water.

"Srećan Božić", "Hristos se rodi" and "Vesele božićne praznike" or "Srećen Božić" are the Croatian, Serbian and Slovenian Christmas greetings, but the Serbian greeting should in strict accuracy be written in the Cyrillic alphabet.

FOREIGN EASTER CUSTOMS

That America is truly the heir of all ages and all civilizations is never better illustrated than during a festival season such as Easter. It is at such a time that memories of old world customs and traditions awaken in our foreign-born and that they endeavor to reproduce here the festivities and rites of their homeland so that their American-born children and friends may glimpse something of the beauty and spiritual significance of their cultural heritage.

Many of the traditions which center around Easter may be traced back to a festival celebrated in pagan times in honor of the Goddess of Spring. The very name Easter, for instance, is, according to Bede, derived from the Anglo-Saxon name of that goddess, Eostre, or Ostara. As in the case of Christmas, a church festival was subsequently superimposed and combined with it. Whatever their origin, these old world customs are one of the immigrants' contributions to our new world culture. Side by side with the American observance of Eastertide - the special church services throughout the country and the "Easter Parade", for instance - adaptations of some of the following European Easter customs will be found in many of our nationality groups.

Pre-Lenten Frolics

Before Ash Wednesday ushers in the forty days of Lenten fasting and self-denial, there is many countries, especially in Catholic countries, a season of mirth and revelry. It is a carnival season: carnevale, "Farewell oh Flesh"! Formerly it lasted from the Feast of the Epiphany to Ash Wednesday, but nowadays it is limited in most countries to the Sunday, Monday and Tuesday just preceding Lent. Italy is an exception; here Carnevale begins on January 17th and continues until Ash Wednesday, reaching the peak of boisterous merriment on Shrove Tuesday. Throughout the whole period, there are pageants, masques, banquets and other festivities in the various cities and villages. King Carnival, a fat straw man, makes his royal entry into Venice on Shrove Tuesday where he reigns merrily, but briefly, until midnight at which time his body, stuffed with fireworks is burned in a bonfire in St. Mark's Place.

The Carnival celebrations of Italy are famous; there are others which are less well known. There is, for instance, the "Fasiangy" of the Slovak peasant, a season of boisterous merrymaking extending from the ninth Sunday before Easter to Ash Wednesday. Dancing, drinking and pranks of all sorts engage much of his attention during this period. The church is said to frown on this festival but it is firmly rooted in Slovakia. In Hungary, also, the carnival season preceding the Lenten period, the Cibere as it is frequently called because of the cabbage soup which forms one of the staple articles of diet during that period, is one of general mirth and festivity. Since in most Catholic countries the devout do not approve of weddings during Lent, the pre-Lenten season is also one of many weddings; many of the carnival jokes and customs accordingly deal with such events. A case in

point is this . A tree trunk is dragged through the village streets amid song and music. The procession halts in front of the houses of marriageable girls, especially of such as have been known to have turned down a suitor. It taunts them in the following words: Wail, wail, wail wail! I was left out at Carnival!

The last three days are the gayest and the noisiest of all. This is the season of the "dawnjokers" who at daybreak make so much noise and commotion that sleep is impossible. Tuesday before Ash Wednesday is the climax of the celebration. Rich and poor alike on that day provide as lavish and generous entertainment as possible; it is said even the Christmas feasting seems stingy by comparison.

In Germany and Austria the inhabitants try to crowd gaiety and feasting into the days preceding the forty day Lenten period. Bonfires on hilltops, fiery wheels rolling down the slopes to be quenched, as a rule, in a brook at the foot of the hill, still are frequently seen in various sections of those countries during the week preceding Lent. Besides being occasions for mirth and noise, these ceremonies are held to insure good harvests. According to folk belief, the land illuminated by these fires will be fruitful. For this reason the peasants are glad to have the fiery wheels, and the children with the flaming torches who run behind the wheels, cross their fields. Masked processions are another traditional feature of this pre-Lenten period in Germany and Austria. In Silesia, a boy wrapped in straw so as to look as nearly as possible like a bear, accompanied by "Schimmelreiter" - again boys masked as horse and rider is led from house to house begging gifts and food. In southern Germany, masked boys, known as Hansele, represent demons and other evil spirits. In southern Schwarzwald the Hansele covers his face with a wooden mask, suspends a fox's tail from the back of his head and wears a brightly colored garment somewhat like the traditional clown costume, ornamented with bells and rattles. He hobbles through the streets carrying a sack and followed by a flock of children singing derisive songs. For answer he throws them nuts, apples, sweets etc. In Lueneburg, masked boys and youths on Shrove Tuesday stage a procession for the purpose of collecting eggs and sausages. One carries a pitchfork on which the sausages are hung. Accompanied by music, they go from house to house, and in each house they dance and feast. In Silesia, a Schimmelreiter forms part of similar processions. Community dancing almost invariably concludes these processions. In certain localities there is evidence that such processions were originally fertility rites. In the Hessian village Langenthal, for instance, the dancers are showered with hempseed and, as this happens, they jump as high from the floor as they can; according to folklore, this helps the hemp grow tall. A very famous Fastnachtsfeier, or carnival festival, is the Munich Schaefflertanz. It is danced by men in gay attire; they wear green caps with blue and white feathers, short red jackets, white vests, black kneebreeches, yellow aprons, white stockings and black shoes with silver buckles. From 14 to 20 men take part as well as a "Vortaenzer" or leader, and a "Nachtaenzer" or jester. They carry large halfhoops wound with sprigs of box and gayly colored ribbons, and raising them above their heads they perform all sorts of intricate and beautiful dance figures. The "Vortaenzer" is required to be especially skillfull; it is claimed

that he must be able to swing the decorated hoop over his head and between his feet without spilling a drop of wine from three full glasses fastened to the inner edge of the hoop.

In Germany, as in most other countries, eating is an important part of the pre-Lenten celebration. As it is the season of the year when farmers prepare their summer supply of smoked meat, sausages, etc., pork and sausage form important items in the feasting. Pancakes are traditional food during this season in cities as well as in the country. Various superstitions are connected with Shrove Tuesday. In the courtyard, for instance, a circular space is roped off just before sun set and the evening feed for the hens and other fowl is strewn within the circle. This insures that during the year the barnyard fowl will be in good health and lay many eggs. In Bavaria an effort is made on Shrove Tuesday to give the farm animals their evening meal as quickly as possible so that the stable doors may be shut before the sun sets - "die Soane noch in den Stall sperren" - thereby insuring that the stable will be warm the whole year. In many places, late on Shrove Tuesday or Ash Wednesday, a straw puppet is buried with sham ceremony and amid loud lamentation, or is thrown into water or is burned and the ashes strewn on the fields in a fertility rite. The straw puppet here, as in many other countries, undoubtedly originally represented Winter, which has been vanquished by the sun and spring.

While pre-Lenten frolics are most frequent in Catholic countries, in the Protestant countries of North and West Europe survivals of earlier rites or rituals - pagan or Catholic - are also still to be found; and some have been transplanted to this country. The British Shrovetide is an example in point. On Shrove Tuesday one must eat pancakes. At the Westminster School a traditional rite known as "tossing the pancake" is still celebrated on that day. Children, known as "Shrovers" go singing from house to house, and are rewarded with pancakes or "Shrovecakes". "Hurling" which has been described as a sort of "hand football" is another ancient rite connected with Shrove Tuesday. It is thought to be of Celtic origin and to symbolize the battle between summer and winter. The game is played in the village streets - chiefly in the villages of Cornwall nowadays - by men and boys. The ball used is the size of a cricket ball and is made of applewood and covered with a casing of silver. It has been conjectured that this silver ball symbolizes the rising of the sun after the winter solstice. Virtue is ascribed to the touch of this ball and before the game it is passed around among the spectators. It is sometimes taken to the sick and aged so that they may be helped through handling it.

In Scandinavian countries, children wind a wooden cross with many colored ribbons or with tissue paper and sally forth with it at day-break on Shrove Tuesday. They belabor relatives, friends, or even strangers with this cross and exact gifts of "Fastelavn boller" or buns, and other goodies. Another relic of the days when "Fastelavn" the "Carne Vale" of the Northern countries, was an important festival lasting from Sunday through the Tuesday preceding Ash Wednesday - Pork Sunday, Bacon Monday and White Tuesday, when only white food was eaten is the game known as "striking the cat out of the barrel". Today it is

a favorite children's game, but originally it was in the nature of a tournament with the customary gay trappings. A barrel containing a cat - originally a live cat was used but later a stuffed one was substituted for humanitarian reasons - was hung over a roadway. Men arrayed in festive garments galloped their horses past the barrel, striking it in passing with their spears. He who broke the barrel and so let the cat out became "Cat King" until next Shrovetide and was given certain privileges, exemption from taxes for one thing. Sometimes this game is explained as a survival of a pagan rite, the cat being a symbol of darkness which the coming of Spring disperses.

Certain Mid-Lent Customs

In certain regions of Hungary they play a fire game on the first Sunday of Lent which is interesting because fire rites of many sorts were used in connection with the pagan spring festivals. This game "sajbozas" is played with wooden rings - sajbo - about six inches in diameter and a long stick. The boys and girls of the village gather on the village pasture after dark. The girls march in procession around a small reed hut which has been built there, singing while they do so, and then set it on fire with a candle which has been blessed in church. The boys heat the sajbo rings in the fire till they glow; then they twirl them on their sticks and dash them forcibly against a large target. The strongest boy has the first throw; as he hurls his sajbo, he shouts: "Sajbo, sajbo whose sajbo is this? This sajbo belongs to the Holy Virgin." As the game continues sajbos are dedicated to the various saints and when the list of those is exhausted, to fathers, mothers, sweethearts, etc.

In Poland it is the custom on the 4th Thursday of Lent to fill old pottery vessels with ashes and at nightfall break them as noisily as possible against the walls or doors of neighbor's houses. The custom has twofold significance: in the first place, it is an expression of joy at the fact that Lent is nearing its end, and in the second place, it rids the house of the old utensils in anticipation of the new outfit to be installed at Easter.

In Czechoslovakia they "carry out death" on the Sunday preceding Palm Sunday, a ceremony symbolic of the passing of Winter. In the Bohemian Forest, among the sturdy tribal Chods, so-called because they formerly walked "chodit" - the boundary between Bavaria and Bohemia, it is customary to prepare a wooden or straw dummy ornamented with gay ribbons and to carry it through the village streets to the river bank, singing meanwhile: "We are carrying out the Winter and bringing in the Springtime." After the dead winter is thrown into the stream, Spring is ushered into the village by girls carrying small spruce trees gaudily decorated with red apples, bright ribbons and gaily colored eggshells. They form in groups and go caroling from house to house, announcing the coming of the Spring and collecting ingredients for Easter cakes and other gifts. This Sunday is known sometimes as "Caroling Sunday", sometimes as "Death Sunday".

On Forty Saints Day - March 9th - Rumanians bake cakes shaped like the figure eight and sprinkled with walnuts and honey. They are called colaci or sfintisori (little saints) and are offered to all who come to the house during the day. On that day also tools and instruments are cleansed and sharpened, and otherwise made ready for the Spring labors. Ashes from the hearth are sprinkled around the house so as to keep out the "serpent". According to a Rumanian superstition, a serpent guards and protects each household, but evidently it is supposed to exercise its benevolence outdoors. Forty genuflexions on the evening of this day are believed to win the good will and protection of the Saints for the coming year.

