

DEATH-ROLL OF THE RUSSIAN TERROR

THE Reign of Terror accompanying the somewhat sluggish revolution in Russia has neither the swiftness nor the decisiveness which marked a similar movement in Paris at the end of the eighteenth century. The bloodshed that was incidental to each stage of the Russian crisis has, in fact, gradually diminished and violence has ended in something like apathetic calm on the part both of the Government and the people. This we gather from a pamphlet published by a well-known Russian writer, Professor Jhankoff, and quoted in *The Christian Commonwealth* (London). Dr. Jhankoff declares he has watched the press carefully to obtain the most accurate data; yet his statistics understate the real facts. "They do not give the complete story of Government tyranny." For the past six years, he tells us, the huge death-roll has resulted from four causes. The first is the "pogroms," *i.e.*, the organized plunder by one part of the population on another. This violence is generally engineered by the Government, or by the police-prompted "Black Hundred" against the Jewish communities. The second cause is the fury of bomb-throwing revolutionaries against officials or capitalists. The third cause of mortality is the severity of the courts in passing sentence of death, and the fourth is the wide-spread despair, ending in suicide. The Professor gives the following figures for executions in 1909:

"During the year 1,457 people were condemned to death by court-martial. Of these 582 were reprieved, and terms of imprisonment substituted for the death-penalty; 540 were executed. The fate of the rest is not known."

Of those who were the victims of revolutionary malignity we read:

"The Terror, *i.e.*, attempts on the lives of representatives of the Government and rich capitalists, is gradually declining, a fact which is shown by the following figures of deaths resulting from such methods:

"January, 177; February, 190; March, 155; April, 245; May, 190; June, 216; July, 175; August, 153; September, 145; October, 95; November, 102; December, 86.

"The character of the Terror has completely altered within recent months. It has quite lost its political aspect, and attacks on wealthy autocrats are now made for purposes of robbery and plunder. The victims are generally important men in the financial world rather than leaders of the Government or its officials. There is no doubt that the success, if it may so be called, of the method of political assassination was responsible for the violence which has followed. Only one-quarter of the victims of the Terror in 1909 had any connection with the Government, and most of these were soldiers, policemen, and guards who had taken part in various pogroms."

The Russian pogrom is a peculiar species of revolutionary demonstration and seems to have been animated, we are told, by class-hatred, racial aversion, and a passion for gain in the way of robbery. Dr. Jhankoff says of the pogroms:

"Formerly thousands of people took part in them; now there are never more than a few hundred. The motives behind these events have also changed. They have lost their political, national, and religious aspects; here once again the plundering section of the people have adopted pogroms as a method of robbery and spoliation. Occasionally a family quarrel leads to a small pogrom. The horrible condition of the people, the destitution and unemployment which are so rife are no doubt the cause of this wide-spread violence."

Suicide, however, is one of the saddest features of the Russian revolution, and the disappointment occasioned by the failure of the Douma as a popular assembly has aggravated the condition of the popular mind. Thus we read:

"Suicides and attempts at suicide are fast increasing in number. Of course our statistics show only a small proportion, but the municipal authorities give additional information. In Moscow, attempts at suicide have risen from 594 in 1908 to 675 in 1909. The

increase of suicide is still more evident in St. Petersburg, where the following figures are published:

"1904, 427; 1905, 354; 1906, 532; 1907, 796; 1908, 1,442; 1909 (six months only), 1,191.

"The suicides only decreased in 1905 when the liberation movement was full of optimistic hopes, and before the British loan, which followed the amicable agreement between the English and Russian Governments, had enabled the tyranny to be resumed. Suicides and bloody family tragedies are the most painful features of Russian life at the present time. They are more dangerous than other violent acts, as they reveal internal decay, and remind the students of history of the darkest periods in the story of the world's progress when self-destruction has been common among the people of a nation."

National discontent and unhappiness are pervading the whole of the Russian Empire, declares this writer:

"Generally speaking, life in Russia seems to have lost its value, and that proves we are living under abnormal conditions, and passing through a black period of the nation's history. It is a period of reaction. Five years ago the Russian people seemed to be on the verge of a great national revolution with Liberty as the inspiring watchword of the people. When the first Douma was elected, and over 100 representatives of the workers returned to that Assembly, the whole world believed that the dawn of constitutional freedom had at length come to Russia, but scarcely had the rejoicing of triumph begun, when the Russian Autocracy, replenished by British money, recommenced their system of tyranny. And they have succeeded, for the people's forces are spent, their hopes are dashed to the ground, and it does not seem likely that they will rally again for many years, their disappointment is so keen."

