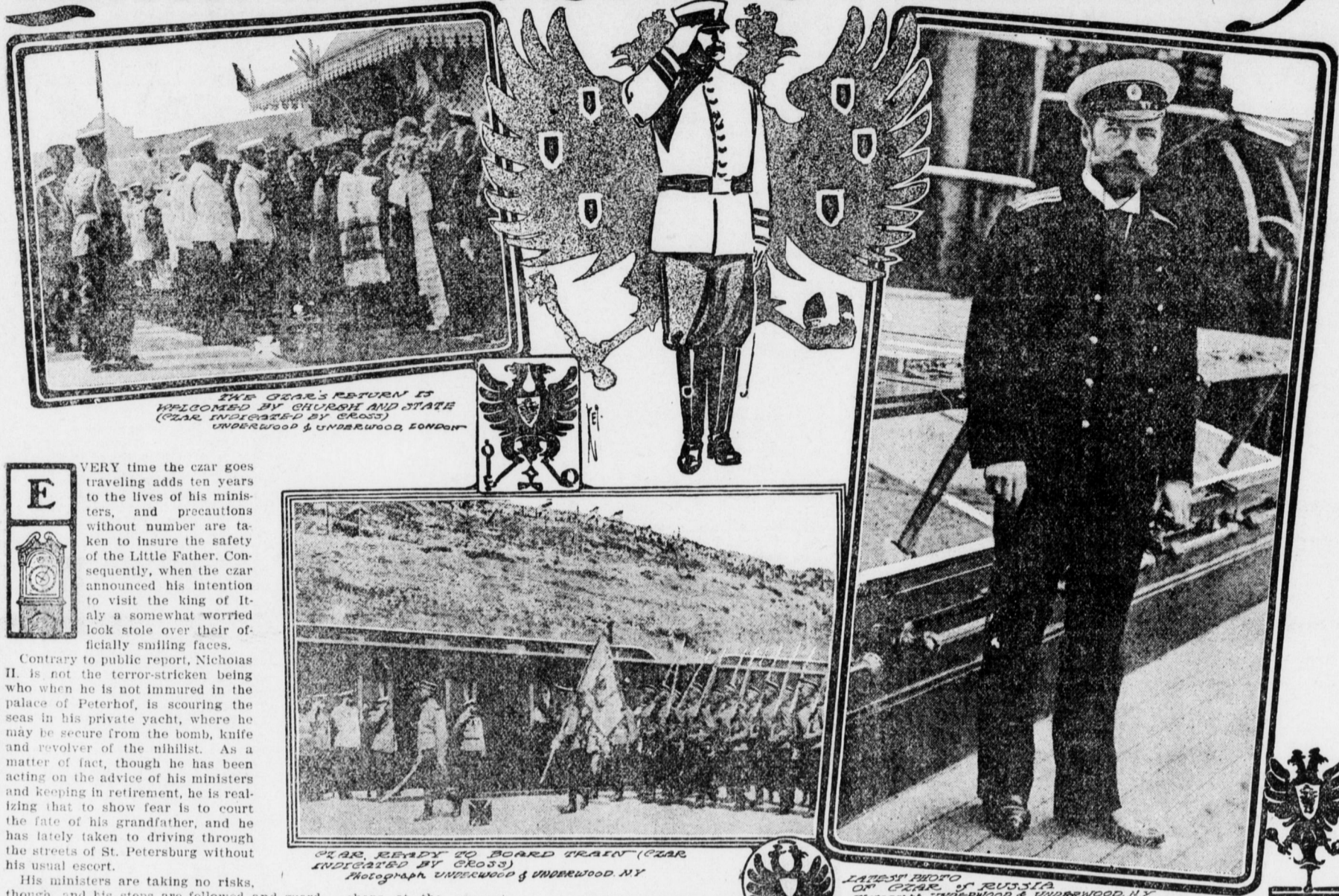


# When the Czar Goes Traveling



**E**VERY time the czar goes traveling adds ten years to the lives of his ministers, and precautions without number are taken to insure the safety of the Little Father. Consequently, when the czar announced his intention to visit the king of Italy a somewhat worried look stole over their officially smiling faces.

Contrary to public report, Nicholas II. is not the terror-stricken being who when he is not immured in the palace of Peterhof, is scouring the seas in his private yacht, where he may be secure from the bomb, knife and revolver of the nihilist. As a matter of fact, though he has been acting on the advice of his ministers and keeping in retirement, he is realizing that to show fear is to court the fate of his grandfather, and he has lately taken to driving through the streets of St. Petersburg without his usual escort.

