

OF RUSSIA'S RULER

How the Monarch of All the Muscovites Looks, Acts and Talks.

ALEXANDER III. CONSIDERED AS A MAN

Six Feet Four of Perfect Physique and Wonderful Muscular Strength.

RUGGED CONSTITUTION OF THE ROMANOFF

Kindliest of Husbands, Witful, and the Trustiest of Friends.

SOVEREIGN IN LOVE WITH HIS CONSORT

Personalities of the Empress and Her Children—The Czar at His Nurse's Funeral—"Carp" Enthusias on This Pattern of Kings and His Possessions.

St. Petersburg, Aug. 29.—[Special Correspondence of THE BEE.]—The Czar has returned with his family from a visit to Denmark and he is now dividing his time between his two favorite suburban palaces of Gatchina and Peterhof. He never spends his summers in St. Petersburg, but he comes to the city about once a week, and it will be surprising to Americans to know that he drives about in his ordinary citizen's dress. I saw him on the Nevski Prospekt, which is the Broadway of St. Petersburg, a few days ago. His carriage was a rich dark-blue landau and he drove with out-riders, the only sign of his rank being his liveried coachman and footmen. Down at Gatchina you may see him almost any afternoon walking about the palace grounds, and you may see him stroll outside of them. He may have a guard about him, but, if so, it is invisible, and as far as I can see his majesty has fewer attendants than the other monarchs of Europe. The most of our information concerning the czar comes from England, and the English newspapers disseminate more false reports about public men and matters than any other newspapers in the world. They report the czar as spending his whole time tramping in his palaces; they say he is a tyrant and a sensualist, and that he never has a peaceful moment. The fact is, however, that he is a man of peace. Of all the people I have met in Russia, including many enemies of the czar, I have not found one who could say anything against his private character. All say that he is a brave and conscientious man, and his relations to his wife and family are the models for the empire.

The Sultan and the Czar. I saw the sultan of Turkey at Constantinople a year or so ago and the contrast between him and Alexander III. is striking. The sultan is a lean, sallow, nervous fellow with a frame and a face for all the world like those of Jay Gould. He lacks, however, Jay Gould's nerve, and as I looked at him I could see by the way his eyes restlessly wandered from one part of the crowd to the other that he was afraid of assassination. He had a troupe of about 7,000 soldiers around him and Osman Pasha, the hereditary grand vizier, sat in his carriage by his side. Nevertheless he trembled as he passed along on the way to worship at the mosque, and he inspired me rather with pity than respect. I was told at Constantinople that he feared to go to bed at night and that he often sits up until day-break. He has his watchmen always about him, and in the towers of his palace there are guards who are ever on the lookout. The czar has nothing of the coward about him. He looks like a monarch, and every inch of his six feet four is singly. The Romanoff family from which he comes has always been noted for the apenness of physique of its members, and Alexander III. is a giant. He stands six feet four inches in his stockings, and he weighs 250 pounds. His biceps are as big around as a man's leg, and his strength is prodigious. He can take a horse shoe, I am told, and bend it double in his hand, and he can take a gold coin the size of a dollar and force it between his fingers. His head rises above those of his suite, and the Russian costumes which he wears make him look even taller than he is. When I saw him the other day at Gatchina he had a visorless Russian cap on his head, and his massive frame was clad in a long overcoat and his trousers were tucked into a pair of top boots. His uniform was that of one of his regiments, and he wears different uniforms from time to time in compliment to such companies of his soldiers as most see him. A regiment considers it a great flattery to have the czar wear its uniform, and this is one of the ways in which he shows his approval of the drill of his soldiers. He is very fond of his soldiers. He addresses them as his children and they call him the "father czar."

