

Muzzle on the Russian Press.

Attempts to minimize the gravity of the recent disorders in Russia have failed to carry conviction to the minds of even the impartial. And this can hardly be wondered at when one considers how the Russian press is strangled by the censorship. An article on this subject, written by Dr. W. J. Vagradoff contains some interesting examples of the way in which the system is worked.

Article 140 of the Russian Press Statute runs as follows.

'When the Imperial government considers that the discussion of any public question is undesirable, the minister of the interior may direct the censorship authorities to advise the newspapers and periodical publications of the fact, and to prohibit them from mentioning the subject in question.'

This provision may be, and is construed in a very wide sense, and the punishment for disobeying a prohibition of this kind is the suspension of the right to publish the offending journal for three months. A Russian journalist once observed that the only subject which he could safely write about was 'Cockroaches in Colorado.' There are plenty of cases recorded which show that this was no empty phrase.

Not long ago the Nordisches Tagblatt was suppressed altogether for publishing an article describing how the Emperor Nicholas lives at Livadia. The tone of the article was loyal and respectful, and the emperor's mode of life was spoken of in terms of the warmest admiration, but the censorship authorities were inexorable.

About the same time the Novoe Vremya published an article describing some evils connected with the police in the provinces. The next day the official Gazette contained a notice to the effect that the police officers who had been found guilty of the charges brought against them by the Novoe Vremya had been summarily dismissed. The Gazette added that the Government would be thankful if other journals would follow this example and publicly denounce administrative scandals. Simultaneously with the publication of this notice, however, in the Gazette every editor in St. Petersburg received a secret warning from the censorship authorities that any journal which offended in this way again would be immediately suppressed.

On another occasion the Novoe Vremya published statistics of the number of political exiles who had been banished to Siberia by administrative order without any trial. The next day the censor gave the editor the alternative of acknowledging that the figures given were erroneous or of being banished to Siberia himself by administrative order. Needless to say the correction was made though the statistics given had been taken from an official return.

The enactment that no paper may appear of which the editor has not been approved by the censorship authorities is a potent weapon against the freedom of the press. When the editor of a journal which the censorship authorities dislike retires from his post they refuse to approve of any successor to him. The proprietors of the paper may propose a hundred candidates for the post, but the controllers of the censorship find some weighty objection against each one of them. The journal is then obliged to cease to appear, because it has not an editor sanctioned by those who preside over the censorship.

Bad as is the condition of journalists in St. Petersburg, it is infinitely worse in provincial towns, where they are literally the slaves of the local authorities.

Apart from the political censorship in Russia there is a religious censorship exercised by special priestly tribunals under the supervision of the Holy Synod, the supreme authority in spiritual matters.

These tribunals are entrusted with the task of preventing the circulation of any books in any language which may damage the spiritual authority of the Orthodox Greek Church over the people.

The last action of the Holy Synod that has attracted universal attention was, of course, the excommunication of Count Leo Tolstoi. In reply to the letter of Countess Tolstoi, in which she protested against the synod's action, Antonius, the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, wrote an extraordinary epistle, explaining and justifying their conduct.

'It is not,' he writes, 'what the synod has done in condemning your husband's falling off from the church that is hard, but what he has done to himself in renouncing belief in Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God; our Redeemer and Saviour. In consequence of that renunciation you

ought long since to have given expression to your painful indignation. And your husband is, of course, not perishing because of a slip of printed paper, but because he has turned away from the Fountain of Everlasting Life. A Christian life without Christ is not to be thought of, for according to His own words, whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

'Of him, therefore, we can only say that he has passed from life to death. Herein lies your husband's ruin, but he alone is to blame for that ruin, and not anybody else. The church to which you belong consists of those who believe in Christ, and for the believers, its members, the church blesses in the name of God all the most important moments of human life—birth, marriage, death, the grief and joys of men. But this it never does, nor can do, for the unbeliever, the heathen, the slanderer of God's name, for those who have fallen away and who do not wish to receive either prayers or blessings from it—in short, for those who are not its members. And from the standpoint of this church the decree of the synod is quite natural, comprehensible and clear as God's day. The love of God is infinite, but it does not forgive all and everything. Slander of the Holy Ghost is forgiven neither in this nor in the other world. Matthew xii., 32. As long as your husband lives one cannot say that he is lost, but with full truth it has been said of him that he has fallen away from the church and is not a member of it as long as he does not repent. In saying this in its decree the holy synod has only confirmed an accomplished fact, and therefore only those can be indignant about it who do not know what they are doing.

