

When Blood Flowed Like Water at Odessa

Thrilling Description by an Eye-Witness of the Awful Scenes of Carnage Between Russians and Jews That Followed the Proclamation of the Czar's Grant of a Constitution.

(By a Merchant for Sixteen Years a Resident of Odessa.)

Odessa, Nov. 4.

THE general railway strike, which commenced over a week ago, the particulars of which are generally known, paralyzed the shipping trade of our port, and seems to have been the forerunner of a carefully prepared revolution. The town was full of rumors of a commencing general strike over all Russia, and everybody anxiously stored up a stock of provisions. Thousands of people of all classes, chiefly common laborers and students, held big meetings in the University, from where the agitation was carried to the gymnasiums and other schools. The authorities were powerless to stop these meetings, and revolutionary speeches continued to be made and the Government insulted.

On Friday morning, Oct. 27, all the schools went on strike. The pupils started an awful row, beating their teachers and proceeding to the gymnasiums, smashing the windows in and demanding the shutting of all schools. They also went to the girls' schools, and were going to proceed through the streets together with the girls, but were driven away by the police. On this occasion, it is said, girls were beaten by policemen with leather sabre sheaths, and another version says that two girls were wounded, having been defended by students. Meantime, the students tried to persuade the post officials also to strike, but were unsuccessful. However, the whole staff of the municipality, and that of the banking houses, as well as all the chemists, in harmony with those of other towns, decided to strike in order to obtain political liberty, such as a general right to vote, liberty of the press, of religion, of associating, and inviolability of person.

When the report of a schoolgirl having been wounded was spread about, a storm of indignation arose. A meeting demanded that the Mayor and the members of the Town Administration should appear immediately, and on their arrival the formation of a civil militia for self-defense was demanded under immediate suspension of payments to the maintenance of the police and the troops. Next day the Board of Aldermen, called the "Douma," decided to decline any responsibility and to resign rather than agree to these demands. Upon this a committee of fifteen members was constituted under the Presidency of a lawyer, a Jew, who had previously been banished and recently returned from his exile. This committee immediately started to carry out the proposal of forming a kind of civil defense.

Orders had arrived on Sunday morning from St. Petersburg to stop meetings in the University, but to allow the students to enter. Troops consequently were stationed around the University. A public notice from the Governor had warned the citizens not to raise tumults and not to attack the soldiers, who had been authorized to fire should any disturbances occur. On Sunday, Oct. 29, at noon, the streets were overcrowded. Many boys and girls, mostly Jewish, ran about, stopped cabs, capsized five tramcars, and started to build barricades. From these barricades it is said that the first shots were fired against the troops. These replied by a few volleys, which dispersed the rioters, who left about twenty dead and about eighty wounded on the battlefield. About two hundred persons were arrested, many of them mere boys, and among the dead and wounded there were also a lot of children.

Monday passed perfectly quiet. The people, although extremely excited, seemed to have realized that it was useless fighting the soldiers. The troops were distributed all over the whole town, and Cossacks patrolled about. The day was one of the numerous holidays, being the anniversary of the "marvelous saving of Czar Alexander III and his family from the railway accident at Borki." All houses were decorated with the national flag, and at night the streets were illuminated in the usual way by colored lamps put on wires fastened from tree to tree along the alleys, which gave the town a very nice and festive aspect.

Tuesday morning brought a wonderful surprise. During the night a telegram from St. Petersburg announced that the Czar had granted the rights and liberties demanded by the people. Since Sunday morning no papers had appeared, the editors having joined the general political strike, saying that they were not allowed to tell the truth. However, these joyful tidings were communicated to the people by an extra paper immediately. A general rejoicing followed. Many embraced and congratulated each other. The crowds cried "Hurrah!" and gave cheers for liberty and formed processions carrying red flags. From the national flags the blue and white stripes were torn off, thus making a red flag. At 2 P. M. the exultation reached its climax, and was being completely overdone, red flags showing everywhere, many orators making violent speeches, and crowds shouting "Down with autocracy!" This was because the Czar's manifesto still contained his full title as before. In their reeling joyousness the revolutionists committed serious excesses; for instance,

