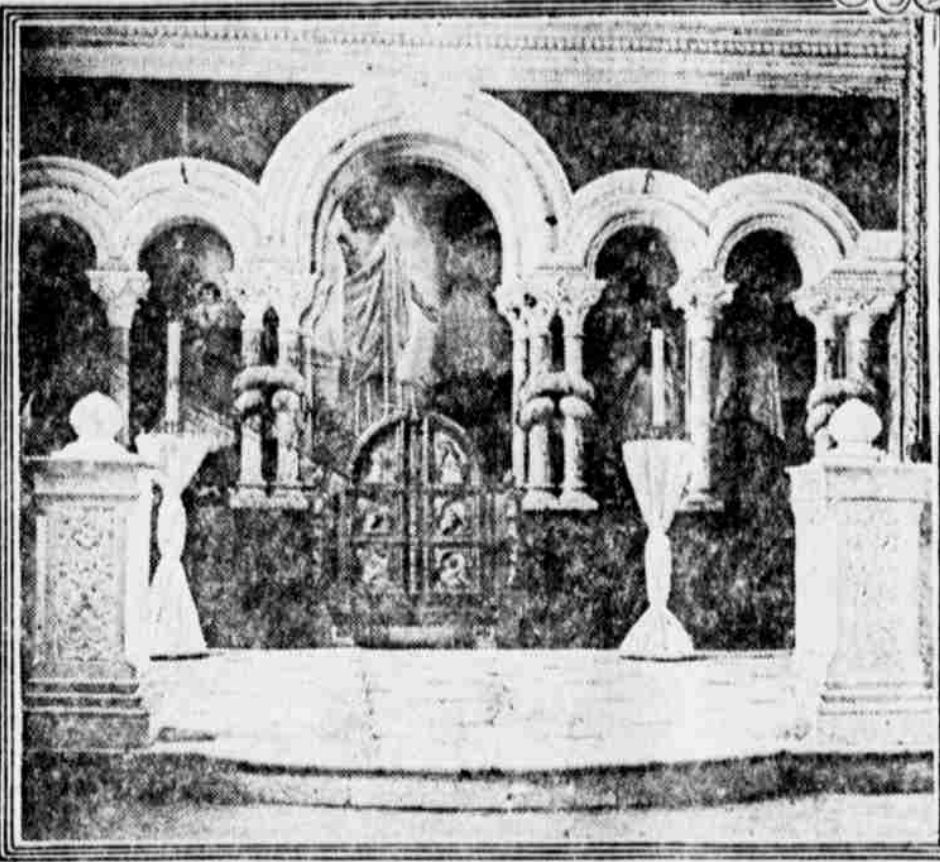


Vast Church Treasures for Starving Russians?

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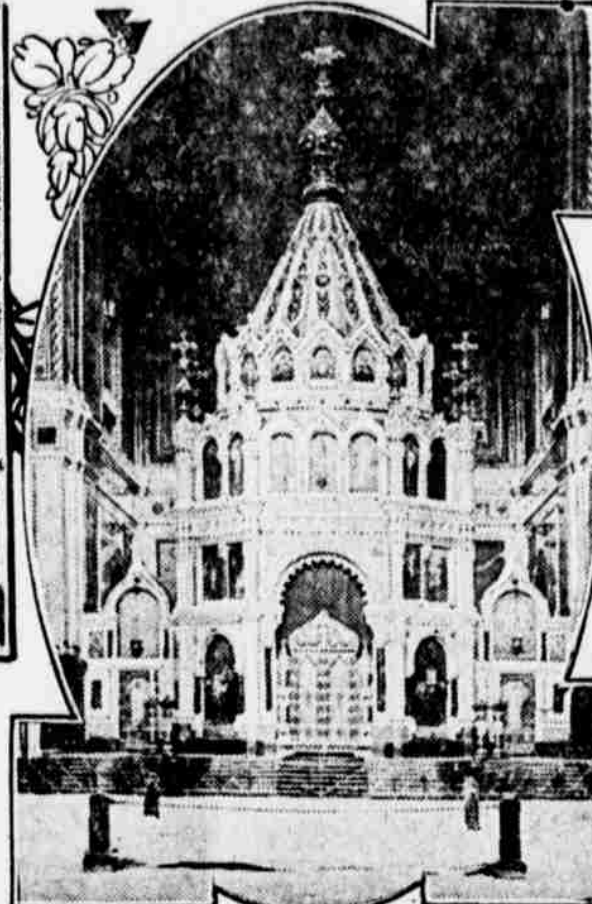
CATHEDRAL OF THE ANNUNCIATION, MOSCOW



