

hundreds of civil prisoners are taken—elderly men, women and children," explained the consul's wife. "Prison trains bring them here from Moscow. They are carried to distributing prisons in Siberia. Thence they must march to the exile villages.

"Those with money manage fairly well, but the penniless suffer desperately. Poor people are often seized in their homes without warning. They must be prepared to encounter Siberian cold. We are allowed to help them, which helps a little."

A dark red exile train stood before us, crowded with innocent victims. The open door spaces were filled with wan, frightened faces.

"Everything you need most will be here presently," called the consul's wife in friendly German, as she climbed on the unsteady runway with practiced ease.

"Suppose we look first at sore eyes, next for sore throats," she suggested, unpacking some simple remedies. Patiently the civil exiles lined up to be inspected.

A man of 80 limped forward. "Madam, you must excuse our conditions," he whispered hoarsely. "We are non-combatants from villages in Eastern Prussia. The Cossacks suddenly swept upon us. Before we knew they were coming they held our district. We were driven from our homes—aged and sick, women and children. None had provisions, few proper clothes. Armed guards drove us across the Russian frontier. Then we entrained. Forty men and women have died in these cattle cars in coming here. We were given black bread and tea, but no chance to rest or keep clean."

The consul's wife dismissed the apology.

"Let us be thankful that tubs have come, with plenty of hot water and soap," she said gently, and presently the homeless were enjoying the luxury of a bath.

A military kitchen rolled up, huge kettles steaming. Hot broth and

stewed meats were given to the exiles, the consul's wife carefully supervising it all.

Suddenly the warning clangor of starting bells sounded and the consul's wife hurried back to the cattle cars into which the exiles were piling at the gruff commands of their guards. Her arms were filled with bunches of spring flowers—tulips, lilies and daffodils—she had kept the best surprise for the last.

"Next-year!" she told the now smiling prisoners. "Never doubt but that you will return next year." Men and women tried to hide their tears and answer bravely.

Grinding wheels caught sanded rails, the dark red train noisily got under way. Five hundred innocent, unrecorded exiles started on a month's journey into the unknown. The friend they left behind watched their departure sadly.

"America cannot compel peace and could not, by fighting, change the result of the war. If only for the sake of stricken people who need us, American MUST remain neutral," said the consul's wife.

STUFFED CUCUMBERS

Cut good sized cucumbers into halves lengthwise and remove the seeds. Fill the hollows with a force meat made of equal parts of roast beef and boiled ham chopped fine. Moisten one-half cup of fine bread crumbs with one tablespoonful of boiling water and one tablespoonful of butter, mix with the meat and add a few drops of onion juice; fill the cucumbers and tie halves together with soft twine. Place in a roasting pan and pour over them one cupful of beef stock and bake until tender. Remove the strings and place cucumbers on hat platter, thicken gravy left in the pan and pour over them. Serve piping hot.

Buy soap in as large quantities as possible, remove wrappers and place in dry place to harden.