



THE ADVENTURER KING

CZAR NICHOLAS OF MONTENEGRO

By ARTHUR D. HOWDEN SMITH

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THE FAVOR BROUGHT BY SIBELS AT SCUTARI

HE HAS always seemed to me the prince of all adventurers: a man whose nostrils sniffed the breath of battle as eagerly as most of us sniff a flower; a man whose virile person delighted in the zest of danger, who was invariably willing to stake his all on the right; a man hardy, determined, daring, resourceful, bold, yet never reckless; withal a man who knew when to let well enough alone and steer the middle path of caution.

He happened to be born with royal blood in his veins; but that is of small account. Every inch of territory, every subject he owns, he has fought for, and it is to his credit that the domains handed to him by his predecessor, fifty-two years ago, have been rather more than doubled in extent and population through the might of his sword and the agility of his brain.

Nicholas Petrovich Niegoch, czar of Montenegro, prince of the Zeta, volode of Brda, and gospodar of Tchernagora, Europe's last feudal ruler, was born at Niegoch, the ancestral home of his house, on September 25, 1841. He came of the wonderful line which has given rulers to Montenegro for more than two hundred years and which was one of the foremost families of the ancient principality for centuries before that. The Petrovich dynasty has reigned in Montenegro since 1696, when the rule of the hereditary vladikas, or prince-bishops, was inaugurated. But for hundreds of years before that date, even before the time of the first Black Prince, Stephen Chrnolevich, the Petrovichs were an honored family, who boasted the rank of volode or lord.

All of the men of this line have been men of great personal prowess, exceptional military ability, statesmanship and political cunning, and possessed of marked personal magnetism. Living, for the most part, lives of strictest celibacy, quaint mixtures of the warrior and the monk, they presided over the destinies of their tiny nation with a sense of responsibility that you will not find equaled by the standard of any ruling dynasty in Europe.

At the beginning of its existence, Montenegro was ruled by successive dynasties of princes, of which the last was the Chrnolevich. In 1516, however, the system of government was changed, and what were known as elective vladikas were installed.

One ruler of the Petrovich was succeeded by his brother's son. Strangely enough, there was never any jealousy among the nephews who were passed over.

For instance, the father of Czar Nicholas, Mirko, known as the "Sword of Montenegro"—the most famous warrior the little land can boast and a stalwart bulwark against the invasions of the Turks which threatened Montenegro until 1878, when Russia put a stop once and for all to Moslem aggression in Europe—was twice passed over for the throne, the second time in favor of his own son. Yet he fought cheerfully both for his brother and his son and never showed a trace of ill-feeling, although, as has been said, he has always been regarded as the best leader the Black Mountain men ever had.

To tell the story of Czar Nicholas, the first of the Montenegrin rulers to wear a kingly crown, means the telling of the story of his country throughout his reign.

It is not a story which can be lightly told, either, for it involves description of several of the most stirring combats which have taken place since the days of the Crusades.

In the first place, it is necessary to give a brief sketch of the land of Montenegro, or Tchernagora—"the Black Mountain," to call it by the name its inhabitants love best. Montenegro was colonized in the last decade of the fourteenth century by noble families from Macedonia, Serbia and Bulgaria, the pick of the old Slav aristocracy, who fled from their upland castles in the Rhodope hills after the battle of Kosovo in 1389, when the Turks completely crushed the Christian power in the Balkan peninsula, and the great Bulgar-Serb empire, which had been numbered among the mightiest in Europe, went down to everlasting defeat.

From that time on, the story of Montenegro is the story of endless battles, wars, sieges, raids, forays and encounters with the Turks, varied occasionally by combats with the Venetians, who made several abortive attempts to scale the impregnable road known as the "Montenegrin Ladder," which runs from the Bocca di Cattora up to Cetinje, and, later, combats with the French and Austrians.

Time and again the Turkish Sultans and their viceroys, the Pashas of Albania, Bosnia and the Herzegovina, endeavored to conquer the tiny land. For four hundred and fifty years, army after army, led by the Janissaries and best generals Turkey could produce, attempted to conquer Montenegro and failed. During the first half of the last century the warfare between the little principality and its great enemy was almost unceasing. In the reign of Danilo II., uncle of Nicholas, a number of tremendous battles were fought.