Palm Sunday

The Sunday before Easter Sunday, Palm Sunday, is a day of great importance especially in Catholic countries. In the first place, there is the blessing of the "palm". For obvious reasons real palms are not accessible to most, and various substitutes are resorted to. In several countries pussywillows are used. In Lithuania the peasants take gaily decorated pussywillows to church to be blessed by the priest. In Czechoslovakia also pussywillows are blessed by the priest. They are taken out to the fields and waved over them to preserve the crops from rain and hail. The potency of the holy willow is held to be so great that people frequently eat the "pussies" in the belief that they thereby safeguard their health for the year. Serbia designates the day as the day of flowers. All of the villagers go to the river bank to gather willows and grasses which they hold aloft with church banners in a parade through the village streets. In Poland the willow is likewise used but not exclusively. In certain sections, for instance, branches from whortleberry or currant bushes are used. The boys and girls of the village go into the neighboring forests to get the whortleberry twigs; oftentimes they have to dig them from under the snow. Currant branches are kept in water in the house for three or four weeks beforehand so that they may be in leaf before Palm Sunday. Usually they are tied with white and red ribbons. The twigs are taken to church on Palm Sunday to be blessed; subsequently the householder sprinkles holy water with them in every room of every building. They are taken out into the fields and waved aloft to preserve the crops from injury of all sorts. They are also used when the cattle and sheep are first driven to pasture after their winter in the stables.

In Belgium branches of box take the place of palms. After being consecrated in church, they are placed in the house, in the farm buildings and even in the fields, where they serve as protection against evil spirits, lightning and other misfortunes. As is true in so many other countries, these consecrated "palms" are used for sprinkling holy water throughout the house and in the fields. They are also used to sprinkle holy water on the dead. Branches of box likewise take the place of palms in certain sections of Germany, and when consecrated are supposed to have the same virtues that the Belgians ascribe to them. In Westphalia they are placed in the flax fields to insure fertility, but it is bad luck to place them there in rainy weather. They are also placed in beehives. In Bavaria branches of box in the shape of a cross

are believed to protect the fields against hail, mice, worms and other pests. The leaves of boxwood, crushed and mixed in the fodder, bring health to farm animals.

In Switzerland small evergreen trees serve as palms. The slender trunks are partially peeled so as to show alternating stripes of light and dark, and as a rule all but the top branches are lopped off. The trees are then decorated profusely with sprigs of box, with apples, eggs and brightly colored ornaments. The oldest son carries the family's tree to church on Palm Sunday where he places it in front of the altar to be consecrated by the priest. Afterwards he takes it home where it forms an honored decoration in the house, or more often, in the garden.

As mentioned above, branches of box are substituted for palms in certain German provinces, but in Germany as a whole, the willow, especially the pussywillow, is the favored palm substitute. An interesting custom, once widely observed in that country but now perhaps extinct, or almost so, is the following. In the memory that Christ when he entered Jerusalem on the Sunday before his crucifixion rode on a donkey, a wooden image of that animal, "der Palmesel" used to play an important part in the Palm Sunday procession. It was placed in a gaily decorated chariot and drawn through the streets by children or sometimes by the village officials. Oftentimes men impersonating the twelve apostles walked ahead of the chariot, Judas always with a red wig. During the procession the boys offered bundles of hay to the "Palmesel" in the belief that they thereby secured fertility for their crops. As late as 1862 the farmers in Swabia, to safeguard the health of their cattle, threw hay before their stables on Palm Sunday, saying "the donkey of Our Lord ran over this hay and ate thereof." The touching of the Palmesel was considered to bring good luck; during the procession parents would place their children on its back.

In Italy olive branches are blessed; afterwards they are fastened to the vessels of holy water in the homes and kept until the next Palm Sunday. In the case of a death in the family, holy water is sprinkled on the body by means of such an olive branch. In countries of the Near East Palm Sunday is known as Hosanna Sunday in commemoration of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Olive branches are taken to the church to be blessed. After forty days they are placed in the homes and burned at different times during the ensuing year to ward off evil.

In Spain, Mexico and other Latin American countries, the religious brotherhoods arrange processions on Palm Sunday, sometimes repeating them on the other days of Holy Week. The Palm Sunday procession in Seville of the Penitents - a religious and social order deriving from antiquity - is especially famous. Of peculiar interest is that similar celebrations occur on American soil. The early Spanish priests introduced the Penitent Brotherhood in this country and it has gained an especially firm foothold among the Indians in New Mexico and in the Philippine Islands. The expiatory zeal of old Indian ceremonies has been blended with the pietistic fervor of medieval Spain in these celebrations, and they keep alive the memory of Christ's suffering and death with gruesome realism. The Penitent Brothers indulge in fanatic fasting and flagellation; while, as a rule, an effigy is used for the

crucifixion, not infrequently someone volunteers to impersonate the Saviour on the cross and remains elevated aloft in this posture for as long as forty-five minutes. Many of the ceremonies take place in desert country fifteen or twenty miles from any village and are surrounded with considerable secrecy.

Of a different character is a Palm Sunday performance enacted in many sections of Hungary. A dummy of straw and rags, Prince Cibere, representing Lent and deriving his name from the Lenten soup, is carried through the streets by the rejoicing villagers and then burnt, drowned or thrown beyond the boundaries of the village, after which Good King Marrow Bone is proclaimed victor in the contest which began between them on Ash Wednesday. Popular belief has it that the death or exile of Prince Cibere puts a stop to or averts disease and trouble.

Holy Wednesday

Czechs and Slovaks call the Wednesday of Holy Week "Ugly Wednesday". There is a superstition that anyone eating honey on this day will not be stung by serpents. The church bells are muffled, their place being taken by great wooden rattles in the church towers.

Maundy Thursday

From Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday, or at least to noon on Holy Saturday, church bells in Roman Catholic countries and, to a lesser extent elsewhere, are silent. The people say "the bells have gone to Rome". In many countries a traditional part of Maundy Thursday services is the washing of the feet of old men or beggars - usually 12 in number. A high dignitary of the church or possibly even a ruler or member of the royal family performs this act of humility in commemoration and imitation of that time when Christ washed the feet of his twelve disciples. It is said that the Emperor of Austria, Franz Joseph, never failed to observe this rite. In churches in Spain, in Italy, in Russia, in Greece and in Mexico, this ceremony of washing the feet of the poor is still observed, in Poland it also takes place in many of the churches. On Maundy Thursday baskets of food are distributed among the poor in Poland; there, as in most countries, Thursday of Holy Week is a time for remembering the unfortunate. It is of interest that, in England also, these traditional observances still take place, in part at least. In Westminster Abbey on Maundy Thursday, Maundy money is distributed to a number of old men and women drawn from all over the country. They must be sixty years of age or over, have paid taxes, and have employed labor. Those who are placed on the Royal Almoner's list remain there for the rest of their life. The number of Maundy money beneficiaries varies; usually the number of men and the number of women correspond with the age of the King on his coming birthday. Each is given a small purse with specially minted Maundy pennies, and another purse containing a more substantial sum of regular money. Maundy pennies, are much sought after by collectors and sell for considerably more than their face value.

Originally, the Westminster Abbey ceremony included the washing of feet of the pensioners; King James II was the last, however, to perform

this act of humility. After his reign, the duty fell to the lot of the Lord High Almoner until about 1750, when this feature of the ceremony was discontinued. George V and his two sons, Edward VIII and the late George VI, showed active interest in this ceremony and took part in or supervised the distribution of Maundy Thursday alms. The dignitaries who dispense the alms wear "towels" across their chests, a symbol from the days when the washing of feet was actually part of the Maundy Thursday ceremony; they also carry large bouquets of flowers and herbs, a relic of the days when the plague had to be guarded against, and when herbs were believed to be an antidote for it.

In Czechoslovakia, Holy Thursday is called "Green Thursday". The Hawthorne is supposed to weep on that day; according to tradition, it is the tree from which the crown of thorns was fashioned. Parents send their children to the brooks to bathe on Green Thursday; it is a cure for laziness. At breakfast the Czechs and Slovaks eat honey and "Judas cakes", cakes twisted like rope. The Russians attend evening service at which the evangelium of the apostles is read. Afterwards they carry home lighted candles from which they light the little lamp before their icon. It is a good omen if the bearer succeeds in reaching home with the candle still burning.

Good Friday

In many countries the entombment of Christ is reenacted in church on Good Friday with great ceremony and sorrow. In Russia a sepulchre is erected in the center of the church; covered with a beautiful pall on which is placed a life-sized picture of the Saviour and masses of flowers. Except for the votive tapers before the icons, the church is dark. The people kneel before the picture in prayer and worship. A similar ceremony takes place in the churches of Poland, of Lithuania, and of Rumania. In Rumania, after the entombment ceremony, the priest gives his parishioners flowers from the tomb, which are noted for their healing qualities. On the parishioners' return home they carry a lighted candle three times around their house and later mark a cross with the candle on every wall. The Rumanians call this Friday "barren Friday", because of the belief that seed planted on this day will not germinate. Holy Friday is "Great Friday" to the Greeks. The services that day reenact the story of the Passion. The figure of Christ is nailed to the cross, then taken down and buried in a tomb erected in the church. The tomb is covered with orange, lemon and jasmine flowers and buds. At midnight an effigy of Christ is borne through the town in a solemn torchlight procession. These open air processions also take place in this country in communities where Greeks are numerous; they can be seen for instance on South Halsted Street in Chicago, and in Tarpon Springs, Florida, where there is a large colony of Greeks employed in the sponge fisheries. Bands form part of the processions and play dirges, and at intervals the priests and the people raise their voices in religious chants.

It is on Good Friday that the devout ascend, on their knees, the 28 steps of the Santa Scala near the Lateran Palace in Rome. The Santa Scala according to tradition, was formerly the staircase in the palace of Pontius Pilate. A similar ceremony is performed in Mexico. At

Amecameca, holy city not far from Mexico City, the faithful climb a mountain on their knees to worship at the sepulchre of Fray de Valencia, a saint beloved by the Indians, who is buried in one of the caves.

Holy Friday is known as "Great Friday" in Czechoslovakia. On that day anyone can look upon the sun without being blinded by its glare. Moreover, all hidden treasures are revealed to those seeking them before sunrise. An ancient ballad tells of a woman who went before sunrise of Great Friday to a mountainside. The rocks opened and she beheld quantities of shining gold. Hastily laying down her child, she filled her apron with gold and then ran home for a large vessel to hold more treasure. By the time she returned, however, the sun was up and her child was shut up in the mountain. A year later she returned to the same spot before sunrise; the mountain opened and she found her child alive and well. The Syrians, on Holy Friday, eat bitter herbs -- thyme and dandelions -- and drink vinegar in memory of the sufferings of Christ, and they walk barefooted over the mountains gathering thorns and flowers.

Holy Saturday

At ten o'clock on Saturday in Roman Catholic countries "the bells come back" and ring again. On this day the housewives complete the preparation of the traditional Easter dishes, and in most Roman Catholic countries baskets of Easter food are taken to the church to be blessed or else the priest goes from house to house in the village blessing the food. In Poland the Easter table is spread on Saturday. It is covered with a snowy cloth, oftentimes festooned with evergreens, and the centerpiece as a rule consists of moss, fruits, colored eggs, and a symbolic lamb made of butter or sugar. Extra places are set for unexpected guests; one place is traditionally reserved for the prophet Elijah. The Easter meal of meats, sausages, eggs, cakes and other dishes, the "Swieconka" must be blessed by the priest. So in spite of the press of household duties one or more members of the family must attend church service with a basket of food and fetch the holy water with which to sprinkle the house and barns, cattle and fields, and the holy fire at which the home fires must be kindled. Very similar customs prevail in other Roman Catholic countries.

A ceremony known as "Scoppio del Carro" takes place in the Piazza del Duomo, in Florence, Italy, on Holy Saturday. Early in the morning a chariot drawn by oxen in rich trappings is driven into the piazza. On the chariot is a high scaffold decked with flowers and laden with fireworks. From the scaffold a wire runs into the cathedral down which a dove, symbolizing the Holy Spirit, glides when the church bells announce that mass is nearing its end. The dove carries the sacred fire which lights a fuse and sets off the fireworks. Simultaneously the church bells of Florence ring out joyously. The pagan rite of carrying the sacred fire from house to house is said to be the origin of this ceremony.

An impressive fire ceremony takes place in Jerusalem on Holy Saturday. The scene is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and usually some 5,000 persons from all over the world attend it. Fifty patriarchs carrying banners, march singing around the tomb of Christ in the center of the church. Then the bells ring out: the Holy Fire is lighted and flames shoot out through apertures in the wall of the sepulchre. The spectators crowd toward the fire to light candles they have brought with them and the interior of the huge church becomes a glittering mass of lights.