His ministers are taking no risks, though, and his steps are followed and guarded by the secret police, who on the slightest indication of an accident, would appear in the guise of beggars, street merchants, passersby. It is when he goes on the railroad that the risks are greater. There is no simple sending his secretary to get a ticket and book seats. No! The whole railroad system over which he is to travel has to be mentally reviewed. The officials have to be called to a conference with the minister in charge, when the route is arranged, the time table fixed and then the telegraph gets busy. The special train is prepared and steam is kept up ready to start at any minute. Word is sent ahead to the garrisons along the line, and the soldiery have to be prepared to take positions along each side of the line at distance of a very few yards. Station masters are warned and the whole plan is absolutely perfect. But one thing is wanting, the exact day and hour of the journey. That is known only to the czar and one or two in his complete confidence. Once his mind is made up his train leaves, and word is passed on just ahead of it. A pilot engine with carriages is run a short time in front, and no one knows whether the czar is on the pilot train or the train behind; but both trains are impartially saluted. Any person found lurking in the vicinity of the railroad is liable to be shot, for it is not once, but many times that the secret kept so closely has leaked out by some unknown channel, and the rails have been undermined, bridges have been partially destroyed, and all kinds of infernal machines deposited on the track, timed to explode at the exact moment of the passage of the train.

It is the same whenever the czar travels, his presence in a foreign town is always denoted by the number of apparently casual visitors of Russian appearance.

Whatever his feelings may be, the zarina makes no secret of her fear for herself, her little girls and the little Czarevitch Alexis, whose kidnaping may take place at any moment.

Meanwhile the czar himself safely met his royal host. Nothing ostensibly occurred to disturb his enjoyment. The numerous functions passed off safely, and now that he has returned by a circuitous route to St. Petersburg, the zarina can breathe freely—until the next time he goes a-traveling.

Government pawnshops are the latest move on the part of Russia to raise money for her revenue, and ostensibly to help the people. Of course, behind every scheme of this kind there must be a "popular" motive; and to supply the Russian government attacks the "terrible Jew money lenders," who have so long preyed upon the poor. The people themselves are between the devil and the briny deep; but perhaps of the two evils the government is the lesser. After all, it comes down to a question of per cent. The Jews charge 24 per cent. on loans and as much more as they can reasonably squeeze. On the contrary, the government proposes to charge only 6 per cent.

Having taken the monopoly of vodka—the popular Russian intoxicant—thereby increasing the revenue by some \$10,000,000 yearly, the ministry of finance in Russia is about to start imperial pawnshops. The author of the project, M. Kokovtsov, says that it will, in the course of a few years, prove a source of about \$50,000,000 yearly. Not only this, but it will enable the poor to obtain credit at a hitherto unknown rate, that of 6 per cent. per annum. The lowest loan will be 2 rubles—not quite \$1—and money will be advanced on every conceivable thing. The imperial bank will supply the capital needed to start the pawnshops at the rate of 4 per cent. interest.

The central pawnshop will be at St. Petersburg; at first branches are to be opened in the larger cities, including Kiev, Odessa, Riga, Tiflis, Kharkov and Warsaw. When these are fairly started others will be opened in smaller towns, till the whole empire is studded with imperial pawnshops, just as it is with vodka

shops at the present moment. The accounts will be audited by a branch of the imperial finance control. In time private pawnshops will be bought up by the state.

The authors are confident of success and there seems little doubt that the enterprise will prove a very great blow to similar establishments kept by private people or small companies. These are perfect sharks. In some towns they have founded a trust, so as not to lend money on pledges at less than 18 per cent. This is the case in large cities like Petersburg, Odessa and Warsaw. In the last there are two enterprises which hold the pawnshops in their grip. According to law they are not allowed to take more than 6 per cent. per annum. But to this they add 6 per cent. for accommodation and 6 per cent. for insurance.

The owner of the largest six pawnshops is a Count Lubinski, a man of good family and considerable wealth. The owners of the others are all well to do. Needless to say, they find the business most lucrative, and have expressed their determination to use all their influence against the introduction of these new pawnshops. Nobody will pay them 18 per cent. when they can get the same thing for 6. They know only too well that their days are numbered as soon as the project becomes law.