Five years before the time came for Nicholas to ascend the throne, his destiny had been determined upon, and as his uncle was a man of considerable foresight and no small intellectual attainments, it was determined that the heir-apparent should be given a first-class western education in preparation for his assuming the responsibilities of leader of his people.

Accordingly, after a preparatory course in the home of his aunt in Trieste—where he imbibed principally hatred of the Austrians, who were becoming almost as dangerous enemies of Montenegro as the Turks—he was shipped off to Paris, where he studied at the Academy of Louis-le-Grand, and obtained some proficiency in French, Italian and German, besides Serb history and other more usual branches of knowledge.

Even if Nicholas had not been a king he would have deserved commendation and a distinctive place in the history of his country through his literary endeavors. Besides a volume of poetry,



NICHOLAS AND SOME OF THE WIDOWS OF SOLDIERS

he has written several poetic dramas, including "The Empress of the Balkans" and "Prince Arbanit," all dealing with Serb history, and declared to possess unusual merit.

He was not quite nineteen when he was called to take his uncle's place. Two months later he married Milena Voukovich, daughter of one of the principal volvodes, who had been a brother-in-arms of his father, Mirko. The Czarina Milena is still one of the handsomest women in Europe. She stood shoulder to shoulder with her husband throughout all the trials and adversities of his eventful reign, at times when he was driven from pillar to post by the Moslem hordes that were poured through the defiles of the Lovchen range in wave after wave, so that even the brave Black Mountain men quailed under the attack and sought safety on the impassable mountain heights.

They had peace of a kind for a year, and then war broke out with redoubled violence. The insurrection of the rayahs, or Christian peasants of the Herzegovina, aroused the sympathies of the Montenegrins, and young Prince Nicholas found his hands full trying to obey the injunctions of the great powers to refrain from hostilities and keep his fiery subjects in check.

For some months he held out against the wishes of the nation, with somewhat dubious success. He honestly did his best to remain neutral; he even consented to allow the Turks to send their convoys across Montenegrin territory. A series of "frontier incidents"—"frontier incidents" is the designation for any fracas along the Montenegrin border which results in fatalities—followed close upon one another's heels. The Turks grasped eagerly at the chance they had been looking for. Omar Pasha, viceroy of the western provinces, one of the bitterest foes of Montenegro, threw a huge army across the frontier, undeterred by his previous defeats at the hands of Mirko. It was reasoned in Constantinople that young Nicholas had earned the dislike of his subjects by his peace policy, and that now, while there was turmoil in the Christian camp, Turkey might find it easy to crack the nut which had resisted so many efforts for so many hundreds of years.

But things did not turn out exactly as Turkey had anticipated. A great part of the principality was overrun, most of the villages were destroyed and ruin stared every one in the face. Omar's army had entered the country in three divisions, aiming to comb it from side to side, and making their principal effort against the valley of the Zeta, which might be called the highroad of Montenegro, the main artery of its life. But, led by the giant fighter, Mirko, and their boy prince—in whom they trusted implicitly, once he had sanctioned war—the Montenegrins took up unflinchingly the struggle of their fathers. The Turks were assailed from every height, from the sides of every pass.

True, the valley of the Zeta fell into the invaders' hands, but on little else could they keep their grip for long. The war was fought with a fierce, unrelenting fanaticism which is all but incomprehensible to the western mind. After sixty battles, the Montenegrins were glad to meet their foes half-way.

They conceded some unimportant points and won a breathing spell.

Cholera followed in the wake of famine, and despite the assistance of France, which sent shipments of corn to arrest the ravages of hunger, many who had survived the bullet and steel of the Turkish armies were carried off by the scourge of disease, among them Mirko, "the Sword."

The loss of his father was a great blow to

NICHOLAS GOING TO THANKSGIVING SERVICE

young Nicholas, who had often relied upon his judgment and advice. But no man, however young, could have gone through the experiences which had been the prince's lot during the few years of his reign without learning much thereby.

Nicholas realized that it was as certain as such things could be that sooner or later he would have another war with Turkey on his hands. He set out to prepare for it almost before hostilities had been concluded. He secured large quantities of modern rifles and artillery—an arm in which the Montenegrins had been

sadly crippled—and instituted a systematic plan of military organization, on the model of the greater European nations.