A more frivolous aspect of Holy Saturday are the Judas games and jokes which take place in many countries. In Poland, for instance, the boys construct a Judas dummy of straw and rags. They carry it to the cemetery where they belabor it with wooden swords; afterwards they drown it in the river or burn it at a stake. In Mexico the street vendors sell life-size images of Judas during Holy Week. They are made of straw and usually filled with firecrackers. They are hung on a rope stretched across a roadway and on Holy Saturday they are beaten and stoned by the crowd and finally set on fire. The Judas image may also be stuffed with candies and other goodies, in which case it is used in children's games, the children beating it with wooden staves till it gives up its treasures. The burning of Judas in effigy used also to take place in Athens and other parts of Greece, but because of the danger of fire it was forbidden. Instead there is almost continuous firing of revolvers on Saturday evening, the object being "to kill Judas."

Easter Day

In several countries - Russia - Rumania - Greece, for instance - the principal Easter service takes place at midnight. In Russia a procession forms - or used to form - at half past eleven on Saturday night. The clergy in their most gorgeous robes, preceded by persons carrying the cross aloft and richly decorated church banners, and followed by the choir march around the church and then out through the church doors. All carry lighted candles. Outside they circle the church in a symbolic search for the tomb of Christ. When the bells announce midnight, the procession reenters the church, and as the leader crosses the threshold, he says, "Christ is risen.", and the congregation responds "He is risen indeed." Then the impressive and beautiful Easter mass is celebrated and at its conclusion, about four o'clock in the morning, the worshippers return home to partake of a bountiful Easter breakfast. This begins a three-day period of feasting and hospitality. In every home hospitable tables decorated with flowers and laden with many kinds of meat, whole hams, and little lambs made of butter and special Easter bread and cakes welcome the visitors. Street vendors set up their carts in the villages, and festivities and merry-making abound.

In Greek churches the Easter liturgy begins when on the stroke of midnight the priest throws open the door and exclaims "Christos Anesti" (Christ is risen.). In Athens the archbishop proclaims Easter at midnight in the public square, while the congregation sings the time-honored hymn of John of Damascus, "The Day of Resurrection." Rockets are set off during the ceremony.

The Easter service in Poland is a daytime one and is the most important one of the year. Here also a procession passes around the church three times looking for the buried Christ. Revolvers are shot off to symbolize, it is said, the lifting of the stone from the tomb. After the service the young men in their carts race to see who shall reach home first, and the winner is proclaimed champion until next Easter. Before sitting down to the Easter dinner people exchange Easter eggs and good wishes. The meal that day is as abundant and delectable as the family purse permits. In rural districts it is customary to give some of the food which has been blessed in church to the farm animals, thereby assuring good health for them for the year. Sometimes portions of the food are placed on the graves of the dead.

In Germany, as in most other countries, colored Easter eggs are given to children on Easter Sunday, and they are told that the Easter hare has laid these eggs. The myth of the Easter hare seems to be of German origin, though it also appears in certain sections of England. It has, of course, been firmly established in the United States, where it is almost as closely identified with Easter as are the colored eggs. Lighting of fires on hilltops and rolling fiery wheels down the slopes of hills is an Easter Sunday custom as well as a "Fastnacht" in Germany. In Bavaria the peasants gather piles of wood in front of their churches and set them on fire. A priest blesses the fire, and when it is dying down, each peasant takes a stick bearing live embers to his home where his wife uses it to kindle the hearth fire. Pieces of the charred stick are scattered about the home to protect it from fire and lightning. Water which has been blessed by the priest in the presence of the congregation is likewise carried home. In Sweden and in other Scandinavian countries there must be eggs on the Easter breakfast table, and everyone tries to eat as many as possible. In Sweden, as elsewhere, the egg is the symbol of renewed vigor and life which the vernal equinox brings to the earth and its inhabitants. Popular belief in a number of countries ascribes special virtues to eggs laid on Easter Sunday and Maundy Thursday. A popular Scandinavian Easter custom is that of "Easter Whipping". Twigs from young birches are brought into the house and put in water some two or three weeks before Easter Sunday so that they may be in leaf by that date. Very early Easter morning some member of the family slips out of bed before the others are awake and proceeds to whip the sluggards unmercifully with the birch twigs. This peculiar custom has an origin similar to egg-eating. The physical contact with the young birch is supposed to bring increased life and energy.

Easter Monday

Easter Monday in most countries is a holiday and a day of merriment. In Poland, it is customary for boys to choose the strongest, most energetic girl in the district as their leader throughout the year. They drag her to the well and pour a bucket of water on her head or take her to the stream where the ice is broken and she receives a thorough immersion. The girl thus baptized is considered the leader of the harvest celebration and in all other festivities. In some towns the choosing ceremony is performed by sprinkling water on the head or by spraying with perfumed water. Easter Monday is also known as "Ducking Monday"

in Czechoslovakia, On that day also the boys plait willow wands and ornament them with bright ribbons. With these they switch the girls "so they won't be lazy" and every victim is obliged to give an egg to her tormentor. The switches are cut from willow trees which are the first to bud in the springtime, and the whole season is called "pomlázka" and "omladnutí", which means to renew youth; and there is a belief that whoever is lashed with the Easter switch will be made young again. Groups of boys go caroling from house to house and are rewarded with colored eggs and with "Hnetanky" or Easter cheese cakes. It is also customary for every girl to present a beautifully decorated egg to the boy she loves. In Hungary, on Easter Monday, the girls present bottles of perfume and various kinds of Easter candies to the boys in return for the same sort of gifts given them by the boys on Easter Day.

The afternoon of Easter Monday is the traditional time to visit relatives and friends in rural Germany; "going to Emmaus" such visiting is called. On the evening of Easter Monday the young man hastens to the home of his "red egg"; in other words, to the home of a young girl who has sent him as an Easter greeting a red egg, an intimation that she is not averse to his attentions.

Easter Superstitions

Numerous superstitions are connected with Easter observances. A few have already been referred to; the following may prove of interest. In Scotland it is a good omen if, on first looking out of a window on Easter morning, one sees a lamb. It is especially lucky if the lamb's head is turned toward the house; it is less lucky if the lamb is lying down or is facing away from the house. To meet a lamb is lucky at any time; the devil can appear in any shape except that of a lamb. It is a widespread superstition that rain or dew which falls in the evening of Easter Saturday or on Easter Sunday is an excellent beauty lotion. In many places the girls spread sheets on the grass to catch the beneficent water. In certain sections of Germany when the bells ring for service on Easter Saturday the farmer runs out to shake his fruit trees believing that this will mean an increased fruit crop. An egg buried in a field in spring secures a good yield of grain. It brings luck if the plough passes over an egg at the first spring ploughing.

There are many rites for driving out evil spirits, witches, etc., who in several countries are supposed to be unusually malignant in Easter week. In Albania on Easter Eve the young people light resinous torches and march singing through the village till they come upon a brook. They throw the torches into the water and thereby rid the neighborhood of evil spirits. On the evening of Easter Monday the Gypsies of Southern Europe place herbs and simples in a wooden box which rests cradle-wise on two pieces of wood. Among the herbs they put a dead snake or lizard after everyone present has first touched it with his fingers. Thereupon the box is wrapped in white and red wool, is carried from tent to tent, and afterwards thrown into running water. The gypsies believe that by this ceremony they ward off ill health and misfortune for the coming year. Should anyone find the box and open it, he and his will be visited by all the maladies the gypsies have escaped

THANKSGIVING IN MANY LANDS

Giving thanks for the bounty of Providence is a practice as old as mankind and widespread as the human race. Long before the Christian era, harvest gods were worshipped with curious and varied rites. Customs now in use at harvest festivals have their counterparts in pagan countries; in many cases their origin and their significance is shrouded in the mist of antiquity. The American Thanksgiving Day is usually ascribed to the Massachusetts colony of pilgrims, who, in gratitude for their first harvest on American soil, devoted the day of December 13, 1621 to praise and rejoicing. The idea underlying such a celebration did, however, not originate with them. Thanksgiving day - by that or some other name - was known to virtually all the peoples who have come to America since 1492 and is known to those now coming.

Sifting the information obtained from foreign-born staff members of the American Council for Nationalities Service and checking it against well known authorities on folk lore and folk festivals - the Golden Bough, for instance - it becomes apparent that a day of thanksgiving is a custom in almost all the countries of Europe. It usually has to do with the harvests - with the planting of crops or their gathering - and therefore is observed in rural districts rather than in cities. In no country is it a national and universally observed festival as here, where the President proclaims it and business closes down entirely. In that connection it is of interest to recall that in this country also, until the time of the Civil War, the celebration was local and chiefly confined to the New England states. The first Thanksgiving day in New York State was November 26, 1795; it was proclaimed by Governor John Jay as an expression of gratitude for the cessation of a yellow fever epidemic. It was chiefly through the efforts of Mrs. Sarah J. Hale, a native of Boston and editor of Godey's Lady's Book, that the custom became a national one. After the battle of Gettysburg, July 1863, she urged President Lincoln to proclaim a day of Thanksgiving throughout the country-which he did, appointing August 6, 1863, for the purpose. From then till now, the Presidents of the United States have generally set aside the last Thursday of November of each year for the nation-wide thanksgiving.

ARMENIA

On or around August 15th, Armenians celebrate a harvest festival known as Navasard. Nowadays this festival is a religious one and consists in the blessing of the grapes, the most important crop of their country, but in its origin it was far different. Literally translated, Navasard means New Year and its name dates from pagan times when the Armenian year began in August. The festival in those days was dedicated to Astrik, Armenian goddess of the hearth, and it was celebrated with elaborate ceremonies and much feasting. With the coming of Christianity the pagan holiday, as so frequently happened, was taken over by the church. Astrik yielded place to the Virgin Mary; the festival is now linked with the Assumption of the Virgin. Of the many pagan ceremonies and rites, only the churchly blessing of the grapes remains.

On the evening before Nasavard great trays heaped with the first ripe grapes of the season are taken to church and usually placed before the altar. In some communities the priest who is to conduct the Nasavard ceremony must spend the night in church in prayer and meditation. Next morning, after the grapes have been blessed, the priest gives a small bunch to each member of the congregation. As they eat their first grapes of the season - before the Nasavard blessing, grapes are considered "untouchables" by the devout - they cross themselves. In certain localities it is considered sacrilege to throw the stems of these grapes on the ground; they must be carefully burned.

About a month later the grapes are fully ripened and the gathering takes place. The whole village participates in the work which usually lasts for a week or more; it is a period of much gaiety and feasting. During this time the mothers of the families prepare many of the Christmas sweets, which largely are made of grape juice. Of these "sharotz", here called "nut sausage", is especially dear to the Armenian child. Concentrated grape juice is boiled with flour and sugar until it forms a thick paste. Next, nut meats which have been strung on a long cord are covered with the paste until the concoction assumes the form of a sausage. The sausages are suspended from the kitchen ceiling till thoroughly dry and then are locked away safely till Christmas when they are brought out as a special treat.

Some Armenian rural communities in this country observe the "grape blessing" custom.

An Armenian festival or ceremony which seems to have no counterpart in other countries is that of "Andastan". It has to do chiefly with the crops and may be either a supplication, as in the case of prolonged drought, or thanksgiving for abundant crops or other blessing. It has no fixed date but may take place in spring, summer or fall. It is usually celebrated in the fields but may also be celebrated in church.

When it is decided to hold an "Andastan", as a rule the priests from neighboring communities or villages are asked to participate; sometimes a hundred or more are present. Clad in their vestments, they move in procession first to the east, then to the west; next they go to the north, then to the south, forming a cross "in the procession and by the procession". Meanwhile they invoke blessings on the four corners of the earth; the east, symbolizing growth of the spirit; the west, peace; the north, fertility and increase of population; and the south, the growth and spreading influence of the church. Name and spirit of "Andastan" are international in their implications; they are not concerned merely with Armenia and Armenians. "Andastan" means literally "here and there and everywhere" and the blessing is intended for the whole world and for all peoples.