they pulled down the iron inscription on the town hall, "God save the Czar," and they are said to have also torn down the Czar's portrait inside the town hall. It appeared that neither the Socialists nor the new committee of the "Douma" were satisfied with what had been granted. The latter seemed to imagine that they were the representatives of a ruling people, and could do what they pleased. Instead of restoring now the old powers of order, they insisted on carrying out the idea of a civil militia, and already in the morning had dismissed the police and withdrawn most of the troops. Those that remained did nothing to interfere with the democratic demonstrations. Students were the leaders, and acted as representatives of the Douma committee. No accidents happened, but many passersby were forced to salute the red flag by taking off their hats.

Southwest of Odessa is the Dainitzkaja Street,

ered around themselves the laborers of the port for a counter demonstration. It is said that disguised policemen were among the leaders, encouraging the laborers. About three hundred men, sturdy, wild fellows, marched up the hill to the town, having at their head national flags, and shouting "Hurrah for our Russian Czar!" The writer heard the words, "This time we shall give it them hot." At the corner near the Hotel Europe they met the first Jew, and immediately knocked him down with sticks and killed him. Two German Captains, on the way to their agents' office, arrived at this place at the same moment, and with difficulty got through the mob. Then the rioters went to the town hall, close by, and took away the black flags that had been put up in token of mourning for those who had fallen the night before. The spectators saluted the national flag by taking off their hats. Then the frenzied mob, bloodthirsty and eager for prey, went

the port thus found a well-organized resistance, and from the balconies they were shot with revolvers and from the roofs bombs were thrown down upon them. The noise of the fight, the explosions of the bombs, the constant crack of shooting, was awful, and now and then it was mixed with the sound of the ringing of church bells. The threat voiced by the students a few days before the proclamation of the imperial manifesto that people would be wading in a sea of blood at Odessa, now became true. The whole day and night the fight continued, in which it appears that the students and Jews had the better of it, and the hospitals were already then quite full of the wounded.

At 9-A. M. Thursday, Nov. 2, the fight recommenced. Hooligans looted Jewish shops in Torgovaja and other streets. A thick fog made the situation all the more terrible. The smell of powder and gas from the bombs filled those streets where

and most of the victims have fallen there. What scenes of horror took place in these houses of poverty the world will doubtless learn in a few days. The awful fight in the streets is nothing in comparison with the dreadful scenes of murder and torment committed against men, women, and children by a swarm of outcasts worse than wild animals. To inflame the people's rage rumors had been spread about that the Jews had murdered all their Christian servants, that the monastery church had been defiled by Jews, and that they had insulted a procession at the cathedral, tearing and trampling on the ikon (holy picture) of the Blessed Virgin.

What part during these deplorable events the authorities played, who had the duty of keeping order, remains to be explained. No doubt such explanations will be demanded by the press, which—let us hope—will be actually free now. Only on Thursday afternoon the soldiers commenced to act more energetically; but instead of going for the hooligans, artillery was put into action against those houses from which shots had been fired.

The third night of horror brought the continuation of the fight with renewed violence. The crack of revolver and gun shooting was mingled with the screams of the wounded and those which were to be murdered. Hatred between two races and religious fanaticism had caused a slaughter comparable only to St. Bartholomew's Night.

Friday, and still the riots have not come to an end. Still the plunderers and murderers are at work. But at last the authorities are trying to put a stop to this awful uproar of the powers of hell. The Town Governor published the following proclamations:

"I. In order to stop the pillages which are taking place since the police discontinued to act (and their activity ceased owing to the numerous attacks on single policemen) patrols have been sent out by the troops and police, which, however, the inhabitants are firing at from windows, and thereby do irreparable harm to themselves. A civil militia confirmed by law does not exist at Odessa. I urgently request that firing from windows should be stopped to avoid the necessity of destroying the houses, from which firing takes place, by artillery. "NIEDGARDT, "The Town Governor,

"II. Many citizens applied to me, requesting to re-establish protection by the police. This is possible if every policeman is surrounded by ten citizens, to whom he intrusts his life. All who desire the re-establishment of the police may apply to the Chiefs of the police stations. The troops and the police are busy in stopping the plunderings. The firing from windows interferes with executing this purpose. "NIEDGARDT, Town Governor."

