

IS STALIN THE MODERN NERO?

IN the light of certain recent revelations, there are some who believe that Joseph Vissarionovitch Djugashvilli, known to fame as Joseph Stalin, is driven to destruction by some dark impulse within himself.

The blood lust of a Nero or a Tiberius is traced by modern psychology not to innate wickedness, but to some unhappy childhood experience, some derangement of the glandular system, some hereditary taint, some shock to the psyche, some repressed impulse raging in the unconscious.

Once the repressed impulse bursts its chains, it may dominate the personality completely. If the individual is unchecked, disaster will follow.

No Caesar, no Czar ever ruled more absolutely than Stalin. He holds in the hollow of his hand one-seventh of the globe and one hundred and seventy million people.

Stalin's father, Vissarion Djugashvilli, a cobbler by profession, was a confirmed dipsomaniac.

In one of his drunken rages the brute almost beat his son to death. He attacked the boy, not only with his fists, but drew

blood by stabbing him with the implements of his craft. With difficulty the mother of Vissarionovitch Djugashvilli saved her son's life.

The father died in a drunken brawl, but his beatings left on the soul of the son even deeper marks than those left in his face by smallpox.

This information is vouchsafed by Stalin's former friend and fellow countryman, Kyrill Kakabadse, one-time deputy People's Commissioner of Georgia, the land where Joseph Stalin was born.

After holding high offices under the Soviet government, and representing the Russian manganese trust in Berlin, Comrade Kakabadse fell out with the dictator. Condemned to death on his refusal to return to Russia, he remained abroad to tell tales out of school about the friend of his youth, Stalin.

All others who know the truth, Comrade Kakabadse avows, are either dead or in prison.

It behooves us to take all information, friendly or hostile, concerning Soviet Russia, with a grain of salt. Kakabadse's revelations would be rejected by

the present writer, if they did not tally with the actions of the dictator.

Some children are crushed completely by parental brutality. Stalin's childhood experience made him what his name implies, a "man of steel." It taught him to defend himself with cunning and ruthlessness.

These qualities liberated him from the sense of inferiority engendered by pain and humiliation. They are the qualities with which he triumphed over men far superior to him in mental equipment.

If this were all, Russia could draw her breath in peace. Ruthlessness and cunning may be desirable attributes of statesmanship, but recent events in Russia justify the suspicion that Stalin is sacrificing the interests of the country and the principles that seem to have guided him in the past to his passions.

It is difficult to reject the suggestion that, like other autocrats, Joseph Stalin derives a morbid pleasure from the exercise of his cruelty and his cunning.

Not satisfied with killing, he plays with his victims like a cat with a mouse. He imprisons them and sets them free, only to jail them again tomorrow. Before their final annihilation he forces them to humil-

iate themselves in public and to praise the hand that slays them.

Some students believe that Stalin's emissaries use drugs which make the mind exceedingly susceptible to suggestion to extract confessions. The Cheka is accused of practising refinements of cruelty, unknown since the inquisition, until weakened, terrorized, starved, its prisoners break down.

If these methods fail to work, Stalin's victims are tricked by false promises of a pardon or threats to their wives and children. Those who still refuse to succumb, die in prison. The others sign weird confessions with which the world is familiar, all written in the same style, all dictated by the dictator!

Even Stalin's friends admit that he is vengeful and that he never forgives an insult. All these facts—making due allowance for exaggerations and wilful distortions—suggest the possibility that Joseph Stalin is a sadist.

Both masochism and sadism are expressions of the "will to die" that exists—if Freud may be trusted—side by side with the "will to live."

Masochism is the passive, sadism the active, expression of the same destructive impulse. In the masochist it is directed against the individual himself;

the sadist diverts it from himself to others. It is also probably entangled with the desire to punish oneself or others for various offences.

All these elements may enter in some way into the psychology of the man whom the friend of his youth calls "Stalin the Terrible."

Fortunately, in most individuals—even sadists—the destructive impulse stops short of murder. But where the barrier of the law is removed, havoc may ensue.

Absolute rulers, tyrants, dictators, are likely to overstep all limits. Yet they are cunning enough to rationalize their bloody impulses by ascribing their murders to political motives. Nero, Caligula, Tiberius, usually ascribed some reason, however fanciful, some legal quibble, however far-fetched, to explain their ruthlessness.

"I have no enemies," said one great tyrant, Porfirio Diaz.

"Why not?"

"They are all dead."

"If I did not chop off the heads of my subjects," said Stalin's compatriot, Ivan the Terrible, to the Prussian Ambassador, "my subjects would chop off mine."

Something like this would no doubt be Stalin's explanation of his mass executions. Is it more than a coincidence that

Stalin occupies in the Kremlin the apartment that once harbored Ivan the Terrible?

Before his death Lenin warned the Communist Party against Stalin. When Trotzky read the message of the dead leader to the high council of the Bolshevik Party, Stalin shrugged his shoulders and insisted that Lenin was no longer mentally responsible when he wrote his last will.

But he resented its introduction, and everyone who opposed him at that time or any other time, no matter how great his merit, how powerful his claim to consideration, is either a corpse or an exile.

Kill—kill—kill — seems to be the *leitmotif* of the dictator. Lenin died in time. "If my husband had not died," Krupskaja sarcastically remarked, "he, too, would have been liquidated."

Trotzky, Zinovieff, Kamenef, Bukharin, Radek, Rykov, Tomski, the leaders of the Left and the Right, have been slain, imprisoned, or exiled one after another. Eight commanders of the Red Army including Field Marshal Tukhachevsky, followed.

Stalin's regime is a succession of St. Bartholomew's Nights. In the Ukraine, among the Cossacks, in the Caucasus, everywhere flamed opposition and everywhere firing squads silenced

Stalin's critics. Everyday there are reports of new shootings.

However, the man who is feared by all Russia, is himself

pursued by fear. At home or in the street he is protected by triple guards.—*D. F. Wickets, condensed from Physical Culture.*

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The World's Largest Animal

SOME of the earlier zoologists classified the whale as a fish, but all zoologists now classify the whale as a mammal, since the cow whale suckles her young. The whale baby feeds on its mother's milk for about eight months, and then it is weaned. Adolescence lasts from then until about the end of another period of eight months. Thus in two years the whale passes from infancy to adulthood, although of course it continues to increase in size for a long time after maturity is reached.

Its growth goes on at a tremendous rate. In a single day, during the period of most rapid increase in size, the young whale puts on in growth the weight of a full-grown man. A really large whale will weigh as much as 1,500 men.

The oily blubber, chief prize in whaling, performs a very important biological function for the whale. It is to these huge sea mammals what the hump is to a camel—a reservoir of energy-food stored up in times of abundance, to be drawn upon in seasons of scarcity. Because of the tremendous quantitative fluctuations in the various forms of sea life on which whales feed, they must often go for long periods without feeding, and often cruise for hundreds of miles without so much as a herring or a shrimp to eat.

A second function of the blubber is protection from the cold. A whale well wrapped up in his layer of blubber can live for weeks and months in polar water at a temperature near or below freezing.

Whalebone, formerly next in importance only to oil in the whaling industry, is now of practically no value. Nowadays the whalebone sieve from the animal's great jaws is simply dropped into the sea.—*Science Digest.*