'You have received from the whole world manifestations of sympathy. I am not astonished, but I think that this is no consolation to you. There is a human and a divine glory. 'For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away,' I, Peter, ii, 24. When news spread last year of the Count's illness, the question rose in the minds of all servants of the Church; Is he who has fallen away from the faith and the Church worthy of Christian burial and prayers? The synod was asked and gave the servants of the church the secret answer and indeed, the only answer it could give: He is not, should he die, without having returned to membership of the Church. In this there was no threat against anybody. And indeed, I do not believe that any priest, even a dishonest one, would be found to take upon himself to give the Count Christian burial; and should one be found to do it, such burial of an unbeliever would be a criminal profanation of the holy rite. Moreover, why should one force your husband, who, no doubt, himself does not desire it, to have Christian burial?

'If you are a living being, and regard yourself as a member of the Church which is indeed a bond of living reasonable beings in the name of the Living God, then your statement that the Church is to you an abstract conception becomes itself weak. It is wrong of you to reproach the servants of the Church with wickedness and violation of the supreme law of love given to us by Christ. The action of the Synod involves no violation of that law. It is rather an act of love, by which your husband is summoned to return to the Church and believers called upon to pray for him. The shepherds of the church are appointed by the Lord. It is not they themselves who, as you say, regard themselves in their pride as standing at the head of the church. They wear mitres set with diamonds and stars, but this is not the chief thing. Even in coarse raiment, hunted and persecuted, they remain, and will remain, shepherds, however they may be insulted and called the most abominable names. In conclusion, I beg to apologize for not having answered you at once, but I waited till the first vehement outburst of your affliction was over. God bless and keep you, and forgive the Count, your husband.

An interesting pendant to this letter of the St. Petersburg Metropolitan is that addressed to the Czar last December by Count Tolstoi. This letter is now being privately circulated in Russia, and its contents have become so generally known among all well-informed people that there can hardly be any doubt as to its authenticity. The request made on behalf of certain Russian women who ask to be allowed to leave their present place of abode, evidently refers to their wish to

join their husbands in exile somewhere in the remoter parts of Siberia. The letter, which was written when the Count was very ill and bedridden runs as follows: Your Imperial Majesty Gospodar Nicholas Alexandrovich:

Kindly read through the enclosed letter yourself and alone; it was not at first intended for you, and it is short. Listen to the promptings of your own good heart and act accordingly.

Nine young women living at liberty, with sufficient for their needs, and two old matrons beg as a special favor, after selling all they have accumulated by hard work, to be allowed to give up a free and comfortable existence and to go to the most horrible place of exile, surrounded by the most painful conditions. What must have been the sufferings of these people during six years of separation, living alone, in the most difficult circumstances?

And how moral and strong must they be if, in the midst of their sufferings, they think not of themselves, but of one another and of how to be true to their marriage vows. But these are not the only people who are suffering there. Hundreds of such Russians, the best of the people, are undergoing still worse suffering from religious persecution, which, through some astonishing misunderstanding, continues to be practised in Russia, and is even on the increase at a time when all enlightened persons and governments have long ago recognized the futility, absurdity and cruel injustice of such persecution. I have long had it in my mind as a sacred duty before I die to try to open your eyes to the senseless and terrible cruelties which are perpetrated in your name. The accompanying letter from the Dukhobors has determined me to put it off no longer. Thousands of the best Russians, sincerely religious people, and therefore such as constitute the chief strength of every nation, have been already ruined, or are being ruined in prison and in banishment, or have been sent out, or are being sent out of Russia.

The flower of the population, not only in the Caucasus, but also in Russia proper, 10,000 Dukhobors, notwithstanding all hardships and privations, have quitted their fat fatherland forever, not only with regret but in terror from the remembrance of all they have had to undergo there. Several thousand Molokani in the district of Kars, as many in Erivan, whose petition to be allowed to emigrate I have already submitted to you, the Molokani of Tashkent, and some 10,000 persons in the provinces of Kharkoff and Kieff who are persecuted for their faith—all these wish and pray for one thing only, and that is, the permission to leave Russia and to go where they may safely worship God as they understand Him, and not as ordered by the authorities most of whom recognize no God whatever.