The activity of the troops was at last more successful. The firing decreased and for a few hours ceased entirely, but commenced again in the afternoon and night. An eye witness asserts that hooligans looted shops in Richelleu Street in the presence of the soldiers.

The position of the population during these terrifying days is a most miserable one. Trade and communication are of course interrupted entirely. All offices are shut. The inhabitants of endangered houses fled to friends or to the hotels, which are overcrowded and refuse to take in Jews. Many foreign subjects fled on board the steamers in the port. There is already great want of bread, meat, and coal, and the price of the latter has risen to about \$15 per ton.

Friday night several houses were still bombarded with machine guns and horrible deeds also committed by the mob. Saturday, however, everything was quiet. Soldiers are at every corner. The civil war, it seems, is finished, at least for the present, and the people appear in the streets again. A proclamation from the Commander in Chief of the Odessa Military District says that the troops have strict orders to prevent any looting or attacks on peaceable citizens by force of arms. The number of the dead and wounded is estimated at a minimum of 5,000, of which 1,500 are hooligans. Other estimates go to much higher figures. It will scarcely be possible to ascertain anything definite, as the thousands of wounded in the private houses are not counted. As there was absolutely no more room in the hospitals, all the schools had to be made into provisional lazarets.

Similar fearful news arrived from other towns of South Russia. At Nicolaleff and Kishineff the furious battle seems to have raged nearly as hotly as here. There are no minute particulars, owing to the stoppage of railway and post communication. Kherson has suffered comparatively little, as telephonic information estimates the number of dead and wounded there at under a hundred.

Let us hope that by development in the direction of modern civilization opened up by a liberal government, South Russia, and especially Odessa, may recover by and by from this last formidable blow.



PANORAMIC VIEW OF ODESSA.

leading to the village of Dalnik, where many poor Jews are living. The news of the Czar having granted a constitution caused great exultation among these Jews also, whereas the Russian population was made jealous and got irritated by the provocative behavior of some fanatics who carried red flags and declared that now they would have the same rights as the Russians, and soon would get the better of them. At night already a Russian mob commenced to destroy and loot Jewish shops and houses. When the students heard of the disorder in the Dainitzkaja, part of them hurried there armed with sticks and revolvers to defend the Jews, but were fired at by Cossacks and infantry, and many of them killed and wounded. This was the signal for the outbreak of the civil war and indescribable anarchy which reigned at Odessa for the following three days.

Next morning, Nov. 1, Russian "patriots" gath-

into town. In Deribas Street (one of the main avenues) they commenced beating the Jews to death and smashing and looting the Jewish shops. No troops or police interfered, having been foolishly dismissed by the Douma committee. Socialistic students and Jews came to the rescue and soon commenced a regular fight in the streets, the students and Jews firing revolvers and throwing bombs.

Since the horrible slaughter at Kishineff the Jews have well provided themselves with arms and ammunition, knowing that in case of a massacre they cannot rely on the police and troops for protection. They have formed a thorough system of self-defense, and even the women are provided with sulphuric acid. The Social Democrats, to which party in Russia most of the Jews belong, seem to have regular bomb factories, some of which were detected here during the Potemkine affair this Summer. The hooligans from

the fight raged, chiefly in Deribas and Kherson Streets. At 11 A. M. the fog cleared away. The shooting was getting less violent. Patrols of Cossacks were riding through the town. The plunderers went to the suburbs to continue their work there. From 7 P. M., however, firing was renewed in town. In the suburb named Ferrisip several factories belonging to Jews were burning.

The numbers of hooligans had grown to thousands in the course of these two days, and frenzy had turned them into wild beasts. The Jewish shops and magazines were left by their proprietors, and hundreds were entirely smashed and emptied. The prey must have been very valuable, and therefore the crowds of robbers continually increased. Most terribly they have devastated the suburbs. The poor inhabitants of these were not so well prepared for defense as the Jews in town, and therefore the suburbs show a most frightful picture of devastation,