

HOW RASPUTIN WAS POISONED AND THEN SHOT

Remarkable Vitality of Russia's Notorious Monk—Poisoned, He Attacked His Enemy, Was Shot in the Head, Then He Arose, Put on Coat and Was Found Dead in Street.

(This is another of the series of articles by Charles Edward Russell, who has just returned from Russia, where he spent three months as a member of the official United States commission to the new Russian government.)

(By Charles Edward Russell.)
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The young man that undertook to rid the earth of Rasputin, the German spy and agent, I will call the duke, altho he wasn't that. When he made up his mind to do the Rasputin job he consulted with an intimate friend of his, a doctor.

The doctor advised poison as a quiet, efficacious way of dealing with persons of the Rasputin sort, and suggested cyanide of potash. That there should be no blunder nor slip-up, he experimented with a dose of this remedy on a large dog. The dog died instantly, and the doctor made an estimate of a somewhat larger amount necessary to overcome Rasputin's great vitality.

The duke meantime sought the acquaintance of the faking monk and got his confidence, which was not easily had. It was the duke's account of the ladies that were alleged to be dying for the love of the faker that did the business.

Date of Meeting Set.
The duke owned a large and handsome house, and what he was maneuvering for was to get Rasputin at night and alone into that house. He was not readily separated from his bodyguard, but he finally agreed to come at 10 o'clock on a certain night and meet these ladies that so much desired his acquaintance, but shied at the bodyguard.

The doctor fixed up the poison dose, putting it into some cakes. At 10 o'clock Rasputin appeared and was received at the door by the duke.

The houses of the well-to-do in Russia usually have a large reception room on the ground floor, and the parlors on the floor above. The duke's house was so arranged.

It was a bitter cold night, even for Petrograd in the middle of winter. There was a blazing fire in the fireplace of the reception room. Rasputin was divested of his magnificent fur overcoat and fur cap and led before the fire.

"Before we go up stairs to see the ladies," said the duke, "we will sit here a moment and have a glass of wine."

Poisoned Wine and Cake.
So the wine and the poisoned cakes were brought in.

But at first Rasputin would take no refreshment and sat before the fire, looking rather suspiciously about him.

The duke is a good talker. He spun a web of flattery around the false monk, continually arousing his curiosity about the fair ladies above. Finally, Rasputin, apparently convinced that all was well, accepted a glass of wine and ate two of the cakes.

The duke stood by, expecting to see him fall dead.

He didn't fall dead. In a few minutes he complained of feeling ill, and bent forward in front of the fire, his hands upon his stomach. Then he looked up with an expression of fiendish hatred on his face and began to curse the duke. He understood that he had been poisoned.

Still he continued to live.

The duke became frightened and ran up the stairs to the doctor, who was waiting in a room on the floor above.

"He is the devil," he cried. "That poison did not kill him and he knows that I gave it to him. The next minute he will go out and give the alarm!"

"Take your revolver," said the doctor, "and go down and finish him."

Duke Took Revolver.

The duke took the revolver and slipped down the stairs. Rasputin sat in the same position, bent over the fire. The duke came behind and shot him thru the head. Rasputin fell prone upon the floor.

The duke ran upstairs to tell the doctor.

"That man is evidently of the most extraordinary vitality," said the doctor. "You had better go down again and make sure that he is dead."

The duke returned. Rasputin lay apparently lifeless, stretched out be-

fore the fire. The duke bent over him to see if he still breathed and the terrible creature suddenly gripped him around the ankles and hung there, frothing at the mouth and cursing.

The duke struggled to win free, but Rasputin hung on. At last the duke made a sudden and desperate leap, wrenched himself from the madman's grasp and bolted up stairs, almost hysterical.

"He is certainly the devil," he whispered to the doctor. "He is still alive, after all that!"

"Take the revolver again," said the doctor, "and we will go down together and finish him."

They went down stairs and were stricken dumb and shaking with terror and amazement.

Man Had Vanished.

The place was empty. The fur overcoat and fur cap were missing from the rack at the door. The man had vanished.

Absolute ruin stared them in the face. Rasputin had gone forth knowing of the double attempt on his life.

Within an hour the two of them would be in prison cells and as good as dead.

While they stood there quaking and staring, suddenly there came a loud rapping on the front door.

The doctor, half mad with fright at the supernatural fate that seemed to have overwhelmed them, pulled himself together enough to stagger to the door and get it open.

A perfect stranger stood there. He said:

"A man has fallen in the street

before your house. Do you know anything about him?"

They ran into the middle of the road and it was Rasputin, dead at last.

With all that poison in him and a bullet in his head, he had arisen, put on his overcoat and cap, opened the street door and crossed the sidewalk to the middle of the road before he dropped.

They carried the body into the house, got it out the back way into an automobile and took it down the

Neva to a lonesome spot, where they thrust it thru a hole in the ice.

There is a strong current in the Neva. By daylight the body should have been carried out to sea and lost.

At daylight a carter driving along the shore saw something black projecting from the ice, went out to investigate and found the body of Rasputin.

The czarina was wild with grief. She erected a beautiful mausoleum on the palace grounds and every day she went to weep over the coffin.

The people did not weep. And on the second day of the revolution a party of stalwart men in black top boots went out to the palace and broke open the mausoleum and took the body out to the middle of the street and burned it there.

Many versions of Rasputin's end have been printed in America. This is the version that was told among the best informed in Petrograd when I was there. I have fairly good reason to believe it is substantially correct.

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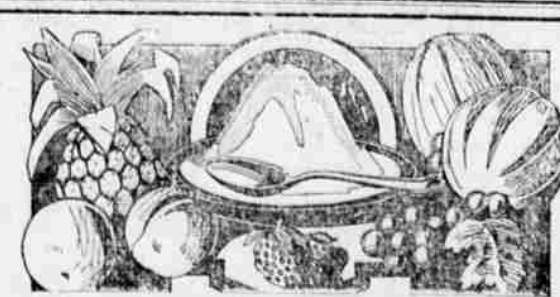
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