

CHOLERA IN RUSSIA.

The People of the Volga Live in a Way That Invites the Great Plague.

THEIR FOOD INDIGESTIBLE.

Patrid Fish, Wilted Cucumbers and Bread That Is Like Clay.

CENSORSHIP OF THE PRESS.

How Objectionable Articles Are Blotted Out With Indelible Ink.

PICTURES GORBLED FROM THE MAIL.

RESPONSE OF THE DISPATCH.

ST. PETERSBURG, AUG. 14.

HE skeleton of the cholera now hangs over Russia, and the reports of its horrors along the lower reaches of the Volga are brought here daily. They are kept out of the newspapers as far as possible, but it is not known to just what extent the plague has spread, but there is no doubt that the whole of the Volga regions will be devastated by it, and, in order to understand its dangers, it is necessary to know the character of the country and the life of the people.

The Volga is as wide as the Mississippi. It is 2,300 miles long and it has as great a trade as any river in the world. It flows through a flat country and the lower half passes through an almost treeless region. Upon these great plains the hot sun of the tropics is beating down now with relentless vigor. There is absolutely no protection from it, and the women go about with only their bodice and their head, and children roll their brains under the sun's burning rays, with no protection whatever. The men wear heavy caps, and the women are so built that they are like baked ovens at this time of the year.

No Sanitary Provisions at All.

At Kazan and Samara I saw hundreds upon hundreds of half-naked men lying on the roadside and sleeping with their heads on the ground. They were surrounded by the smells of decaying vegetable matter all about them. Samara has a system of water works, but most of these Volga cities have no sanitary arrangements whatsoever, and the villages of Russia which possess a water closet is one of a thousand. The people, moreover, have no knowledge of the rules of health, and their diet and habits would naturally breed the cholera and carry it over to the next generation. Their soup is made of green cabbage, and old men and babies eat this by the gallon. They eat carrots, and one of the chief articles which they eat is bread. The bread is made of rye and is consumed in large quantities. The green cucumber, which is eaten raw, just as it comes from the vine, or, more often, after it has been pickled, and stale from lying about under the hot sun.

In the provinces just above Saratoff a great deal of famine bread is still used. I saw a woman find that the bread was so hard that she had to break it up in a mortar. It is so hard that it would be the ruin of any man whose horse were to eat it. Its surface is of a dirty gray, and when you break it open you find that inside it is a deep brown. It is so hard that it is like a piece of wood. It is so hard that it is like a piece of wood. It is so hard that it is like a piece of wood.

The Plague Comes From Asia Minor.

With the increased facilities for communication diseases of this kind spread more rapidly than ever before. The bed of the cholera seems to be Asia Minor, Persia and the regions along the Trans-Caspian Railroad. The great cholera epidemic of 1832 and 1833 in this region and extended into Asiatic Russia. The cholera of 1830 first manifested itself in Persia, and it got its start on the shores of the Caspian Sea. It crept up the Volga just as this time it is creeping up the coast of the Caspian Empire and during the following year spread over Europe and wrapped its disease-spreaders around England, France and the rest of the world. It came to Italy and finally came over to North America. Nearly every cholera of history has come from the Trans-Caspian region, and it is reasonable to assume that it can keep it down it is impossible to tell whether it will succeed. Down at Astrakhan the people are dying by the dozens every day, and there are 100 cases in the neighborhood of 100 cholera cases in that city. It is through this town that all Parisian travelers must come, and a rigid quarantine is enforced. The officials on the trans-Caspian road inspect all passengers with careful examination is being made at the different cities.

At the present writing, however, the people are dying from the lack of doctors, and there is practically no medical service in connection with the Russian villages. During the typhus fever and the famine of the cholera epidemic, the care of the sick was largely by well-to-do people, who did the work for charity's sake. Reports from the cholera districts are so unreliable that it is impossible to tell just to how great an extent it exists. There are said to be a few cases in the hospital at Moscow, but so far as the cholera epidemic is concerned, the disease seems to be confined to the Volga.

Rotten Wood Filled With Disease.

The sanitary arrangements of Moscow and St. Petersburg might be improved upon. It is not that the houses are not clean, but that they are not clean enough, for they are not clean in this respect as those of any other cities of the world. The police have charge of the sanitary arrangements and if a man does not keep his house clean, he is liable to be fined or his house is liable to be closed. The great trouble is the lack of good water works, and as the sanitary building of the cholera districts are so unreliable that it is impossible to tell just to how great an extent it exists. There are said to be a few cases in the hospital at Moscow, but so far as the cholera epidemic is concerned, the disease seems to be confined to the Volga.

One of the most offensive smells along the Volga is that of putrid fish. Nearly every street has great crates of walking dead fish, and the streets are filled with the stench of rotting fish. The fish are carried about on strings and their shoulders. The men of these fish come from Astrakhan, and in which is one of the greatest fish markets of the world. It is here that the greater part of the codfish of the world is shipped from this point every year. Much of the fish is made into sturgeon, and millions of dollars' worth of it is shipped from this point every year. The poorer of them eat the refuse, and this has aggravated the cholera, and the people are rapidly increasing. The fish which are shipped from Astrakhan are often not more than half cooked and they are in a bad condition when they are sold to the people. They are eaten half cooked and as little care is taken to keep them clean they form about as indigestible an article of diet as can be found.

The bread is almost enough to kill.

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