"Andastan" is frequently celebrated on Holy Cross Day, September 14th, in the Armenian churches here and abroad. According to legend, some centuries after the death of Christ the Bishop of Jerusalem found the cross on which Christ was crucified, buried in the earth and with

autumn flowers growing above it in profusion. At the Andastan ceremony on September 14th a cross is wreathed in flowers and evergreens to commemorate this event, and each member carries home a sprig to insure a blessing.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

In Czechoslovakia there are two harvest celebrations, one of which Posviceni, is the church consecration of the harvest. The other, Obzinky, is secular in nature. When the harvesting is over, the farm laborers make a wreath of ears of wheat, or rye and field flowers. It is usually placed on the head of the prettiest of the girls, who then with the other harvesters, accompanied by music and song, proceeds to the home of the land owner to whom the wreath is offered. It is held in high honor and usually kept until next harvest. After the ceremony there is dancing and feasting at the farmowner's expense. At this feast are usually served roast pig, roast goose and the famous Kolace, cakes square in shape and filled with plum jam or sweetened cheese, or poppy-seeds.

In some sections of Czechoslovakia, instead of a wreath, or in addition to a wreath, the last sheaf harvested is dressed as an old woman, the Baba, and borne in state to the home of the landlord where it occupies a place of honor till Christmas or, in some places, till the next harvest. In Moravia an old woman, or perhaps the woman who bound the last sheaf, is actually wrapped up in the sheaf - but she is not kept there till the next harvest.

Emperor Joseph II, desiring to combine the two thanksgiving celebrations, designated a special Sunday for that purpose but the people of Czechoslovakia still cling to both.

GERMANY

In Germany as in Czechoslovakia, the gathering of the crops is celebrated both in church and home. Even in the cities the "Erntedankfest" is a festival of importance. The last day of the harvest is one of thanksgiving and of feasting, in which all who have helped are asked to share. Roast pork is quite generally served on this occasion, and beer; in the grape - growing sections, wine flows like water. Dancing is part of the celebration, barn dances and square dances especially.

A large wreath of wheat and field flowers is presented to the owner of the farm. Then all gather in the big hall of the farmhouse; prayers of thanks are offered, after which the wreath is hung in a place of honor. In some sections of Germany it remains untouched till next harvest; in others, the grain is rubbed out of it on Easter Eve and scattered among the young corn. Sometimes the straw of the wreath is placed in the manger at Christmas to make the cattle thrive.

In certain sections of Germany, the last sheaf, usually dressed as an old woman, is carried in triumph to the farm, a harvest custom formerly widely observed. In former times, in many agricultural countries,

the peasants believed the Corn Mother or Corn Spirit was present in the last sheaf; hence the custom. The sheaf was often made exceptionally large, or weighted with stones, both being deemed a good omen for the next harvest. In Holstein the "old woman" is drenched with water, the remnant of a pagan rain charm.

In the wine growing districts of the German Reich, vintage festivals abound. A famous one is the "Fasselrutschen" at Klosterneuberg in Austria. In the cellar of the abbey is a huge cask, with a capacity of 12,000 gallons. It is the work of a celebrated Viennese carver and was constructed in 1704 to serve as receptacle for the abbey's wine, Leopoldsburg wine, which had great renown. According to ancient custom, young and old, male and female gather at the abbey on November 15th to slide down the side of the cask, landing on a padded platform at its base. The tradition is that the more headlong a person slides, the better his luck the coming year. In recent years there has been a notable revival of interest in old customs and traditions and a movement to foster those still being practiced and to revive others. An instance in point is a vintage festival celebrated on the Schafberg near Vienna some years ago. It was arranged by the "Alt Wiener Bund", which used to do much to keep alive old Viennese customs and possibly still does. The festival opened with a procession headed by "wine maidens" crowned with vine leaves, flowers and grapes. Following them came the wine growers and their wives and children attired in old-time costumes. Especially picturesque were the lovely old Austrian gold lace headdresses worn by many of the women. A huge "vintner's crown" decorated with apples, pears and grapes was carried in the procession, as was also a "vintner's goat" made of straw and vine leaves, doubtlessly a pagan survival and connected with the worship of Pan, the goat-footed god of revelry. A comedy figure in the procession was the "hirte" or watchman, who was clad in traditional costume and carried a cane with which he ward off the efforts of boys to steal the grapes from the decorations. As in vintage festivals everywhere, dancing and wine drinking played a prominent part in the festivities.

GREAT BRITAIN

A discontinuance of most of the harvest customs in Great Britain has resulted from the substitution of reaping and harvesting machines for the sickle, scythe and other hand implements. Fifty years ago or so, however, the Harvest Home Supper, the "Kern Doll" or "Kern Baby", the "Kern Woman" or "Cailleach" (Gaelic for old woman) as she is called in Scotland, the ceremonies of Crying the Neck or Crying the Mare, and the Hockey Cart were features of the harvest festivities on many farms.

As in other European countries, the above-mentioned customs are undoubtedly survivals of pagan harvest rites. The Kern Baby and the Cailleach represent the "Corn Spirit", which according to pagan belief ruled over the fields and had to be propitiated by certain rites; Persephone and Demeter were their names in Greece. The last sheaf, known as the "Kern Baby" in case the harvest was early, or the Kern Mother or Kern Woman or Cailleach if it was late, was dressed in festive woman's clothing and carried in procession to the farm house where it was honored

by various ceremonies. In some districts it was kept till the coming harvest; in others it was fed to the cattle at Christmas to ensure their health for the coming year. "Crying the Neck" or "Crying the Mare" was probably another pagan survival. As the harvest progressed, the corn spirit was driven from place to place, finally taking shelter in the last corn or hayloft left standing. This was tied or plaited into what was known as a "neck" or "nack" and then the reapers hurled their sickles at it in an effort to cut it down. The successful reaper, was, according to tradition, expected to cry, "I have her!-What have you?" the others were to ask. "A neck! A neck!" or "A Mare! A Mare!" the winner would reply. "What will you do with her?" "Send her to Farmer _____" naming a farmer who was behind in his harvest. "Crying the Neck" or "Crying the Mare" became a gesture of derision, but it is believed by antiquarians that it originally was a rite for getting rid of the corn spirit, not by any means a wholly benevolent spirit, and passing her on to someone else. A writer to the London Times in 1934 claimed to have seen the ceremony of "Crying the Neck" practiced in several localities in Cornwall that year.

Other old harvest customs are still observed in Great Britain. On September 21st, St. Matthew's Day, a fair has been held on Woodbury Hill, Rere Regis, Dorset, for centuries, it is said. At this fair on a certain section of the hill, farm workers traditionally settle their quarrels before an audience of their friends "in the old fashioned way". Hiring of servants, especially of farm servants, traditionally takes place on Martinmas, November 11th. About persons who were changeable or flighty, the old saying was "He will not stay to eat Martin's kail." Kail, however, is not the traditional Martinmas food; roast goose is eaten in many homes on that day in England, as well as in a number of other countries - Germany and the Scandinavian countries, for instance. According to popular belief it was possible to foretell from the breast-bone of goose eaten on Martinmas Eve what the coming year would be like. In England the custom of eating goose on Martinmas has largely been transferred to Michaelmas Day, September 29th. An old saying has it that "Those who eat goose on Michaelmas Day shall not want money all that year."

Harvest festivals are not wholly the property of the rural regions of Great Britain. In London, the costermongers have their Harvest festival, or Thanksgiving; it comes a month before the American Thanksgiving. Just as for centuries the Harvest Homes has been marked by solemn churchward processions of men and women bearing armfuls of the fall fruits of their labors in field or orchard, the costermongers in London on that day attend church, their offerings coming from the market instead of fresh from the fields. The most notable feature of their processions is their costumes, which are covered from head to hem with round pearl buttons, edge to edge, solidly or in designs. The wearers of the costumes are known as "pearlies". Each one makes his own costume; one of the "pearlies" reports spending three weeks sewing on buttons. There is always a Pearly King and a Pearly Queen at these festivals. According to tradition the fashion which is now the pride of the costermongers dates back to the 18th century; an irreverent cockney refused to be outdone by the splendor of a visiting Latin American

and, lacking spangles for his coat, simply raided the nearest button basket.

HUNGARY

Hungarians celebrate two festivals in connection with the gathering of crops. In the spring, on St. Mark's Day (April 25), is held "the feast of the wheat". Led by their priest or minister the people go in procession to the wheat fields where the future bread is blessed. Each person takes home with him some ears of wheat from the fields thus blessed. In some districts these ears are supposed to have a healing, magic effect and they are everywhere greatly esteemed. The fields and crops are blessed again on Sts. Peter and Paul's Day, June 29th, the day when harvesting begins in Hungary.

Later in the summer when the wheat is harvested, the second festival occurs. Modern agricultural methods have done away with the old harvest-home customs in most sections of the country, but they still linger in the remoter districts. In Transylvania, where the owner of a farm still relies chiefly upon the labor of friends and neighbors for the gathering of his crops, the harvest is an occasion for mirth and feasting as well as work. When the last sheaf is harvested, a wreath of wheat and wild flowers is carried to the farmer's house by girls dressed in their most colorful costumes. It is still customary to lie in ambush for this procession and to drench them and the harvest wreath thoroughly with water, to ensure a rich harvest for the coming year. Another custom that still survives is this: on the landowner's first appearance in the harvest field, the harvesters seize him and tie him securely with a straw rope. He has to pay ransom for his release.

When the procession arrives at the farm house, poems are recited in honor of the farmer. Then the wreath is hung in a place of honor where it remains until next harvest. After that follow a bountiful feast and dancing usually to the music of a gypsy band. Gingerbread cookies made especially for this festival are lavishly distributed among the guests. They are usually highly ornamented and moulded into the shape of animals, human beings, hearts, etc. The gingerbread cookies of Hungary are considered an interesting manifestation of the folk art of that country.

The gathering of the grapes - the szuret, it is called - the last of great outdoor tasks in Hungary, is the occasion for special gaiety. It is looked forward to eagerly by the young people; most of the peasant dances take place after this festival. According to ancient custom the gatherers of the grapes fashion an enormous "bouquet" out of grapes. This is carried in procession on a pole by two men. Gypsies go in front to play gay dance tunes and next follow usually clowns or actors who perform comic stunts. Then come the gatherers of the grapes and finally, with the grape bouquet, a bevy of girls dressed in white and with wreaths on their heads. In festive procession they pass through the village, dancing, singing and drinking the health of every person they meet. When they reach the home of the owner of the vineyard, they hang the big cluster of grapes from the ceiling and then follow feasting and more dancing.

While the grapes are being gathered, or later, during the dancing, a traditional game of "robber" takes place. Several men are appointed to guard the grapes; the others then endeavor to steal the fruit from the vines or from the "bouquet" without being caught. If caught, the thief is dragged before a "judge" and made to pay some forfeit, usually to dance a solo dance amid the jeers of his companions, to sing a song, or to perform a ridiculous pantomime.

ITALY

There is no national harvest festival in Italy but practically every region in some fashion celebrates the gathering of the crops.

In northern Italy a "Giorno del Ringraziamento" (Thanksgiving Day) is observed in August after the wheat is threshed. It is a religious festival but the peasants usually finish the day with merrymaking and feasting.

In many districts of Italy, notably in Tuscany and in the country around Rome, Brindisi and Milano, the gathering of the grapes is the occasion for much gaiety and mirth; "Festa di Vendemmia", it is called, or "la Sagra dell'Uva". As in several other countries, the harvesting of the grapes is a community affair; friends and neighbors help gather the fruit and receive in return for their services food and gifts but no wages. "The wife of the owner of the vineyard cuts the first bunch of grapes and gives the signal to the others to begin. A lively contest ensues as to who shall first fill a basket with the grapes, an augury of good luck. All are as if intoxicated with happiness and joy; voices are raised in songs or jests. The little children run back and forth bringing baskets and messages; their faces are smeared with grape juice for today they can eat their fill of the grapes which till now might not be touched and could be had only by stealthy thieving when mother was not looking. There is no idling anywhere; the vines must be stripped before nightfall. In the midst of the frantic haste, however, time is found for jesting and kisses and for wonder and praise as clusters of grapes, which the workers exclaim are as beautiful as those of the 'promised land', are cut from the vines". Great carts drawn by oxen transport the grapes to the winepress, carts and oxen being decked with flowers and ribbons.