The result was that Turkey feared to wring from Montenegro all the privileges the sultan had really gained under the last treaty.

During the next fourteen years there were many covert outbreaks along the frontier. In fact, such affairs have always been regular topics of gossip in Montenegro up to the present time.

It came in 1876, when Serbia declared war all by herself against Turkey, and Montenegro threw in the whole force and weight of her 190,000 inhabitants with Serbia's 2,000,000. There had been some rumor of a Russian declaration of war against the sultan. But Montenegro did not wait for this. That was not the Montenegrin way. "Fight for your brothers against any odds," that is the Montenegrin creed, and Prince Nicholas acted upon it. The blood of Tchernagora ran as hotly as of old. But there was more than hot blood and desperate courage to throw into the balance for the principality this time. There was the result of all the scientific preparations Nicholas had been making for fourteen years.

His increased standard of efficiency told right at the start, when he was able to rally 20,000 men to his standard—the largest army Montenegro had ever put in the field. Instead of waiting for the Turks to attack, he pressed the war into the enemy's country.

By means of a series of combats that he afterward loved to style "Homeric" in his moments of reminiscence, the prince compelled Niksic to capitulate, an achievement which, in his people's opinion, overshadowed all the others of the war, for Niksic had stood for centuries a threatening outpost of the Moslem power at their very gates. Then, unwearied by the months of steady fighting, the prince countermarched his army to the south, pressed on to the sea coast, and for the first time in the centuries of Montenegro's existence, the Montenegrin eagles bathed in the brine of the Adriatic. Antivari and Dulcigno both fell, and Skutari—the "bloody Skutari" of the Montenegrin ballads—was besieged, when news of peace came.

Well might Nicholas sit back content. In a succession of campaigns that had met with unbroken victory, he had pushed forward his frontiers in every direction. He had reduced every Turkish fortress within striking distance of his frontiers, save Skutari.

So passed more than thirty years—eventful they would have been called in any other part of Europe, but somewhat dreary for Montenegro. So long ago as 1868, of his own free-will and without any pressure—indeed, in the face of the opposition of many of his advisers—he voluntarily granted the country a constitution and abrogated his despotic powers, in form at least—for as a matter of fact so long as Nicholas lives the government of Montenegro will be a benevolent despotism, by and with the glad consent of the people.

Since then he has granted other reforms and has done everything possible to promote the individuality and talent for self-government of his subjects.

It is as fierce, ruthlessly fanatical crusaders that I like best to think of Nicholas and his people; such crusaders as followed Richard the Lion-Heart to within sight of the walls of Jerusalem; of the same caliber as the Franks of the Fourth Crusade, who, under Dandolo, Count Baldwin and Montserrat stormed Constantinople and set up on the shores of the Bosphorus a Latin empire that might have checked the Moslem tidal wave had Europe backed them up.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. BELLERS, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.)

LESSON FOR JULY 13

MOSES PREPARES FOR HIS WORK.

LESSON TEXT—Ex. 2:11-25.
GOLDEN TEXT—"Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." Matt. 5:5.

Meekness does not imply any lack of aggressiveness; it does not imply a mildness of temper. Moses, we judge from a study of this chapter, was not as yet "meek above all men."

In last week's lesson we considered the birth, salvation, nursing and training of Moses as child. After Jochebed had nursed Moses (v. 9) he was returned to Pharaoh's daughter and "became her son," thereby obtaining all the rights, privileges and training of the Egyptian court.

I. His Qualifications. (1) He had a godly parentage and an early godly training. Do we appreciate the tremendous advantage of the child who is well born and well trained? True, environment is not all-sufficient, but it is a great asset. The psalmist emphasizes this when he exclaims "thou hast given me the heritage of them that fear thy name." Ps. 61:5.

(2) Moses had a knowledge of the conditions. Born and nursed in a slave's home he knew of the oppression of Israel. Reared in Pharaoh's court, he knew how the Egyptians feared these same Israelites (Ch. 1:9, 10). Moses saw (v. 11) the burdens borne by those of his own race.

Heart of Sympathy. (3) Moses had a heart of sympathy (v. 11). Seeing an Egyptian taskmaster evilly entreating a kinsman Moses' heart rebelled and at once he flew to his support and defence. Our Lord was "moved with compassion." A like righteous indignation impelled the Master to drive the money changers from the temple and to denounce the hypocritical Pharisees. Moses had not, however, learned self-restraint, and that he should express his sympathy at the proper time and in the most effective manner.