How the Czar Exercises. The daily life of the czar is simple in the extreme. He keeps his great frame in good condition by regular exercise, and like Gladstone he often goes out on a cut-down horse on his own regulars. He sometimes saws these trees into lengths with a crosscut saw and he does all sorts of manual work. He is an athlete of the first order, and he is fond of playing with his children, and during his stay at Denmark he had a number of wrestling matches at the palace there, in each of which, I am told, he came out victorious. He is fond of horseback riding and he has 100 saddle horses in his stables here. His carriages are of the finest and he has a number of golden coaches and gorgious landaus, each of which is worth many, many thousands dollars. I had died harness and the metal work of which was of solid gold or silver. I saw harness cloth embroidered with pearls, and the total value of these trappings and coaches runs high into the millions of dollars. As I looked at them I could not but think of the simple carriages with the czar's coat and how far his spirit is removed from that of ostentation. He leads a more simple life, in fact than many of his nobles, and he cares nothing whatever for style. He is one of the hardest worked men of his empire. He rises at daybreak and takes a cup of coffee, says his prayers and then begins work, looking over his state papers. At 10 o'clock he takes breakfast with his wife, and after breakfast he exercises for a while before going back to work. He keeps his system in perfect condition and his stomach never goes back on him. He has his dinner at 6 o'clock, but has many big men, he eats little, and his dinner is confined to a glass of Burgundy. He always dines with his family, and his family relations are most beautiful.

In Love with His Wife. The czar of Russia is in love with his wife. This is an extraordinary thing for a Russian monarch, and both peasants and nobles have spoken to me in the highest terms of his purity in this regard. He spends his evenings with his family and often reads to his wife while she embroiders, and there are a number of stories here which illustrate this part of his character. It is now twenty-five years since he married his present wife, who is the daughter of the late Emperor Napoleon III. and she is the most beautiful woman in the world. The future czar repined that he was too much of a barbarian to think any woman more beautiful than his own wife and his actions toward her from that time to this have shown that he has continued of this opinion. Still his marriage to her was one of the most beautiful of love. She is, you know, the daughter of Christian IX of Denmark, and her name was the Princess Dagmar. She had been engaged to the czar's elder brother, who died at Nice, and in this way the present czar became heir to the throne. The Princess Dagmar was much loved by the czar's brother, and she did not want to be married

to her present husband. Alexander himself had a sweetheart whom he was anxious to marry, but state reasons made both these young people give up their cherished ideas, and Alexander III. wooed the Princess Dagmar and married her. Love came after the marriage, and, though this was over a quarter of a century ago, they are lovers still. The Empress of Russia. The empress of Russia is the reverse of her husband in appearance. She is as slender and petite as he is strong and massive. She is not so beautiful as her husband. Her nose is slightly retroussé, but her features are otherwise well formed and her eyes are bright and lively. She is one of the most beautiful dancers in Russia and she is as fond of dancing as a Danish country girl. At the winter palace in St. Petersburg she arrives each year some of the most wonderful balls of the world. Seven thousand people can live in this palace, and the thousands of dancers trip the light fantastic above the heads of the rosewood and ivory. Now and then the empress appears at these dances in her royal robes. She wears a gorgeous crown which fairly glazes with diamonds. Her necklace is of many strands of the purest pearls and her vest is a mass of rubies, sapphires and diamonds put together so that they show five. One of her gowns is of emerald velvet with a train of white velvet which is fairly covered with gold embroidery, and the train is studded with strands of the purest coral. The jewels on one of these robes would make an American village rich, and their value surpasses computation. In the czar's study at Moscow I saw the empress's coronation robe. The train of this was of woven silver, and there was enough of woven silver cloth in the robe to have carpeted an ordinary parlor. I noted the shoes that she wore at this time and I can tell you her majesty's foot has a high instep and that her size is No. 3 1/2. The empress is the member of the imperial family who most fears the assassination of the czar. She is in suspense whenever her husband is away from her and every time that his life is attempted her nerves become shattered. She worries about her children, and I doubt not that she often lingers in her childhood life in peaceful Denmark. It is for this reason largely that she is so fond of dancing. She can forget herself when she is on the floor, and as long as the mad gallop goes on she does not feel the presence of the specter which continuously hangs over the Russian throne. The czar narrowly escaped assassination at the funeral of his father. He knew of his danger and he went away with his wife and children down to Gatchina, and everything which matters as though nothing had happened. It was not until the children had gone to bed and that he was out driving came with the empress and she knew that she was terrified and she wept bitterly. He told her that he looked upon it as a matter of destiny and said he was ready to do his duty and he would do it whether he lives.