During the daytime the workers can find no time to sit down to a meal; they bolt hurriedly the fried chicken and other delicacies which are brought to them by the children and old women. When evening and leisure come, tables are set in the fields or vineyard and an abundant feast is spread. Flaring torches light the scene, and singing and music enliven it. After the banquet follow dancing and all sorts of games. The "Festa di Vendemmia" is a great time for courting; the men and girls who during the summer have been too absorbed in the numerous tasks incident to rural life to give much thought to love, now make up for it.

As soon as the grapes on one farm are harvested the workers move on

to the next; the season is one of cooperative good will and neighborliness. It is also one where the spirit of democracy prevails; class distinctions are forgotten, and great landowners and peasants mingle in friendly fashion. The wives and daughters of the former bestow gifts from the city on the families of the harvesters, usually shoes or other articles used by peasants only on state occasions. The lavishness of the feasts and the value of the gifts vary according to the abundance and excellence of the season's grape crop.

Three to four weeks after the "Fests di Vendemmia" comes "L'Ottobrate", a festival usually celebrated the last week in October when it is time to pour the wine into bottles or casks. It is not so important an occasion as the earlier gathering; the owners of the large vineyards seldom participate. Nor is it a field festival like the "Vendemmia"; it takes place chiefly within doors. The urban relatives of the peasants quite generally on this occasion come to visit and share the "Ottobrate" festivities which move from farm to farm till all in the neighborhood have had their turn. The new wine is merely sampled at this time; the peasants believe firmly that old wine like old friend is best and use it freely at this celebration.

Every year Naples celebrates a September festival known as the "Festa di Piedigrotta". Nowadays it is chiefly a musical event, but in origin it was a harvest festival. A few miles from Naples there is a grotto which in pagan times was dedicated to Priapus, god of gardens, fruits, vines and bees, and to which the people of the neighborhood brought gifts and offerings after the harvest was gathered. Piedigrotta in those days rang with the sound of games and contests, choruses and songs. Then Christianity drove out the ancient gods and shrine to Priapus and the harvest festival in his honor fell into decay. In the 14th century, through the efforts of a hermit who had taken up his abode in the grotto, Piedigrotta became once more the goal of pilgrimage and devotion, but sometime in the 18th century the religious festival was transformed into a musical tournament. Nowadays the "Festa di Piedigrotta" is the time when Italian composers plan to present their new songs for a first public hearing. The canzonetta that wins the prize on this occasion very soon is known in every town and city in Italy.

JEWISH

Many centuries before a day for nation-wide thanksgiving and prayer was established in this country, the Jewish people observed such a custom. One of the most important Jewish festivals is that of the "Feast of the Tabernacles", also called the "Feast of Ingathering" or "Succoth", which begins on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, the month of Tishri - that is sometime between the last week of September and the middle of October. It marks the end of the harvest "after that thou hast gathered in from thy threshing floor and from thy wine press" (Deut. XVI, 13, 16, R.V.) - and is a season of joyousness and gratitude for the bounty of nature in the year that has passed.

The orthodox construct booths or sukkas in their gardens or on the roofs of their houses and live in them more or less continuously during this nine*-day festival or at least eat their meals in them. Even in the cities of the United States they follow this custom. Board or canvas must not be used in the construction of these booths; they are fashioned of boughs and adorned with leaves, flowers and fruit. They are symbolic; they remind of the wandering in the wilderness when the children of Israel dwelt in similar booths. On the eve of the Feast, the members of the orthodox family attend synagogue; then, following ancient custom, they assemble in the booth and partake of a ceremonial meal consisting of wine and two wheaten loaves of special baking. In many synagogues in this country a sukkah is erected on the roof or within the building for the Feast of Ingathering and palm branches and citrons are even nowadays brought there as offerings. In the ceremonial observance of the festival the following must be used in accordance with Biblical instructions (Leviticus 23:40); a citron (Ethrog); a young shoot of palm (Lulab); three twigs of myrtle (Hadassah) and two willow branches (Aravah).

LITHUANIA

The end of the harvest brings to Lithuania one of its most joyous festivals, the "nubaiġai". At that time landowners keep open house for all who have helped in the harvesting and for their families. An abundant feast is prepared, and dancing, games and merrymaking last till late at night. At the harvest season the Lithuanian farmers formerly killed a cock and a hen, without bloodshed, the survival of a harvest sacrifice. The fowl were then eaten by the family; no servants were allowed to be present on this occasion.

A number of quaint harvest customs have survived. In Lithuania also the last sheaf dressed as an old woman, the Boba, is borne in triumphal procession to the farm; sometimes the person who bound the last sheaf is wrapped up in it. Here also every effort is made by the farmer and his family to drench the Boba with water so as to ensure plenty of rain for next year's crop. The harvest wreath also as a rule features in the Lithuanian celebration but the mode of presenting it is somewhat unusual. The prettiest of the girls walks at the head of the procession, carrying the wreath on a plate covered with a white linen cloth. As the reapers advance they sing an old song, telling how they rescued the master's crop from a huge bison - probably a symbol of winter - that would have devoured it and how they have brought the rye safely to his barn. On entering the farmyard, they change to songs in honor of the master and his family. Then the wreath is presented and the master thanks everybody and gives a gift to every girl in the procession. One of the harvesters usually delivers a speech; according to tradition the speech must end with a meaningless jumble of Latin and French or Polish words, thought to be a satire on the use of foreign languages by the great landed proprietors in Lithuania. The following translation of an ancient Lithuanian harvest speech or poem will be of interest:

* Originally this festival lasted seven days.

"From deep forests, from trackless swamps, pursued by famine, we wandered about in search of a valley, strewn with flowers, silvered by rye, gilded by wheat. We wandered through dark woods and birch groves, over treacherous bogs, over innumerable bees' nests and over the lairs of bears. We suffered from cold and rain and no one showed us pity. At last an old bear had the kindness to tell us: 'Keep on going. Go where your feet carry you. Go where the finches fly and you will come to (here the name of the master is inserted) who lives on a farm surrounded by tall maples and who has immense acres sown with corn and only a few laborers in the house. Go to him, help him to harvest his corn, and he will give you enough to eat and drink.' We came to thee, gracious master. We have harvested thy corn and now we bring thee a wreath, not of gold or silver, but of rye like diamonds, of wheat like amber. Clarissime, eminentissime, Vestra dominatis, oratis, vocatis---."*

POLAND

A church holiday held in August celebrates the gathering of the crops in Poland. On that day, according to very ancient custom, people bring bouquets and wreaths of wheat and flowers to church to have them blessed. Then they take them home and adorn their holy pictures with them; the presence of the consecrated grain is believed to ensure plenty of food until next harvest.

There is also in Poland a secular harvest festival called "Dozynki", or, more rarely, "Okrezne". When the harvesting is over, the farmworker gather around a small stack of grain which has been left standing in the field and celebrate an ancient rite known as "the decoration of the quail" or "the decoration of the goat". The grain is divided into three parts, each part is plaited like a braid and the three braids tied together to form a tripod. The ground under the tripod is covered with a cloth of pure flax linen and on this cloth are placed a loaf of bread, some salt and several copper coins, from immemorial times the symbols of affluence and a plentiful harvest. Thereupon the harvesters proceed to plough the ground around the tripod. The ploughing may be literal or symbolic. If the latter, a young girl who has worked in the fields for the first time this harvest is swung by hands and feet above and around the stack of grain, "ploughing" it, and being initiated at the same time.

After the "decoration of the quail", the harvesters march under song and music to the home of the landowner. They bear with them large wreaths fashioned of grain and wild flowers; sometimes branches of hazelnut are also woven into the wreaths. At the house the master and mistress with their children and guests await the procession. The wreaths are presented and then hung in the hall of the manor where they remain until the following harvest. Then the master, or his eldest son,

Source: "Lithuania", A.M. Benedictsen.

dances with the girl who has most distinguished herself during the harvest; and the mistress dances with the most industrious of the men reapers. After that, all are invited to a supper consisting usually of meat, bread, cakes, apples, brandy and the traditional Polish honey-wine.

In the district of Cracow the woman who binds the last sheaf is known as the Baba, or old woman. She is wrapped up in the sheaf so that only her head projects, and then taken in a harvest wagon to the farm house where she is drenched with water by the whole family. She remains in the sheaf till the harvest dance is over and all through the year she is called Baba.

In Poland, as in most other countries, farm machinery has largely replaced manual labor and incidentally has to a considerable extent done away with the old colorful customs. In an effort to preserve them and to renew their importance, President Moscicki for some years celebrated "Dozynki" at his country estate at Spala. On these occasions persons from all sections of Poland gathered in the spacious grounds at Spala to pay homage to the nation's foremost farmer and President. The magazine "Poland" in the issue for October 1930 thus described the Dozynki procession of that year;

"At one o'clock on Sunday the President went out on the balcony of the palace to receive the representatives of the various peasant groups. In spite of a steady downpour of rain this file of determined folk passed before their Chief Harvester for more than an hour. During the first half hour, delegations from all over Poland filed passed, dressed in their distinctive and colorful costumes. The larger groups were preceded by orchestras which have played those stirring melodies which have come down to them from generation to generation. Then came peasants from different sections of Poland bearing wreaths, and following these a group of harvesters representing Poland as a whole. This last delegation was led by a woman who wore a wreath on her head and carried in her hands a live cock, an old Slavonic symbol of good will. Threshers added to the rural effect, and a peasant orchestra played a rhythmic accompaniment for the procession. Next passed a wagon driven by a farmer from Spala itself and bearing three bags of flour and a kneading trough. An old woman proudly carried on a wooden tray her own manufacture, a loaf of bread covered with a linen cloth. Then came a Wolyniak with a comb of honey on the same kind of tray. Next were groups from Spala and from Cracow and the Tatra district, the latter wearing the brightly embroidered woolen costume of the Góral. All through the entire procession the President stood there in the pouring rain. He conversed briefly with the leader of each delegation, and received graciously from each an offering of wreaths and bread, visible tokens of Nature's bounty.

"Next the band struck up martial music and groups filed past symbolizing various phases of agriculture. Farmer Polescuk, clad in rough linen, led, driving his two horses hitched to a plow that was held by a robust peasant. An elderly woman in Kurpian dress, adorned with amber beads of her own manufacture followed, carrying a consecrated candle. Three sowers, a Wolyniak, a Lubliniak, and a Kujawiak, were

next in order. Four young boys dressed to represent the four most characteristic districts of Poland came next. Wearing the colors of the Cracow district, a man drove past with a harrow. Reapers and binders from different sections displayed their costumes. Three peasant woman, a Wolynianka, a Lowiczanka, and a Góralka, followed with their rakes. To give a more modern touch, a mechanical binder was drawn past by two horses. A horse rake, still quite a novelty in Poland, and driven by a brilliantly attired peasant, continued the procession. A ladder wagon filled with hay brought this part of the program to a close. The girls rode on the hay and a group of Mazovian peasants surrounded the wagon.

"At three-thirty in the great hall near the stadium the ceremony of delivery of ornate wreaths by the delegates of the districts took place. Among the scores presented were some of real artistic merit. The Wielkopolski wreath was adorned with an eagle artistically made of heads of grain. Ancient village songs were sung as an accompaniment to the ceremony of presentation. Especially stirring was the song of the full-voiced Wolynians, whose magnificent rendition was worthy of a trained choir."

THE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES AND FINLAND

The end of the harvest is also the occasion for festivity and thanksgiving in the Scandinavian countries and Finland. The celebrations are usually local and occur when the individual landowner has harvested and stored his crops. Eating and drinking and dancing are the regular features of these festivals. In Norway, the national bird, when feasts come around, is the "rype" or grouse; and the habit of eating him is growing as the general custom of a thanksgiving day becomes more established. For in Norway, instead of passing, as is true in Poland and some of the other European countries, the custom of a thanksgiving festival is gaining strength. For America's turkey Denmark substitutes goose, cooked as only the Danes know how. The goose comes into his own on Mortens Dag, or St. Martin's Day, and he crowds everything else into the background. The harvest being largely the cause of the jollity, the celebrations reach their height in the country districts.