If you do not know of all the absurd cruelties which are committed in your name, then allow me to tell you here that my words will be confirmed by any just person whom you may commission to investigate the matter. But once knowing that your name is used to justify the infliction of suffering upon the innocent and the best among the people, and that you are able to prevent it, you cannot have peace of mind until you have done this. Do not take counsel with the men who have arranged this ill treatment, to be guided by them, neither with Pobiedonostzoff, who is a man behind his time, cunning, obstinate and cruel, nor with Sipagin, who is a man of mediocre abilities, frivolous and unenlightened.

Such people will tell you that I am a visionary, an Anarchist, and a godless person, and that all I say and advise is unjust, but what I say is not from my own point of view. I speak from the point of view of your Majesty, who is able to put an end to the crimes committed under the guise of legality, and to destroy the bases on which such crimes are founded. Therefore I take the liberty of advising you as follows: First, to revise and abolish the contradictory and shameful laws now existing in regard to persecution in the name of religion, which have long ceased to exist in every other country except Russia; secondly, to put an end to all persecution and punishment for departure from the religious creed of the State, and to liberate all persons imprisoned and exiled on account of their faith; and thirdly to reconsider the question of how to reconcile the requirements of conscience in religious matters with the demands of the State—as, for example, the refusal to take an oath and to perform military service, not to punish such dissent as a crime, but try to reconcile the inconsistency, as was done in the case of the Mennonites, by a compulsory labor in exchange for military service, and a solemn declaration to speak the truth in courts of law instead of the usual oath.

Forgive me if I have not explained myself clearly; my only motive was the good of the people in general and of yourself in particular. I know and feel all the weight

and responsibility of your position. I believe that the cruel religious oppression practised in your name, besides doing harm to yourself in the opinion of the people of Europe, and the judgment of history, lays upon you a tormenting responsibility. By abolishing this religious persecution and by making its repetition impossible you will not only relieve yourself of this responsibility, but will experience the pleasurable consciousness of having done a good work.

God help you to do that which pleaseth Him. And in doing this you do the greatest good for the Russian people and for yourself. Your loving LEO TOLSTOI.

Dec. 15, 1900.

MRS. JONES AND THE BRIGAND.

The Colorado Woman who got Lowest cut Rates on a Captured Husband.

Quartz specimens were piled everywhere. The assayer swept a half peck on the floor, opened the door of the little corner cabinet and got out the cigars—fairly good cigars for a Colorado mining town.

'Yes,' he began, 'any one who knew Mrs. Jones in these diggings knows that she can be relied upon to hold her own. Did you ever hear the Athens story—about Mrs. Jones and the Greek brigands?

'Well, when Jones struck the Big Pony lead in the hills north of town here he sold out within a month for \$3,000,000 in gold, payable in London. You've no idea what a thoroughly undertrodden mortal he was before his ship came in. He was a mover, that's all—had been everywhere from Texas to Oregon and from Missouri to the ocean.

'They came down here and stayed a week before they took train for New York—had \$50,000 advance on the millions. Jones himself was for opening up in style, but the woman's life of hard scrimping had made her a thorough miser. He managed to unload a couple of hundred dollars that week, but she kept cases on him all the while. When she climbed onto the steps of the smoker she wore the same rusty black dress and faded little bonnet that she'd worn into town five years before. Jones—well, what Jones wore didn't matter. He got more appropriate new togs in Chicago.

'I caught them in New York and we sailed together. In London they got their money and I helped them invest it. Mrs. Jones was for having it in gold and keeping it with her, but I got around that by telling her what three millions weighed. Then they went away to see Europe. How they ever heard of Athens no one seems to know, for they were going about the Continent haphazard, as they'd gone over the West—just moneyed movers. They were fetched up in the Greek capital somehow, though, and the Joneses took the old fever for the hills and went prowling about as if they expected to find another Big Pony.

'The landlord at their hotel told him that the place was full of brigands and that he'd be a rich prize for them, but Jones couldn't see any difference between Greece and Colorado. So he kept on prowling until, one day, he failed to come back.

'Two days went by and nothing was heard of him. Mrs. Jones didn't worry much, thought he was big enough to take care of himself and hoped he wouldn't be extravagant. Finally a letter came to the hotel by a roundabout way—letter saying that Sardanapalus Hieronophaleus or some such gout—biggest brigand in those parts—had got Jones, and that he would be returned in good order for \$5,000. Mrs. Jones refused to pay the landlord for translating the letter.

'By and by another came. Jones would be returned for \$6,000 provided the money was sent before the end of the week. He had gone up a thousand on account of the delay. In case the money was not in hand by that Saturday night Jones's left ear would be cut off, in consideration of which depreciation in value he would come down to the first named price \$5,000.'