"THE RESURRECTION" IN VLADIMIR CATHEDRAL, MOSCOW



CATHEDRAL OF ODESSA



ALTAR IN TEMPLE OF OUR SAVIOR, MOSCOW

By JOHN DICKINSON SHERMAN

THE central executive committee of the Soviet Russian government has empowered the minister of justice to seize the wealth of all religious bodies and sects for famine relief. The decree extends even to Moslem mosques and Jewish synagogues. Archbishop Yevdokim of Novgorod had just issued an appeal to all true believers to "lend to the Lord" their possessions to aid those dying of starvation, adding that even church wealth should be sacrificed in this time of terrible need. Until the famine gave the Soviet government this opportunity it had made no open attempt at expropriation, though it had done all in its power to discredit the church, whose influence notwithstanding, on the Russians—the most religious people in the world—has steadily grown. Mystery surrounds the action of the archbishop in yielding up the church's treasures to its bitterest foe. But the Soviet government has ways of its own for getting results.

Now, all the world knows there is famine in a part of Russia. And all the world knows that there are—or have been—vast treasures in the hands of the Russian church. But one is not so sure that these treasures are still in the hands of the church. Nor is one entirely confident that the starving will get the benefit of these treasures, even if they prove intact and the Soviet government gets possession of them. It is hard to believe anything to the credit of the Russian Soviet government these days.

America knows full well that there is famine in Russia. We are trying to save as many as possible of the starving Russians. Up to the middle of March the A. R. A. activities, it is known, had resulted in the landing of 32 ships at Black sea and Baltic ports. These ships carried 212,413 tons, of which 197,516 tons were corn, wheat, and sundries. Of this amount 129,723 tons of corn and wheat were discharged and 71,860 shipped into the interior. Of sundries 5,342 tons were shipped, leaving 57,863 tons of corn and 9,500 tons of sundries in stock waiting for transport to the Volga.

Goods were shipped on 124 trains as follows: From Revel, 23; from Libau, 14; from Novorossisk, 29; from Theodosia, 10; from Odessa, 15; from Windau, 21; from Danzig, 12. The wheat and corn trains were reported on March 15 to have arrived at Ufa, Orenburg, Tzaritzan, Samar, and Saratov. Fifteen trains were nearing Kazan and Simbirsk on the same date. Distribution of the corn to adults began in the first week in March. In addition to these arrivals 167,000 tons were moving on ports and another 200,000 tons were being loaded in United States ports.

These stocks are enough to feed 8,000,000 people. The main problem is transportation, for, in addition to the disorganization of Russian railroads, in some districts there are no railroads at all.

Nobody here seems to know just how awful the famine situation is. Exact figures are lacking. In March Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, who headed an international commission of investigation said:

"The famine of 1921-1922 was caused by lack of grain, caused in turn by lack of seeds and farm labor. Not a thing has been done to prevent a similar shortage for next year and if the world, with the exception of America, which has been marvelous in its succor, still remains aloof, the suffering of next winter will surpass anything ever before known in the history of the world.

"Not one-tenth of the acreage available for harvest purposes has been sown this year in preparation for the fall. The peasants have neither the seeds, the animals for the plowing, nor the energy which is generated by food.

"Their wives and children are starving and despite the admirable relief already brought to them by the American Relief commission and the International Commission for the Relief of Russia, millions are doomed to death, failing a concerted action of the powers before June.

"For 400,000 square miles there is nothing but starvation in Russia. No crops. No food. No smiling children. Nothing but desolation and death. It is a crime against the world."

In March it was stated that the Russian Soviet authorities had failed to provide even half the number of cars promised for the transportation of American relief administration food supplies from the Black sea ports of Novorossisk and from Windau on the Baltic sea to the famine afflicted centers of the interior, according to reports by Walter Lyman Brown, European director of the American organization.