The first Sunday in October the churches in Finland offer prayers for the safe gathering of the harvest. It is known as "Mikkelin paiva" (St. Michael's Day), and in the country districts it is a day of much importance. On this day servants are hired and labor contracts concluded for the following year. A day or so before Sunday, candle-light dances are held at which the harvesters celebrate the end of their arduous labors.

Before the custom of giving thanks for the harvest on "Mikkelin paiva" came into existence, there was throughout Finland a celebration known as "Kekri". Like so many harvest festivals, it had no fixed date but was celebrated by each landowner as soon as his crops were safely in the barns. The festival was probably originally some form of pagan ancestor worship. The "Kekri" were the spirits of the dead who were believed to be interested in the farm work and to help with it. When

the harvest was over, in gratitude for their services during the year and to preserve their good will, a feast was prepared for them, usually in the stables, as the "Kekri" were supposed to be especially helpful with the horses and cattle. With the coming of Christianity the "Kekri" festival became a part of "Mikkelin paiva."

SYRIA

In Syria after the wheat is harvested, a part of it is boiled before being stored. In some villages a huge brass cauldron is placed in the public square for the use of all the people and fire is kept burning under it day and night during the harvest season. On others, the boiling of the wheat takes place within the home, but even here it is largely a community affair.

The young girls of the neighborhood are invited to help on the day a family boils its wheat for store. They are divided into two groups; one group brings the wheat from the huge pile - sometimes it contains 20 to 30 bushels - to the big cauldron; they carry it in small brass vessels balanced on their heads. The other group goes to the spring to fetch water in which to boil the wheat; the water jars are likewise carried on the heads of the girls. Both processions are attended by a man carrying a lighted lantern.

After grain and water are mixed in the big cauldron, a fire is started underneath it. Then in the firelight the helpers dance and sing and play games until the wheat is cooked. A bowl of the cooked wheat into which nuts and sweets have been stirred, serves as refreshments.

On Holy Cross Day, September 14th, when the grapes are ripe, the "Feast of the Crucifix" is celebrated in Syria. On that day the villagers go into their vineyards prepared for a day's outing. Each family divides into two groups; one, consisting chiefly of the younger members, cuts the grapes and loads them into boxes; these are then taken to a big plot of ground where every family has been assigned definite space and where other members of the family await their coming. They dip the grapes into a mixture of alkali and olive oil and then spread them out to dry.

During the gathering of the grapes, the poor of the neighborhood and the Bedouins come with bags begging a share of the grapes and gleaning those left unpicked on the vines. At the end of the day the families assemble in the vineyards for dancing and feasting.

* * * * *

FOREIGN CHRISTMAS DISHES

Christmas customs of the different foreign countries vary on many points but they are alike in one respect; feasting plays an outstanding part in the Christmas celebration everywhere. Furthermore, in most countries there are certain dishes which, like the plum pudding of England or the turkey of the United States, belong traditionally on the Christmas table; they may be served on other holidays also or on festive occasions in general, but at Christmas they are practically indispensable. The following recipes concern dishes of that sort. They are furnished by staff members and friends of the American Council for Nationalities Service who, having frequently eaten food prepared according to them, can vouch that they are practical as well as palatable.

ARMENIAN

Christmas among Armenians is chiefly a religious feast; Gagant Bab, the Armenian version of Santa Claus, does not make his appearance till New Year's, the season of mirth and feasting and exchange of gifts. Though Christmas Eve and Christmas Day are largely dedicated to religious worship, time is found nevertheless for the preparation and enjoyment of an elaborate meal at which the orthodox Armenian makes up for the week of fasting which has preceded Christmas Day. "Anoush About" (sweet soup) for which the recipe is given below is a traditional Christmas dish; the others are served on festive occasions.

Anoush About

2 lbs wheat grains	1 lb small raisins (seedless, light and dark)
1 lb sugar	
1 lb nut meats (walnuts, almonds)	2 tbs cornstarch
1 tsp cinnamon	2 qts water

Wash wheat grains, cover with 2 qts of water and cook well until grains are split. Remove from fire and let stand for an hour. Add sugar, raisins, nut meats and cinnamon. Soften and dissolve cornstarch in a little lukewarm water and stir into grain mixture. Add more water as needed and cook for about five minutes. Pour into individual dishes. Serve cold.

Eggplant Fritters

2 eggplants (medium size)	pinch of salt
1 lb chopped meat (lamb)	" of pepper
1 onion	1 cup olive oil
4 eggs	

Chop onion into small pieces, mix it with chopped meat, add salt and pepper and cook for about 15 minutes. Wash eggplants and cut in slices about 1/4 inch thick; spread the meat mixture on a slice of eggplant and cover with another slice; dip in beaten egg and fry in oil.

Stuffed Mussels

3 lbs mussels with shells	1 cup olive oil
1/2 lb rice	1 tsp sugar
1 lb onions	1/2 tsp salt
1 tbs minced parsley	1/2 tsp pepper
1 tbs currants	1/2 tsp cinnamon
1 tbs pignolia nuts	1 tbs tomato paste

Chop onions into very small pieces; steam in olive oil for 5 minutes; add rice, parsley, currants, nuts and spices. Soften tomato paste in a little lukewarm water and add it to the other ingredients. Cook whole mixture for five minutes, stirring constantly. Scrape outside of mussel shells and wash carefully. Open shells and wash again thoroughly removing the green fuzzy growth between the two halves of the mussel. Spread the rice mixture over the mussels and close the shells. Place the stuffed shells in a large pot, pour a cup of hot water over them and cook for 10 minutes. Serve hot or cold.

CZECHOSLOVAK

In Czechoslovakia the housewife begins her preparations for the Christmas meals fully one week beforehand. Everywhere there is bustle and joyful activity; the village is fragrant with the odor of delicious cooking. In most households the Christmas Eve meal is a meatless one and the day one of fasting. Even the children are urged to abstain from food and promised that, if they do, they will see the golden pigs at supper. It is hoped that their enjoyment of the supper outweighs their disappointment when the golden pigs turn out to be merely the flickerings of the lighted candles on walls and ceilings. Carp is the traditional Christmas Eve dish. It must be bought alive and kept alive until the moment when it is to be cleaned and cooked. Typical Christmas Eve and Christmas Day menus in Czechoslovakia are as follows:

Christmas Eve Supper

Fish Chowder
Fried Fish (hot)
Carp in black sauce (cold)
Pear barley gruel with mushrooms
Vdolky (see recipe)
Coffee, nuts, apples
Decorated gingerbread cookies

Christmas Dinner

Giblet soup with noodles
Roast goose with dumplings and sauerkraut, or
Roast suckling pig
Vanocka (braided coffee cake)
Kolacky (see recipe)
Coffee, nuts, apples
Decorated gingerbread cookies

Vdolky

Butter, size of an egg
2 cups milk
2 eggs

flour
1 cake yeast
pinch of salt
pinch of mace

Melt the butter in warm milk. Add the eggs (beaten), the salt, the mace and yeast and enough white flour to make a soft dough. Stir the mixture until very smooth; let it rise. Then put it on a floured board, roll it out and shape into good sized biscuits; let them rise. Then bake on both sides. Spread with prune marmelade and cottage cheese or thick sweet cream. Instead of baking the Vdolky, they may be fried in deep fat.

To make the prune marmalade, wash and boil one pound of prunes; then stone the prunes and press through a sieve. Boil the pulp awhile with a small piece of butter, grated lemon peel, cinnamon and one cup of sugar. If too thick, add a little prune juice or water. Let cool before rising.

Kolacky

1 cup butter	1 quart sifted flour
4 eggs	grated rind of one lemon
1 quart sweet cream	1 cake yeast
1/2 cup sugar	pinch of salt

Cream the butter and add the egg yolks, one at a time. Stir into this mixture the dissolved yeast cake, the whites of the eggs stiffly beaten, the cream, sugar, lemon, salt and flour. Beat thoroughly and then set dough in a warm place to rise. When light, put on a floured board, cut into small pieces, and shape each piece into a ball, then roll flat like a cookie about an inch thick. Place in a buttered pan, not too near each other. Dent the tops in several places and then spread with prune or other marmalade, poppyseed filling, or cottage cheese. Let the cakes rise again in the pan and then bake in hot oven. When done, brush over with melted butter and sprinkle with powdered sugar.

Poppy-seed Filling

1 lb ground poppy seeds	flavoring
cream	pinch of powdered cloves
sugar to taste	

Place the finely ground poppy seeds in a saucepan and add enough cream so the mixture can simmer. When it thickens, stir it frequently so that it does not scorch. Add sugar to taste, a pinch of powdered cloves, grated lemon rind or vanilla to taste, or chopped blanched almonds.

GERMANY

Probably no country has contributed more to Christmas lore or originated more Christmas customs than has Germany. We owe that country for instance, the custom of the Christmas tree. How and when the idea arose of decorating an evergreen for Christmas is not known, though there are a number of interesting legends and theories on the subject. It is, however, pretty generally acknowledged that the Christmas tree,

as we know it, was first met with in Germany at the time of Luther. In fact, the great reformer himself is sometimes credited with its introduction. The custom spread slowly; it was not generally adopted even in Germany till late in the 18th century. From there the custom spread to the Protestant countries; the Christmas tree was used in Denmark and Norway about 1830 and in England about 1841, and later in Catholic countries. For years, Christmas toys and Christmas tree ornaments were largely "made in Germany", and German Christmas cakes are famous all over the world. Below are recipes for two of the most famous varieties.

Weinachts Lebkuchen

2 eggs (whole)	1 1/2 lb flour
4 egg yolks	1/2 oz cinnamon
1 lb sugar	1 tsp ground cloves
1/3 lb butter	1/2 tsp nutmeg
1/2 lb almonds	2 1/2 tsp baking powder
8 oz citron (sliced thin)	1 tsp grated lemon rind

Heat the butter over slow fire. Stir into the sugar, spices, chopped almonds and eggs (well beaten). Add flour slowly, the baking powder having previously been mixed well with the flour. Roll out the dough thin and cut into the shapes desired. Place half of one almond in center of each cookie and brush top of each cookie with white of egg. Bake in moderate oven until brown.

Spekulatius

1/2 lb flour	2 oz chopped almonds
1/4 lb butter	1/2 tbs milk
1/2 c sugar	1/10 tsp salts of hartshorn
1 egg	

Cream the butter, add the egg, and beat until light. Then add sugar, flour and other ingredients. Work together well, taking care that the dough does not get too stiff. Roll out very thin and cut out figures-animals, humans, etc. Brush top of each cake with milk and bake to a golden yellow.

HUNGARIAN

On Christmas Eve, as soon as the first star gleams in the sky, the Hungarian family sits down to an abundant, though meatless meal. Cabbage soup, fish, noodles, cakes shaped like horseshoes and filled with poppy seed or walnuts, twisted Christmas bread, "bobajka" or dumplings sprinkled with poppy seed and sugar, strudel and nuts are traditional dishes for this occasion. The gaiety and feasting continue till near midnight, when people flock to church to attend the Christmas mass.

"Mezes-Makos Metelt"

1 lb flour	4 oz poppy seed
6 large potatoes	1/4 lb sugar
1/2 tsp salt	2 tbs honey
1/4 lb butter	

Boil the potatoes, then peel. Place them on a board and mash well with a fork. Add salt and flour, taking care the mixture does not become too stiff. Knead mixture carefully, then roll out thin. Cut into strips 2 x 1/2 inches in size. Place in a deep pan of boiling water. When strips float to the top, remove them with strainer. Place them in cold water for about one minute. Melt butter in a pan and when hot lay strips in butter. Place in hot oven for five minutes. Mix the poppy seed with sugar and honey and pour mixture over noodles just before serving. Serve hot.