'Mrs. Jones was immovable. At nightfall of the last day of grace Mr. Hieronophaleus sent word that he would amputate Jones's ear at sunrise the next morning, and sure enough, at sunrise she was notified that the ear had been cut off and that Jones had dropped to the first named quotation. Furthermore, Mr. Hieronophaleus would begin a series of reductions on the morrow, both of prices and of Jones.

'These would be made according to a schedule that he inclosed.

Jones's other ear would follow the first the very next day, with a reduction to \$4,500. Twenty-four hours later he would lose his nose and be marked down to \$4,000. Then his tongue would be abstracted, price dropping to \$3,500, while in consideration of the loss of two thumbs at \$500 each and his feet at \$1,500 the pair he would be further dropped to \$1,000.

'Beyond this there would be no reductions whatever—in price at least.

When the final figure had been reached Jones's head would be forwarded to her, and she might have the rest of him for the cost of delivery.

'Some tourists who knew Greece and its ways came to her rescue and tried to help her. The only way in which they could be of service, however, was in translating letters and advising her to send the sums demanded without further delay. Mr. Hieronophaleus was dreading for the grim way he had of keeping to the letter of his announcements, the landlord said. But Mrs. Jones refused to pay a single dollar for her husband.

'Regularly each nightfall she was informed that a part of his anatomy had been amputated and at what figure the ransom then stood. By cuts of \$500 the price came down until it had reached the figure beyond which it was not to go. Then Mrs. Jones offered to meet the brigand chief and talk the matter over. They took her blindfolded into the mountains and a long confab was held.

She offered \$200 for her husband and Hieronophaleus stuck out for his original \$1,000. Then she came up to \$225 and he dropped to \$900. For five hours they sat in a little mountain cavern and dickered steadily. It was a case of Greek meeting Greek. Then a deal was closed where by Jones was to loose twelve of his teeth and was to pay \$390 for the residue of him. So he was delivered to her then and there and they both left Athens the next day.

'Jones?—Oh, of course not. No, not at all. You see, Mr. Hieronophaleus had an agreement with the Governor of that province. The romance of brigandage means a good deal in money every year to the hotels and tourist haunts of that part of the world—is its main attraction, as it were. So the Governor entered into pact with Hieronophaleus. He was to have whatever he could earn at his trade, less a certain percentage to his Excellency and in return was to operate unmolested. But under no circumstances was any one to be mutilated. That counteracted the romance.

'If Hieronophaleus could work his end by purely theatrical means he was at liberty to burn unlimited red fire, but no single drop of a captive's blood was to be shed, no matter how high the ransom. Now, whether Mrs. Jones knew of this pact no one has ever found out. But I am inclined to believe, from what I knew of her here, that she was simply waiting to buy him in at what she thought was a reasonable price.'

Horses in South Africa.

A South African bred horse keeps his condition best, as he will get his head down and nibble whenever you get off his back. He is less excitable, too, than most English horses. An imported horse bred north of the equator takes at least a year to get used to the change of seasons, not to mention the change of food.

When campaigning, it is not the fast work which kills the horses, but the long hours, heavy weights and want of sleep and food. It is as well, therefore, to halt if possible where there is grazing and to dismount whenever you halt even for a few minutes.

The safest way to secure the horses of a patrol on the veldt at night is to place about a dozen in a circle, each one being tied by the rein to the head stall of the next horse on his left, allowing an interval of only a foot between their heads.

In this way the horses cannot, of course, lie down, but they keep each other warm and cannot get loose without breaking two reins instead of one. If a horse is dead beat, he can of course be knee haltered or tied up by himself.

He Had Molted.

'That fellow is a bird,' said the admiring stranger as he looked after the fresh young man.

'Not now,' replied the native, 'but there was a time when your description might have been justified.'

'When was that?'

'The night we tarred and feathered him about a year ago.'

AWAY WITH CATARRH!

It's Loathsome,
It's Disgusting.

Instant Relief and Permanent Cure Secured by the Use of Dr. Agnew's Catarrhal Powder.

Here's strong evidence of the quickness and sureness of that wonderful remedy, Dr. Agnew's Catarrhal Powder: 'For years I was a victim of Chronic Catarrh—tried many remedies but no cure was effected until I had procured and used Dr. Agnew's Catarrhal Powder. First application gave me instant relief, and in an incredibly short while I was absolutely cured.'—James Headley, Dundee, N. Y.