(4) Moses was brave and zealous, v. 12. But he acted before God told him to act. He "looked this way and that," but he did not look upward.

(5) Moses was educated. We have already seen how he was taught by his own mother and that he received the training of the Egyptians, Acts 7:22. Being brave and mighty in deeds was not enough; he was "mighty in words and deeds." Thus he was prepared to stand before Pharaoh (not the father of his deliverer, but another Pharaoh, v. 24), meet him on an equal footing, and intelligently combat his religion with that of Jehovah.

(6) Moses had assurance. True, he had not as yet received God's call (see Ch. 3) for particular work and his reliance upon force, his tit-for-tat policy was not God's method of working deliverance. But Moses was obedient, and as he obeyed, God honored each step of his faith.

Moses' Mistake. (7) Moses was meek, e. g., teachable. To us this was his greatest asset. A man may be well born, well trained and know the needs and the resources at his command, but if he lack a teachable spirit he is doomed to failure. Moses made a mistake when he slew the Egyptian. At a later date when he had learned of God he undertook the same task and no difficulties daunted him. The change from a prince's position at the court to one of a humble shepherd, a despised calling, was as essential as had been those 40 years at the Egyptian schools.

II. His error. Moses endeavored to work relief by the strength of his own arm, a mistake many Christian workers are constantly making. Our warfare is not with carnal weapons. Moses had no warrant for killing the Egyptian. He was not obeying any command other than that of impulse. The life of Moses had been miraculously spared, nor had he been subject to slavery. Yet he did not know God's method nor was it God's opportunity to strike the blow for deliverance. It is true that the sufferings of the Israelites increased and that no one seemed to heed their cry. But God remembered.

III. His pilgrimage. Some one has suggested that Moses entered another school of patience which would cause him to exercise all of his meekness when he married Zipporah, Ch. 4:20-26. It is true that his father-in-law was more generous and proved a better friend than his daughter, Ch. 18:13-27. Moses gave evidence that he recognized his pilgrim character in the names he gave to his sons, v. 22 and Ch. 18:3, 4. The Christian needs constantly to be reminded that he is but a pilgrim and a stranger here below.

IV. A summary. Again we have brought before us God's wonderful method of preparing his chosen instrument for the carrying out of his promises. Not all, of course, is recorded. A life is saved and preserved. It receives a brief period of instruction at its most critical stage from the hands of its own mother. He becomes proficient in all of the learning of a rich and opulent court. Then comes a time when a definite crisis of responsibility, a sense of persons relation to the poor and oppressed of his own blood, forces him to make a choice. He is convinced of his own incompetence.

The bellies of the Pahouins, a West African tribe, shave the head and then dye it yellow.

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Women, like the plants in the woods, derive their softness and tenderness from the shade.—Walter Savage Landor.

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A case of "precocious violence" is reported from Newark, N. J., where a twenty-months-old infant, supposed to have been jealous of his baby sister, two days old, struck the baby a blow with his fist and injured her fatally.

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This troublesome skin affection is difficult to diagnose at the outset. Be on the safe side, therefore, and whenever the skin is irritated use Tyroe's Antiseptic Powder immediately and avoid further trouble. 25c. at druggists. Sample sent free by J. S. Tyroe, Chemist, Washington, D. C.—Adv.

Not Going to Waste It.

Young Man (whispering to Jeweler)—That engagement ring I bought of you yesterday—
Jeweler—What's the matter with it? Didn't it fit?
Young Man (cautiously)—'Sh! It didn't have a chance. Gimme studs for it.

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Signs.

Billy—Do you believe in signs?
Milly—Yes, indeed.
Billy—Well, last night I dreamed you were madly in love with me. What is that a sign of?
Milly—That's a sign you were dreaming.

After This He Went.

It was getting very late, and the dear girl had smothered yawn after yawn. Still Mr. Staylate showed no signs of going home. Father wound up the clock. Mother let the cat out, and still he stayed and stayed.
"Won't you sing something, Miss Minnie?" he suddenly asked.
"Why, Mr. Staylate," she replied, with another yawn, "don't you know it is considered unlucky to sing before breakfast?"

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