"Halpaprikas" (Fish Paprika)

1 1/2 lbs fresh white fish	1 green pepper
1 1/2 lbs blue fish	2 tsp sweet paprika
3 large onions	

Cut the fish into slices 1 1/2 inches thick and soak in salted water for one hour. Mince three large onions and fry in two level tbs of fat. Add two tsp of sweet paprika. Place fish and other ingredients in wide pan and add a few slices of green pepper. Pour enough water into pan to cover fish slices. Boil 30-35 minutes without stirring. Remove the fish slices, strain the sauce and pour over the fish.

ITALIAN

The Italian feasts and makes merry on Christmas Eve and recuperates on Christmas Day. The Christmas Eve dinner is an elaborate and festive one, and as a rule a number of guests - chiefly relatives, for Christmas is pre-eminently a family festival in Italy as in most other countries - are invited to share it. The housewife prepares for it for days, or even weeks, beforehand; in some sections of Italy, notably in Sicily and Calabria, she will serve as many as twenty-four different dishes on this occasion.

December 24th being a fast day, the evening meal is of course a meatless one. It is traditional for Italians to eat eel on Christmas Eve, a species known as "capitone" being particularly favored. Capitone is seldom seen in Italian fish markets except at the Christmas season as it is expensive; it sells as high as one dollar a pound. But to many Italians, especially to South Italians, Christmas without capitone is not Christmas at all, so the housewife buys it no matter what it costs. Cardoni - Jerusalem artichokes cooked with eggs, is another dish which usually is served on Christmas Eve, and there are all sorts of sweets on the menu: "cannoli" pastries stuffed with cream cheese, "torrone" or caramel nut cake; and others. The Tuscans must eat "Panforte di Sienna" on Christmas Eve, a delicious but very complicated

confection belonging especially to their section of Italy. The "dolce-rias" or Italian bakeries in this country do a thriving business around Christmas in these cakes.

Capitone

Slices of Capitone	garlic
1/2 cup canned tomatoes	sage
1 cup white wine	lemon rind
4 tbs olive oil	

Have the eel cleaned and skinned at the fish market and cut into pieces about two inches long. Flour each piece thickly and place in a stew pan with a few thin slices of garlic, two pieces of sage, a piece of lemon rind and 4 tbs olive oil. Fry for a few minutes, till the garlic begins to turn brown. Add 1/2 cup canned tomatoes (strained) and one cup of white wine. Salt and pepper to taste. Cover pan tightly and allow mixture to simmer over a low flame for about one-half hour. Serve very hot with pieces of toast,

Boiled Capon

One medium sized capon	2 raw eggs
1/2 lb raw chopped pork	1 oz pistachio nuts
1/4 lb sliced smoked tongue	1 oz pignolia nuts
1/4 lb sliced Italian ham	3 tbs minced parsley
1 cup white wine	

Stir together the chopped pork, beaten eggs, parsley, nuts and wine. Mix very thoroughly. Remove the bones from the capon and stuff neck, legs etc. with this mixture. Place the slices of tongue and ham on top of the stuffing. (If the cook does not know how to remove the bones of a fowl, she can stuff in the usual way.) Sew together the openings and tie the capon securely in a linen cloth so that it will not burst while cooking. Boil very slowly.

Boiled capon is very frequently the principal meat at the Christmas Day dinner. The broth is used for soup at that meal with "Tortellini", which are much like ravioli but smaller in size.

Zuppa Inglese

Make a plain sponge cake. Cut into thin slices. Grease a square pan carefully with butter. Dip one third of the cake slices in sherry, one third in sweet wine and one third in Rosolio or any other sweet liqueur. Line the bottom and sides of the pan with the variously flavored cake slices. Spread a thin layer of quince and apple jam on the cake slices in the pan, and on the jam put a few pieces of thinly sliced candied fruit. On top of this, place another layer of the cake slices. Pour over the contents of the pan a thick custard filling. Sprinkle a few chopped walnuts on it and top it all with whipped cream. Ornament with candied cherries. Allow it to "set" for at least one hour before serving.

LITHUANIAN

Among practically all European peoples, the pig and its products figure largely on Christmas menus. It is still quite a prevalent custom, especially in rural districts and in villages, for the thrifty household to slaughter a pig shortly before Christmas and to prepare from it all sorts of viands - sausages, head cheese, blood pudding, pigs feet, etc. - to be eaten during the festival season or the ensuing winter months. Some authorities consider the popularity of the pig a survival from pagan days when a pig was deemed the most acceptable sacrifice to Frey, the beloved sun god of the Norsemen and Saxons, and flesh of a pig was the daily food of the heroes in Valhalla. If, as is generally believed, our Christmas is a blend of a religious festival celebrating the nativity of Christ and of Yule, the mid-winter festival at which the heathen peoples of the North rejoiced in the returning sun, the theory does not seem farfetched.

Among Lithuanians also the pig furnishes a considerable portion of the Christmas fare. A typical Christmas dinner menu is as follows: soup - clear beet boullion or mushroom soup; roast suckling pig with sauerkraut, pan-roast potatoes and baked apples; a spring salad consisting of lettuce, sliced radishes, scallions, cucumbers, and sour cream; and apple cake.

Roast Stuffed Suckling Pig

1 suckling pig (8-10 lbs)	4 tbs melted butter
5 apples	4 tbs chopped parsley
2 onions (large)	salt and pepper
1 quart bread crumbs	sifted sage or ginger

Wash the pig inside and out with a weak solution of baking soda, paying special attention to head openings and mouth. Pour water off and lay pig in cold water for about 15 minutes. Dry thoroughly.* Rub inside well with salt. If desired, pepper and sifted sage or ginger may also be rubbed on inside of pig. Mix bread crumbs with peeled and finely chopped apples, onions, chopped parsley and melted butter. Add salt and pepper to taste and enough milk to moisten mixture. Stuff the pig with this mixture. Sew openings of pig together. Cover the legs and ears with oiled paper and tie the legs back. Put corn cob in mouth to keep the jaws open. Place pig in roasting pan in a very hot oven until brown; then reduce heat to moderate until done. Baste frequently with plenty of fat. Do not allow any water or steam to form as it is likely to burst the skin and spoil the meat. Put the peeled potatoes in the roasting pan around the pig about 3/4 of an hour before the pig is done. Time required for cooking pig is about 10 to 12 minutes per pound. When done, insert a red apple in the mouth of the pig and place on a large platter on a bed of sauerkraut. Surround the pig with browned potatoes and baked apples.

* Another authority recommends wiping the pig carefully inside and out with a wet towel dipped in vinegar, instead of washing.

Sauerkraut

To one quart sauerkraut, juice and all, add a medium-sized chopped onion, a chopped apple, salt and enough water to almost cover the sauerkraut. A raw potato will also mitigate the sourness of the kraut and can be substituted for the apple. As a rule, a pork chop or bacon drippings should be added, but if sauerkraut is to be used with suckling pig, the juice that drips from the pig after it is placed on the platter on sauerkraut is sufficient. Sauerkraut should be baked in the oven in a covered dish for from 2 to 3 hours. Sometimes Lithuanian mushrooms (dried) are baked with the sauerkraut. They must be soaked one hour before being added to the sauerkraut. They give a delicious flavor.

Lithuanian Apple Cake

Grate or crumb a loaf of pumpernickel bread. Place a layer of the crumbs in a cake mould (preferably a mould with a center, such as an angel-cake mould). Sprinkle crumbs with sugar and pour over them enough melted butter to moisten them. Then add layer of sliced apple; if apples are tart, sprinkle sugar on them. Repeat process until cake mould is filled with alternating bread crumb and apple layers. Bake in oven until apple slices are tender. Turn apple cake out from mould onto a cake dish or platter. Serve hot or cold as preferred. Fill the center and surround the cake with whipped cream.

Russian

As in most European countries other than the Protestant ones, the day before Christmas is a day of fasting in Russia. The evening meal is not served till the first star shines in the sky and it is a meatless and, as a rule, quite a simple meal. Christmas Day is the day for feasting and sociability. The Christmas tree is not lighted till the evening of that day, nor are gifts exchanged till then. A more or less typical menu for the Christmas dinner is as follows: clear soup with piroshki, pig-in-jelly, roast goose with apple filling, salad, dessert coffee. It is a custom in many homes in Russia to place straw on the table under the linen cloth. Some hold it commemorates the birth of Christ in a stable; others view it as the survival of a primitive rite connected with the cult of the Corn Spirit.

Pig-in-Jelly

Small suckling pig	gelatine
2 cups fancy cut vegetables (carrots, leeks, celery, peas, etc)	bay leaves
allspice	salt, pepper, etc.

Wash thoroughly, inside and outside, a very young suckling pig. Put in pan and cover with cold water. Add bay leaves, onion, 6 whole allspice. Cook until tender (about two hours). Remove from pan and cut into pieces. Dissolve gelatine in cold water and add to liquid in which pig was cooked, using about 1 level tbs of gelatine for each

quart of the liquid. Arrange the pieces of pig in a deep platter, garnish with the diced vegetables and pour the liquid over them. Place in refrigerator. Serve cold with a sauce made of grated horseradish and sour cream.

Piroshki

2 eggs	2 cakes of yeast
flour	1 tsp salt
1 cup warm milk	2 tbs melted butter

Dissolve the yeast cakes in the milk. Add enough flour to make a thin batter. Stir well and put in a warm place to rise. When it has risen, add salt, butter, beaten eggs, and enough flour to make a fairly thick dough. Knead well and let rise once more. Roll out dough on a floured board and cut into round or square pieces. Fill with ground meat, fish, boiled rice, or fried cabbage. Fold in two and press edges firmly together. Bake in hot oven until brown, or if preferred, fry in deep fat till brown.

Filling

Brown one finely chopped onion in one tbs butter. Add some very finely chopped meat - beef, veal, or other meat. Season with salt and pepper and cook a short while. When cold, fill into piroshki as described above.

SWEDISH

Much has been said and written about the cookery of Sweden. Tourists return from that country full of praise for its interesting and appetizing food and especially for "Smorgasbordet" the Swedish hors d'oeuvres. Unless, however, one has spent a Christmas in Sweden, one has not known Swedish cooking at its best; it is at Christmas, a season dear to all Scandinavians, that the Swedish housewife puts forth her best culinary efforts.

"Lutfisk" (dried codfish) is perhaps the dish most Swedish people consider indispensable on Christmas Eve. It and rice porridge form part of the typical Christmas Eve dinner. Roast goose and "ryper" (or grouse) are also very popular and practically every Swedish family has a "Smorgasbord" that evening, even though as a general rule that is a luxury beyond its means. Dishes made of pork figure prominently in the Christmas Eve "Smorgasbord" and among the cookies baked for the Christmas holidays is a variety cut to resemble pigs.

Lutfisk

Soak a dried codfish in a solution of lime, soda and water till tender (from one to two weeks). Then soak in cold water for about a week, changing the water daily so as to draw out the lime and soda solution. When ready to use, place the fish in boiling salted water and cook for about ten minutes. Serve with a rich cream sauce,

Other Foreign Holiday Dishes

Chinese

Almond Cookies

2 cups flour	2 tbs. almond extract
1 cup sugar	1/2 tsp. yellow food coloring
1 tsp. baking soda	2 egg yolks
1 Cup shortening (not margarine)	

Cream shortening and sugar. Add egg yolks, almond extract and food coloring. Beat well. Sift dry ingredients and add to creamed mixture. Mix well. Roll into 1 inch balls and place on greased cookie sheet. Top with almond half. 350 degree oven - 25 minutes.