"The Soviet officials promised us sufficient cars

for the transportation of 150,000 tons of foodstuffs monthly," he said. "From Novorossisk 125 cars daily were pledged, but latest advices show that the daily average of cars actually supplied there was 50. Similarly, from Windau we were to have 50 cars daily, but the average has been only 22."

As to the probability that the church treasures are still practically intact there is much skepticism among jewelers and diamond dealers. The Russian crown jewels have almost certainly been looted and are now scattered over the earth. There was no word of any looting when the Kremlin in Moscow, where the glittering jewels of royalty resided, fell into the hands of the revolutionists. The Kremlin has been guarded by the Soviet government. The condition of the great collection of jewels in the royal treasury galleries is veiled in official mystery.

Nevertheless, everybody knows that a pearl necklace belonging to the collection was discovered in the United States not long ago, having been purchased for \$825,000 by a Detroit automobile manufacturer.

South African papers in close touch with the diamond trade state that \$10,000,000 worth of stolen Russian diamonds were thrown on the jewel market in ten months in 1921—and the crown jewel collection of Russia was particularly rich in diamonds. The diamond production industry has been seriously disturbed by the large number of these gems coming out of Russia. Some South African mines stopped producing to await a demand for their stones. That some of the jewels which have so affected the international trade are from the royal collection there is no doubt.

The Russian crown jewel collection was considered the most tasteful collection of royal jewels in the world, and probably the finest, except in pearls. The Oriental strain which the Russians inherit from the Tartar invaders accounts for the Russian love for jewels.

The Russian church under the empire was what is commonly called the Orthodox Greek or Eastern church; following the revolution of 1917 the church was disestablished and complete religious liberty was declared. Russia in Europe is divided into 50 bishoprics. In 1900 about 70 per cent of the population (87,000,000) belonged to the established church. The "Greek" merely recalls the early history of the church. The proper name is Holy Occidental Orthodox Catholic Apostolic church. This is the name of a group of churches which do not acknowledge the papal supremacy. The Russian church was established about 1580.

As to the real value in money of the treasures of the church in Russia there is no approximation. It is the sheerest guess work. That the treasures are many and valuable seems certain.

But the value of these treasures has lost nothing in the telling. There are many legends concerning these treasures and according to them no other country on earth has such vast treasures concealed in its churches as has Russia. In discussing the subject big words and many adjectives are necessary; superlatives are in demand. Description necessarily vague, should go about like this:

We have learned to compute treasure in such terms as King Solomon's mines, the mines of the Golconda, or in the lavish magnificence of the court of the queen of Sheba—and yet it is doubtful if the treasures of Solomon, the output of Golconda for a whole century, or the gems that bedecked the throats of Sheba's attendants, all put together, would equal in actual value the hidden wealth of the great temples and churches of Russia.

Russian czars always have been hoarders of jewels. The very barbaric splendor of their courts, the atmosphere of extravagant luxury in which these autocrats have lived throughout the imperial dynasties, all have contributed to the tangible wealth of the nation's great stores of rich treasure.

Kubla Khan, Ghengis Khan, later Persian Shahs—all have given their share, in the shape of loot, to the crusading soldiers of the little fathers. And czars and czarinas ever have been liberal to the priests.

Some of the cathedrals possess treasures which are almost inconceivable. An altar in one of the big monasteries is of solid gold, captured from Ghengis Khan and erected by Peter the Great. It weighs 25 tons and is studded with emeralds, rubies, pearls and sapphires of the Orient. The four largest rubies in the world, worn by Emperor Constantine, adorn the top of it.

The great ikonostaz, a special stand for ikons, in the Uspensky cathedral, is one of the marvels of the world. It is of gold and platinum and is studded with precious stones, among them the lost Lala stone, said to radiate light at night and also to have the power to heal the worshippers. These stones come from the treasures of Pharaoh.

On the ikonostaz is the famous miter of Nikon, which, in addition to innumerable other priceless jewels, contains the pearl of Julius Caesar and the "Perez" pearl. These two pearls are the most famous jewels in history. A king of Persia who ruled in the Fourth century, was the original possessor of the "Perez." The Caesar pearl, for centuries the subject of royal intrigue, is said to be the mate of the one made famous by Cleopatra, which she "drank dissolved in vinegar" to impress Marc Antony.