The rich owners of these pawnshops are cordially hated by the poor classes and by the socialists. From time to time they are attacked by the latter. Not very long ago there was an epidemic of pawnshop raiding in Russian towns. Some socialists armed with revolvers and supported by a large following, attacked the shops, took away all the pledges, returned them to their owners and told them to take them home. Those who had pawned bedding, warm clothing and such necessities paid nothing, whereas those who had jewels were closely questioned as to their origin, and when they were proved to be stolen the trinkets were returned to their rightful owners.

In country places the pawnbroker's shop does not exist. Its work is done by Jews, who keep a general shop or do factor's work in the neighborhood among the peasants and 'squires. These men lend money on anything. Some will advance it on condition that they take all the farmer's milk or eggs for some time. Others give money to the 'squires when the corn is still young, claiming the crop when it has been reaped. It does not always happen that the pawnbroker has the better of the bargain. The Russian peasants and 'squires are often far from honest in their dealings. A 'squire will manage to borrow money on one field of wheat or one crop of clover from three distinct Jews in three districts. When the two last come they find the clover has gone. They do not, as a rule, trouble to go to law about it, as justice is tardy as well as partial.

Sometimes those who have thus been taken in are quite enthusiastic about the other man's cleverness. There is a sporting spirit on each side, and the man who gets the better of the

two of their relatives set forth to find them they likewise returned not.

"Some days after these events a broth- of mine was hunting for thatch in the neighborhood of the temple and came across four dead bodies. Two of them were skeletons, the third was partially devoured, but the fourth, which was inside the temple, was—owing to the incident having occurred about Christmas—in a fair state of preservation. There were no wounds on the body, but simply a dark blue mark around the neck, proving strangulation by the thug's knotted handkerchief, and a bruise at the nape of the neck."

The shikaree added that Tantia had in his employ two renowned thugs who could kill their victims before they reached the ground, and those experts watched Tantia's treasure. I was not surprised that the shikarees avoided the spot, though it was known that Tantia had long lifted his ill-gotten gains and planted them elsewhere.

ILLUSTRATE CRUEL PRACTICES.

The New York Antivivisection society, of which Mrs. Diana Belais is the president, gave an exhibition recently of the work on animals, showing stuffed creatures fastened to boards, furnaces in which the trial by fire was made, and other demonstrations of vivisection. The ladies go on the principle that what one sees is more convincing than what is read or heard.

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## FAME AND FORTUNE OFFERED

Rich Prize for Man Who Discovers the Long-Sought Cure for Tuberculosis.

Dr. George W. Bloomer of Yale university, acting as spokesman for an anonymous giver, has announced that a prize of \$100,000 has been set aside, to be awarded to the first person anywhere in the world who discovers a cure for tuberculosis. The gift is unconditional as to time, place, or kind of cure, the only real condition being that the new cure must have been in constant use at least five years, and that the promoter of the cure convince the investigating board of the merits of his discovery.

A large number of physicians have been working for years to perfect vaccine, or anti-toxin for tuberculosis, or to find some agent, such as tuberculin, which will assist in the cure of the disease. Thus far, the experiments have not furnished a product which will either absolutely cure or prevent consumption, or render the patient immune against the disease. Many of these serums have proved effective in increasing the resistance of the patient and thus helping in the cure, but no scientist of repute to-day claims to have discovered a tuberculin which will produce a cure without the combined aid of fresh air, rest and wholesome food.

### His Little Mistake.

They stood beneath the stars, silent as the heart-beats of the night, looking into the diamond-studded shirt-front of the sky.

"Is that Mars?" he whispered, as he slipped his arm round her taper waist, and gazed upon a glittering orb in the distant blue.

"No, it isn't," she exclaimed, jerking away; it's mine; and if you think you are hugging mother, I can tell you that you are very much mistaken."

The matter was amicably adjusted before anything serious resulted.—Exchange.

### Quick as Wink.

If your eyes ache with a smarting, burning sensation use PETTIT'S EYE SALVE. All druggists or Howard Bros., Buffalo, N. Y.

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## WESTERN CANADA

What J. J. Hill, the Great Railroad Magnate, Says About its Wheat-Producing Power:

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Upwards of 125 Million Bushels of Wheat were harvested in 1909. Average of the three provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba will be upwards of 23 bushels per acre. Free homesteads of 160 acres, and adjoining pre-emptions of 160 acres at \$3 per acre, are to be had in the best developed states. Schools, convenient climate, excellent soil, the very best railroads close at hand, building lumber cheap, fuel easy to get, and reasonable rates of freight, water power for settlement, settlers low railway rates, descriptive literature, "Lost Book of the West" (sent free on application), and other information, to supply are given. Ottawa, Can., or to the Canadian Government Agent.

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