Rinsed Mutton in Chafing Pot

2 lb. mutton (tenderloin lamb)	1 tsp. parsley leaves
1/2 lb. mutton liver (optional)	1 tbs sesame seed paste or peanut paste
1/2 lb mutton tripe (optional)	1/2 tsp. corn oil
2 lb. Chinese cabbage	1/2 tsp. soy sauce
2 lb. spinach	1/2 tsp shrimp oil or oyster sauce
4 oz. bean threads (bean noodle)	1/2 tsp sesame oil
4 pcs. frozen bean curd	1/2 tsp. hot pepper oil
(sauce for each person is optional)	1/2 tsp salted beancurd paste
1/2 tbs. green onion	1/2 tsp. wine

1. Slice the mutton into 1 1/2 wide, 3" long paper thin slices. Arrange the slices in one layer on platters.
2. Slice the liver. Cut the tripe into strips.
3. Cut cabbage, spinach into big pieces. Beancurd into 1" squares.
4. Put the vegetables, bean thread (bean noodles and remaining ingredients including seasonings in individual containers. Each individual prepares his own seasoning mixture to suit his taste.
5. Into a chafing pot full of boiling soup or water, dip mutton slices until just done., immediately dip into the sauce mixture and eat. After several dippings of meat start putting other ingredients such as cabbage, spinach, bean noodle or bean curd into the chafing pot. Let each individual help himself when cooked. The soup in the pot gets tastier and tastier as the cooking progresses. The soup or water must boil continuously. It makes a delicious noodle soup. (About 6 servings)

DanishMock Turtle

2 lbs. veal shanks 3 carrots
2 onions Salt to taste

Slice onions and carrots and brown slightly in butter.. Add cut up veal shanks and cook slowly until tender in water to cover.

Meat Balls

1 lb. ground beef 1/4 tsp. pepper
1 tbs. flour 1/4 cup milk
1 tsp. salt 1 egg

Mix these ingredients thoroughly. Make it into balls and fry.

Brown Gravy

Veal Stock 3 tbs. butter
5 tbs. flour Kitchen Bouquet
1 pony sherry or madeira wine

Combine into gravy and add the cut up veal and meatballs. Garnish with fish balls and halved hard cooked eggs if desired. Serve with puffed paste shells or rolls.

EstonianKringle - Coffee Cake

2 yeast cakes 1 tsp. salt
1 1/2 cup sifted flour 3/4 cup soft butter
3/4 cup scalded milk lukewarm 1/4 cup sugar
Grated rind of 1 lemon 3 1/2 cup sifted flour
2 tsp. vanilla 2 cups white raisins
2 eggs separated 1/2 cup thin sliced blanched
3/4 cup sugar almonds
Confectioner's sugar

Put yeast cake and 1/4 cup sugar into a bowl and stir until mixture becomes liquid and smooth. Stir in alternately small amounts 1 1/2 cups flour and cooled milk. Beat until smooth. Sprinkle lightly with flour and set in warm place until bubbles form. Add lemon rind and vanilla. Put egg yolks into a bowl add sugar gradually and beat until light and foamy, stir in salt and butter. Add to first mixture. Stir in 1 cup of flour, beat until smooth. Beat egg whites until stiff but moist, fold into dough. Add remaining flour a little at a time. Beat until smooth and elastic. Press down in bowl. Sprinkle lightly with flour and set in warm place to rise. When double in bulk, add raisins and mix in thoroughly. Turn onto a floured board, form into a long strip. Place on greased cookie sheet. With hands continue to shape and stretch dough. When ends extend 6 or 7 inches beyond pan twist

them together, the attach ends to middle of the strip of dough. This forms two circles joined in the center. Brush with cream or milk. Sprinkle generously with sliced almonds. Set in warm place and let rise for 30 or 40 minutes. Bake in 325° for 40 to 45 minutes. Sprinkle with confectioner's sugar. Cool on cake rack. Let stand one day before cutting.

Finnish

Salmon Pudding

1/2 cup rice	2 tbs. melted butter
2 cups milk	1 can salmon
2 eggs	salt and pepper

Cook rice in 1 cup water until half done. Add milk and cook until done. When cool add eggs very lightly beaten, salt and pepper to taste, butter and salmon. Mix well. Bake in buttered baking dish til brown. Serve with butter catsup or cream sauce.

French

Crepes

Using blender or electric mixer, blend 4 eggs, 1/4 tsp. salt, 7/8 cup sugar, 1 3/4 cups flour, 2 1/2 cups milk, 1/4 tsp. vanilla and 2 tsp. melted butter, lard or oil. Pour enough batter in skillet to cover about half of the bottom and quickly rotate pan to spread thin and as evenly as possible. Fry on one side until lightly browned. Flip and fry other side not quite as much. Stack one on top of the other on plate, browned side up. About 25 crepes.

Sprinkle each crepe with cinnamon, sugar mixture, roll up, place in baking dish. Fifteen minutes before serving, heat in 350° oven.

Or, serve as cheese blintzes. On each crepe, place one heaping tbsp. each of cream cheese and creamed cottage cheese. Fold in sides, roll up. Place in baking dish, cover and bake at 325 degrees for about 30 minutes. Serve with sugared strawberries and syrup, or serve with your favorite fruit sauce and flame with brandy.

German

Nut Torte

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Use 8 inch or 9 inch round pans. Put wax paper in bottom of pan. Do not use grease or flour in pans.

3 - 4 small eggs	1/4 cup cold water
1 cup sugar	1 tsp. almond or vanilla extract
1 cup flour	
2 tsps. baking powder	1/2 tsp. salt
1 or 1 1/2 cups nuts (your choice)	

Beat whole eggs and sugar at high speed until fluffy and white. Add vanilla or almond extract to egg mixture. Slow beater down. In a separate bowl, mix flour together with baking powder, salt and nuts. Now by hand, fold flour mixture into egg mixture and mix by hand til smooth. Pour into pans and bake for 10 to 15 minutes - until brown on top.

Filling

1/2 lb. (unsalted) butter at room temperature
2 cups of chocolate frosting mix
1 tsp. coffee (instant) or rum extract
1 tsp. water

Beat butter with mixer until fluffy. Add chocolate with coffee or rum extract and water. (More water may be added if mixture is too stiff, however, it shouldn't be too creamy.) Beat until smooth. Spread filling on top of one frosted layer. Then form entire torte. Add nuts to top of torte if desired. Place torte in refrigerator. (It will keep for a week to ten days.)

Great Britain

Yorkshire Pudding

2 tablespoons salad oil or roast beef drippings
2 eggs
1 cup milk
1 cup sifted all purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 425° Pour drippings or salad oil into a 10" pie plate, tilt to cover the surface. In medium bowl beat with mixer - eggs, flour, milk and salt to make smooth batter. Pour into prepared pie plate, bake about 25 minutes until golden brown. Serve immediately with roast beef.

Greek

Baklava

2 lbs. pastry sheets	2 lbs. butter (draw salt)
5 lbs. shelled walnuts	1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 lb. blanched almonds	1/2 cup sugar

Grind walnuts and almonds - coarsely, add sugar and cinnamon and mix ingredients thoroughly. Melt butter, drawing salt. Line baking pan 10" x 15" with pastry sheet, brush with butter; repeat this process until six pastry sheets line bottom of pan. Brush sixth layer with butter and sprinkle with nut mixture. Add another pastry sheet, brush with butter, sprinkle with nut mixture, repeating this process until all ingredients are used, ending with eight pastry sheets. Trim and cut in 2" diamond pieces. Pour remaining melted butter over pastry. Bake at 375° for 30 minutes, then at 350° for 30 more minutes or until golden brown. When it is browned to desired shade cover with aluminum foil to prevent further browning.

During the last half hour of baking you may test by removing the center piece of pastry; It is done when pastry sheets are all browned and not soggy, in the diamond slice.

Syrup for Pastry Delight:

4	cups sugar	1/2 cup honey (optional)
2	cups water	Slice of lemon
	Stick of cinnamon	

While pastry is baking, boil water and sugar with a slice of lemon and a cinnamon stick to form a thick syrup, stir in honey and cool. Spoon cool syrup over hot pastry.

Hungarian

Lilli Kifli - Cottage Cheese Pastries

1/4 lb. flour	1/2 lb. creamed cottage cheese
5 oz. butter	1/2 tsp. salt
2 tsp. baking powder	

Sift flour, baking powder and salt, add butter and creamed cottage cheese. Work together. Knead well then roll out not too thin. Cut in squares, fill with apricot or nut filling. Fold over one end to make three cornered pastry. Put on greased pan. Bake in a 350° oven.

Japanese

Sukiyaki

In the preparation of sukiyaki, the Japanese manner can add much to your dining pleasure. In Japan sukiyaki is cooked at the table, allowing each diner to discriminate the cooking to his taste. An electric frying pan or saucepan may be used. Arrange and bring to the table the following ingredients.

2	ozs. beef suet	2	cups shirataki (threads of gelatinous starch)
2	lbs. beef tenderloin sliced very thin	12	large mushrooms
12	scallions cut in 2" lengths	12	pieces of tofu (soybean curd) cut in 1" cubes
1/2	lb. fresh spinach cut in 1" strips	1	can bamboo shoots bite sized

Sauce: mix 1/2 cup soy sauce, 1/3 cup sugar, and 1/4 cup sake.

Once the sukiyaki is started, each diner is on his own. Cut suet into small pieces and melt in hot pan. Dip slices of beef in the prepared sauce. Fry lightly on both sides (best rare). Dip beef in freshly prepared mustard and eat. About 1/3 of beef is eaten in this way.

Add sauce to fat in pan, add remaining beef and cook until it changes color. Place other ingredients on top of the beef and cook briefly. Transfer beef to top of vegetables, next but do not stir. Cook over medium heat until ingredients are just tender. Pour yourself a bowl of rice and start eating. Sukiyaki may be dipped in raw egg (beaten) just before eating for additional taste pleasure.

Sauce

It is impossible to state the exact point at which sukiyaki may be considered "done" Until all of the sukiyaki is eaten, keep the pan on the fire. More ingredients may be added while the sukiyaki is being cooked and being eaten. Add thin sauce (1 part water, 3 parts sauce), enough to cover bottom of pan when additional cooking is desired.

Teriyaki Sauce

1	cup soy sauce	1/4	cup pineapple juice
1/2	cup brown sugar		dash of garlic powder
1/2	cup white sugar	1	tsp. dry mustard

Combine above ingredients and heat only long enough to dissolve sugar. Cut flank sirloin steak into 1 inch lengths, soak overnight, then grill over charcoal. Brush with sauce.

Latvian

Ham Pastries

1	cup lukewarm milk	1/2	large yeast cake or 1/2 pkg. dry yeast
1	tsp. sugar		sifted flour
	dash salt	1	cup finely cut ham
2	lbs. shortening •		1/2 medium sized onion

Stir together milk, sugar, salt, shortening, yeast. Mix in enough flour to make dough soft enough to be able to stir with a spoon. Let mixture rise. Add enough flour to be able to roll it. Let rise again. Meanwhile mix together ham, onion, salt and pepper. After dough has risen a second time, shape into long thin rolls. Cut off slices and put into 1/4 " thickness. Put spoonful of ham mixture into center, and fold ends and sides of dough over it. Roll in palms of hands to achieve a smooth effect with ham mixture completely enclosed. Preheat oven to 400° and bake 7 to 10 minutes or until brown.

Norwegian

Holiday Cake

1 qt. milk	1 tsp. salt
1 1/2 cup sugar	1 pound raisins
1/2 cup butter	1 pkg. candied citron peel, chopped
1 tsp. ground cardamon	12 cups flours
2 cakes compressed yeast	

Topping: 1 egg yolk, tsp. vanilla, tbs. full sugar, mixed together.

Heat milk and sugar. Add butter and cardamon. When butter has melted, cool mixture to lukewarm. Add and dissolve yeast. Add salt, raisins, Bake in 350° oven.

Yugoslavian

Stuffed.Cabbage Rolls with Kraut

1 tbs. lard	1/2 lb. ground pork
10 onions chopped	1 1/2 lbs. ground beef steak
1/2 lb. rice	1 lb. cabbage leaves
1 egg	2 lbs. sauerkraut
1 tsp. paprika	± lb. smoked ham butt or spare- ribs
salt and pepper to taste	
2 cups water	

Melt lard, fry onions a little, add washed rice, cover and simmer 10 minutes- Beat egg, add seasoning, pork and beef, and rice. Mix well and put meat mixture in the leaves of cabbage. Roll up leaves so mixtures will not boil apart. Put in kettle with half of kraut over it, add smoked ham butt and balance of kraut. Add water; cover kettle and simmer slowly for 2 1/2 hours. Add browned flour and cook another half an hour.

Browned Flour

1 tbs. lard, 1 tbs. flour, 1 tsp. paprika
Brown the flour in the lard. Remove from fire and add paprika.