He concludes by giving the following table of revolutionary slaughter during the past five years:

Date.	Executed.	Victims of Pogroms.	Victims of "Terror."	Suicides.	Total.
1905	32	25,505	984	85	26,606
1906	798	4,524	4,262	557	10,141
1907	664	3,698	6,640	1,803	12,814
1908	975	2,006	3,518	3,705	10,204
1909	540	1,685	1,929	4,036	8,170

FEMINISM IN PERSIA—The emancipation of women and the vindication of their position as partakers in the political life of the nation is generally considered a Western, almost an Anglo-Saxon, innovation. There are suffragettes in London and suffragists in New York, but their activities do not seem to have had any marked effect on politics in either country. They break windows in Downing Street and hold assemblies in Madison Square, without affecting the budget, the tariff, the Lords, or the "insurgents." In Persia, however, women have shown themselves to be a real power. They have become a financial power in the State, says the *Croix* (Paris), an able and well-edited organ of the clerical and ultra-montane party. Thus the editor tells us:

"At Teheran the women have raised the standard of Nationalism in protestation against any attempt to float a foreign loan. They will have no foreign lenders in the Persian budget. The one who appears to be most violently opposed to borrowing money abroad is the wife of the Armenian Ephrem, prefect of police at Teheran. Mrs. Ephrem has formed a company of Persian women whom she ardently addresses and compels to take oath that they will oppose by every possible means the introduction into Persia of a foreign loan."

We learn from the Persian correspondent of the *Novoye Vremya* (St. Petersburg) that the Persian ladies are selling their most valuable jewelry in order to fill the public purse, and that delegations of young women press round the public buildings vowing to sacrifice all for the holy cause of patriotism.—*Translations made for THE LITERARY DIGEST.*

DISEASE FROM POSTAGE-STAMPS

INVESTIGATIONS of the germ-laden condition of much current coin and paper-money, as reported recently in these columns, have a fitting corollary in the discovery, made in England, that postage-stamps are often thickly populated with bacteria. Money is handled, but stamps, in addition, are by many persons moistened with the tongue, which makes their cleanliness a matter of especial interest. "Never lick stamps," says the British experimenter; and we must pronounce his advice sound. Says an editorial writer in *The Daily Mirror* (London, March 28):

"Few people realize that every time they lick a postage-stamp that has been exposed to the atmosphere or handled by other people they are liable to absorb into their systems multitudes of more or less virulent microbes.

"A very distinguished British scientist has just concluded some remarkable tests, specially undertaken for *The Daily Mirror*, to prove his theory that many diseases are frequently so communicated. He bought some stamps at a post-office and placed some of them straight-way in tubes, which were put in an incubator.

"Then he exposed the rest of the stamps, gummed side upward, for four hours in a room with an open window on a damp day, afterward similarly testing them.

"Both sets of stamps were found to bear noxious organisms, but the stamps previously exposed to moist air had five times as many as the others.

"'Never lick stamps,' is his advice to *Daily Mirror* readers. He explained that he found in the gum staphylococci, or grape-like clusters, of kinds which under favorable conditions might produce blood-poisoning.

"He also found many bacilli—the majority perfectly harmless, altho others, undoubtedly noxious—which it would take time to identify—could be similarly picked up."

The scientist who made these experiments is quoted as saying:

"These grape-like organisms are blown about in the air, clinging to fragments of dust. They do not go about alone. The dust settles on a stamp, and the organisms go, too, the gum being a hospitable medium.

"There are also five times as many organisms on a stamp that has been handled than otherwise. Fingers are specially likely to impart organisms to the gum because they are always slightly moist, tho they may appear dry. Typhoid and scarlet fever are diseases that appear peculiarly liable to be conveyed by stamps. But it is consoling to remember that some of the most virulent diseases can only be cultivated in media containing blood serum. Contact of the kind described would not convey them.

"Dirty stamp-wetters of the type used in most offices might easily become highly dangerous. They certainly should be more frequently cleaned, and I suggest that every household should keep a flat tin box with a layer of felt for moistening stamps; the felt should be thoroughly soaked with water to which a few drops of glycerin have been added to keep it moist, and a few drops of an antiseptic, such as carbolic, also. Even then, of course, the liquid should be frequently changed.