The Czar and His Nurse. An incident occurred here at St. Petersburg a short time ago which illustrates the character of the czar and which shows his bravery and kindness as a man. His nurse, a woman named Mrs. J. B. H., who taught his baby lips to prattle in the Anglo-Saxon tongue, died. This nurse was living at the winter palace, and I think she had been in the palace for many years. She was sick, and after she was dead the two lifted her with their own hands and placed her in the coffin. As the time of the funeral the czar arrived five minutes late. He came in walking and said: "My friends, I am sorry I have kept you waiting." It was the English woman's desire that she be buried after the ceremonies of her own church, and the services were held at a little English chapel on the Neva. In going to the church the emperor walked behind the coffin with his hat in his hand, and he took his seat in the church during the services. While the funeral was being pronounced he seemed greatly moved and held his handkerchief to his eyes. With hat in hand he walked behind the coffin in the middle of the street to the cemetery. This was quite a long distance. The streets were lined with crowds of people, and such policemen as were present must have been in citizen's clothes. Through these masses the czar marched without any visible guards. When he reached the cemetery he knelt down in front of the grave, and then he and his brother lowered the coffin into the grave. This is only one of a number of funerals he has attended in his own way, and when he goes to a funeral he walks, after the Russian custom, behind the bears. He is prominently a religious man, and he believes in the Greek Catholic religion. He goes to mass every morning and crosses himself often and prays much. He gives a great deal to the church, and one of the chief motives in his life is that he is too much influenced by the church. The church is the millstone around Russia's neck. It drags the people to the earth and it is largely through them that the persecution of the Jews and the restriction of free thought comes. The czar himself is very kind to his people. They call him their father and he looks upon himself as such. He gave a large part of his personal revenues to the famine and millions of dollars went from his own pocket into the hungry districts. Both he and his wife are very charitable. They visit the various hospitals and they are always giving.

The Czar's Children. I don't suppose there is a family in the United States which has a more happy home life than that of the czar. He has five children—three boys and two girls. The eldest is the Grand Duke Nicholas, who is now 24 years old, and who shows himself to be a bright, aggressive young prince. He has had charge of the whole of the famine fund and he has worked as hard at this as his father does in general. He is a generous and a kind-hearted man, and his manners are pleasant. The second son, George, who is now just 21 years old, has more of the Romanoff off, about him. He is said to be as obstinate and capricious in his disposition. The eldest daughter, Grand Duchess Xenia, is a beautiful girl, and she is a very kind and generous person. I had a present of a photograph of her from one of her friends this afternoon. She looks a little like her mother, and her face is a wonderful one. She was 17 years old last March, and the question of her marriage is one that is already whispered about here in St. Petersburg. She is probably destined to marry one of the great princes of Europe and she will not likely have much to say in the matter. She is very beautiful and she is said to have one of the sharpest tongues in St. Petersburg. She knows a number of languages, and she has considerable talents in the world. There are no frills or furbelows about her. He talks in a simple way to his friends and to his officials, and though he is the czar in every sense of the word, he is not puffed up with conceit. He is probably the richest monarch in the world. His income amounts to more than \$10,000,000 a year, and he owns more land than any other ruler in the world. He has more than 1,000,000 square miles of cultivated land and forest, and he has gold and silver mines in Siberia, and his receipts are so large that no one knows how large they are. He uses his money just as he pleases. No one has any right to criticize his cash account, and his will is law over his subjects. No matter what the laws of Russia may be the czar's will or the czar's word is above all law and things are right because he says they are right. I wish I could describe for you his wonderful palaces. There are nothing like them on the face of the earth. I saw a single crown in the Winter palace which had more than a million dollars worth of jewels in it, and the treasury at Moscow contains cartloads of gold and silver plate. The Winter palace is so large that it covers acres and there is a story that when it was burned two years ago, a cow was discovered in one of the unused rooms where a servant had been keeping it and the people of the palace knew nothing about it. That is the only story about one of the summer palaces near here, and it takes 600 men to keep these in order, and the palace of Peterhof surpasses in its beauties those of "Versailles."

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