The melting of all the gold and platinum, the latter used almost universally in the making of the church bells because of its supposed wonderful sounding quality, will bring millions in gold rubles. The poorest of provincial churches are the wealthiest factors in the country. From ancient times these churches have been the recipients of untold offerings. Every religious holiday adds to the wealth of the shrine.

The shadowy archives of the Russian church are interwoven with threads of Oriental splendor. The magnificence of its priceless collection of treasures, some of them secreted in repositories unknown to the authorities, is unparalleled in the world. No other country ever has owned even in its most prosperous days anything like the marvels belonging to the Russian church.

Some of the most famous jewels are kept in frames of gold and adorn the ikon-stands and walls of monasteries. The candlesticks, the altars, the ikons, even the gates are masses of invaluable jewels and precious metal. The opulent gorgeousness of the cathedrals almost is beyond the wildest imagination.

Perhaps the least known of the hidden treasures of the churches is nothing else than a bed. This bed is of solid gold, its pillars incrustated with pearls and diamonds, its head and foot adorned with the Romanoff crest set with almost priceless emeralds. It is the bed of a slave girl—a beautiful Circassian, who was captured in a Tartar raid and who became first the favorite of a czar and then his czarina. This was Anastasia, whom Ivan the Terrible loved and then beheaded with his own sword.

One night the palace was stormed by the mob, which carried off the gold bed, and, having no other place to put it where it would be safe, carried it to the "Holy of Holies" of the most magnificent cathedral. This was the Vladimir cathedral, which still stands. Since then it has rested behind the altar. Every year the priests have showered upon it jewels given them by those who have kept alive the memory of the Circassian.

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The Ways of Women.

If a woman expresses admiration for another woman, either she does not admire her, or her husband does not. The woman who bares her shoulders usually has a larger following than the woman who bares her soul. The less women care for clothes, the more clothes they wear.

In a crisis a woman will turn to a priest or a palmist.

Many a woman who seems to want coaxing might be driven if the car were luxurious enough.

It is useless to be able to support a woman in luxury if you cannot support her on deshabille.—From "Tattlings," by Sidney Tremayne.

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However, if you wish first to test this great preparation send ten cents to Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., for a sample bottle. When writing be sure and mention this paper.—Advertisement.

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Chairman—Ladies and gentlemen, Miss Discordant will sing "Only Once More."

Green—Oh, thank goodness for that she can't sing a bit!

Chairman (coming forward again)—Ladies and gentlemen, instead of singing "Only Once More," Miss Discordant will sing "Forever and Ever," Collapse of Green—London Titts.

If you use Red Cross Ball Blue in your laundry, you will not be troubled by those tiny rust spots, often caused by inferior bluing. Try it and see.—Advertisement.

Serious Loss Threatened.

Bobby's mother was in a hurry to keep an appointment, and Bobby had all he could do to keep up with her as she went up the street. Finally he called to her and said, "Mother, O mother! You're going to lose something!"

She turned around with rather an embarrassed look and said, "Why, Bobby, what am I losing?"

"You're going to lose your little boy," he answered, "if you don't watch out."

Cuticura Soothes Itching Scalp.

On retiring gently rub spots of dandruff and itching with Cuticura Ointment. Next morning shampoo with Cuticura Soap and hot water. Make them your everyday toilet preparations and have a clear skin and soft, white hands.—Advertisement.

A Husband's Privilege.

"The cook is leaving us to get married."

"Good. She'll soon know from somebody who won't be afraid to tell her how punk her cooking really is."

Correct.

"What do you think is the first requisite of a good husband?"

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One or the Other. "Why is it?" asked the inquisitive citizen, "that after a man rises to great eminence he has an air of weariness?" "I've never been able to find out," said Mr. Gadspar, "whether that is due to the exertion of having risen to a great eminence or the fact that after a man gets up in the world everybody he meets makes him tired."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

Persons of leisure are deprived of a great deal of good company in business hours.

Men's rights are conserved fairly well; it is their privileges that are taken away from them.

She Knows

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