"In forty-eight hours millions of staphylococci and other bacteria can be produced by cultures from a few isolated organisms.

"People often buy single stamps at post-offices and touch them with dirty hands on the counter; organisms are thus left on the counter for the next comer to take up. Always refrain from licking your stamps, therefore."

CANAL-DIGGING BY WATER-POWER

THE most unusual construction work of the year 1910 will be the excavation of a section of the Panama Canal by means of hydraulic jets, says a writer in *The Engineering Record* (New York). He recalls that the hydraulic jet as a means of

excavation first attained prominence in placer-mining in California. The early jets were crude affairs, operated under comparatively small heads, but they proved so efficient that their development ever since the days of '49 has been steady, and hydraulic jetting has now gained wide recognition in civil-engineering work, and its place is being gradually made secure in spite of a few unsuccessful attempts

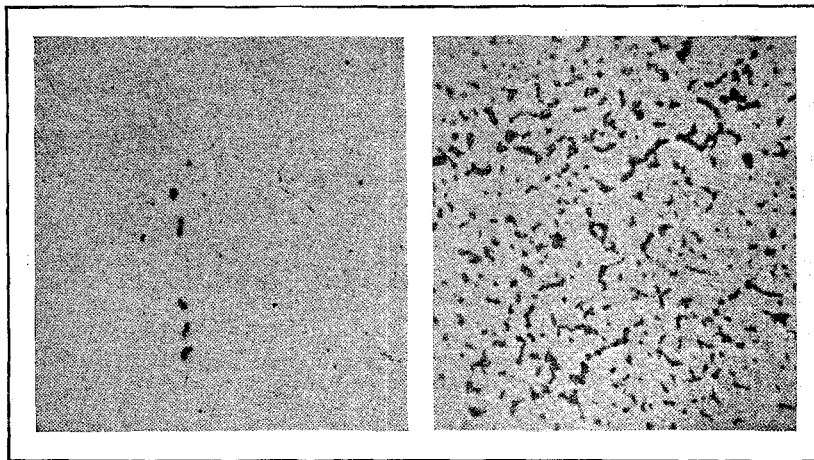
to use it for work to which it is inapplicable:

"For instance, an irrigation company in the Southwest undertook a couple of years ago to construct a dam by the hydraulic-fill process. After installing an extensive system of canals, monitors, and sluicing-flumes at considerable cost, it was found that the actual expense of placing the material in the dam by this method

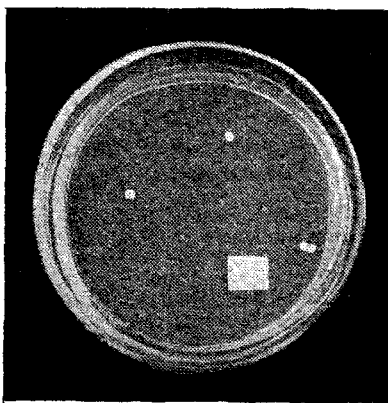
was excessive, the progress was very slow, and the result, when completed, would probably be unsatisfactory. It was accordingly determined to carry on the work by the dry-fill method, which will be more expeditious and produce a better structure, altho it will probably not result in any less total expense. But where the hydraulic jet is used with materials for which it is suited, and the sluicing problem offers no difficulties, experience in many mines has demonstrated that it is a decidedly economical method of excavation.

"Advantage has accordingly been taken of this fact on the section of the Panama Canal lying immediately south of the Miraflores locks. Here, in a length of about 9,000 feet and a width of 500 feet, it is necessary to remove over 7,800,000 cubic yards of loam containing about 15 per cent. of sand and some gravel, within a period of 18 months. This material has resisted the attack of a suction-

dredge to such a degree that the latter was regarded a failure in it. Steam-shovels could not be concentrated in this limited area satisfactorily. After careful study of all available methods of excavating the material and an examination of what was being done in the Pacific States, it has been decided to install [a hydraulic] plant . . . The pumping-plant furnishing the pressure-water should work very economically, and the Miraflores power-station, which will furnish current for operating the dredging-pumps to discharge the spoil outside the limits of the canal, is a permanent station designed for high efficiency. Under these conditions the hydraulic-jet system of excavation will doubtless receive a thoroughly good



BACTERIA FOUND ON THE BACKS OF POSTAGE-STAMPS.



COLONIES OF BACTERIA FROM STAMPS.

Each colony of bacteria seen in this flat glass dish is cultivated from the multiplication of one organism found on a stamp.