

Earth's Mightiest Potentate in Constant Fear of Assassination.

Nicholas II, czar of all the Russians, has had to the palace of Tsarsko-Selo and shut himself in to escape assassination by the Nihilists. So say the cable dispatches from St. Petersburg.

The imperial palace sixteen miles out of the Russian capital, amid splendors that outshine the marvels of the Arabian Nights, the mightiest autocrat of all the world is a self-constituted prisoner.

With an army of 3,000,000 men to do his will, unquestioning and blindly, he is a fugitive from a handful of reformers using dynamite to execute their will. Nicholas takes as an absolute monarch over 100,000,000 subjects, and yet shirks with terror from the sight of his people, among whom the royal reverence call him "our father."

The sovereign whose mind is sufficient to alarm Great Britain or annex Asiatic nations starts with fear at the slamming of a door and trembles at the patter of a mouse scampering across the floor.

The supreme pontiff of the Greek church of Asia must forego his customary worship by the side of the tomb of his ancestors in the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul and seek religious consolation in a private chapel within the palace grounds, surrounded at every step by an armed guard.

Though having an income of \$10,000,000 a year and opportunities of making \$100,000,000, the emperor is forced by the terrorists to abandon the pleasures of life and live in seclusion.

With his waking hours filled by fear and his sleeping hours haunted by nightmares, with his most intimate officials under suspicion of treason, knowing from sad history that the Nihilists carry their deadly explosives into the most carefully guarded chambers of the imperial palace, Nicholas II, never very robust, is said to be breaking down under the strain.

The history of the last few years has shown no other spectacle of such power contrasted with such terror, of such magnificence coupled with such restraint.

Tsarsko-Selo, in which the Russian emperor has taken refuge from the rioters and assassins, is not only at some distance from St. Petersburg, but is surrounded by an extensive park eighteen miles in circumference. These grounds may be guarded by a cordon of soldiers, and no suspicious person can approach the palace in which the czar is hidden from the public. If he is reached by any of the wood-borne assassins it must be as a trusted member of the imperial household or as an official of the government summoned by his chief.

Catherine II, built the Tsarsko-Selo palace in 1744, and it was the retreat in which she liked to receive her favorites. Here she gathered her courtiers and showed them the grand side of her nature. When Lanskoi died in her arms she shut herself up here for three months to mourn his memory. She built him a beautiful tomb and mourned at it for two years. Since the time of the great empress it has been a favorite summer resort of the Romanoffs, because it is considerably higher than the marshy, malarial level of the capital.

The palace is 750 feet long and its facades are adorned with caryatides, pilasters, capitals, brackets, statues and vases in riotous profusion. These ornaments were originally covered with gold leaf at a cost of 1,000,000 ducats, but the glittering surface has long since disappeared except on the dome and the vaults of the church within the grounds.

The interior of the palace is over-

whelming because of the vastness of its rooms and the extravagance of its decorations. The grand ballroom is nearly 150 feet long, and its walls are lined with mirrors and gilded panels. In one room the walls are incrustated with lapis lazuli, and the floor of ebony is inlaid with flowers of mother of pearl. There is a silver room with elaborate fittings in the white metal. The amber room is lined with slabs of amber in architectural panels. The great pieces of precious material thrown up by the Baltic were presented by Frederick the Great and his arms are carved on the panels by the side of the cipher of Catherine.

The walls of the banqueting-room are covered with gold to a height of nine feet. One of the bedrooms shown to visitors has walls of porcelain and pillars of purple glass. This barbaric splendor is to be seen on every hand and it is in the midst of this magnificence that the young czar is a virtual prisoner. The story is told that when she had completed her palace Catherine took the French ambassador through it and was greatly pleased with his expressions of delight. In front of the sumptuous pile he looked about him as if in search of something more, and when the empress asked him what he was seeking he responded:

"Imperial majesty, I am looking for the glass case in which this precious jewel is to be placed."

In ascending to Tsarsko-Selo Nicholas left a mass of imperial pomp and gorgeousness behind him, for the Winter Palace, the Palace of the Hermitage and the Anitchkov Palace are made up of imposing halls and dazzling decorations. The Winter Palace is a four-story structure, 450 feet long by 150 feet in width. It curves around Alexander place and from its windows are seen the Alexander column, one of the great monuments ever quarried by man. So vast is this pile that colonies of poor squatters at times have taken possession of its roof to rear their families and feed their goats upon the grass which overran this imperial building. The roof now supports a garden with large trees.

The Winter Palace is the center of the imperial social life, being used for balls, receptions, concerts, opera and other ceremonies. The state entrance is by the ambassadors' stairs, which are of pure Carrara marble and rise from a vestibule rich in statuary and golden ornaments. Within the palace are more than a score of large halls with corresponding suites of apartments, and all connected by corridors and galleries. The court halls take place in Nicholas Hall. It is a spacious chamber facing the Neva, all in white and garnished with four colossal sideboards loaded with gold and silver plate during the grand functions. St. George's Hall, 140 by 60 feet in size, is adorned

with white marble columns with gilt bases and capitals, besides ten massive candelabra. Here is an imperial throne, before which it has been wont to receive knights of the order. The walls, ceiling and furniture of the golden room are covered with gold, and its chimney is surrounded with exquisite mosaics. The walls of Peter's throne room are hung with soft red velvet embroidered in golden eagles. The white hall, all in creamy white and gold, has many marble statues and costly collections of gold and silver dishes, on which bread and salt have been presented to the czars by loyal cities and towns of Russia. Each new monarch receives many gifts of this kind, which go to beautify their palaces.

Scattered through seven of the great halls are pictures depicting Russian battle scenes. Bring into these halls great palms from the conservatory, fill them with the nobility of St. Petersburg and the notabilities of the diplomatic world, and the result is a brilliant spectacle of laces and lights and jewels and glitter that is not surpassed anywhere else in the world, a dazzling picture of color, in which the black and white of the ambassador of the United States becomes a distinction.

Connected with the Winter Palace by a bridge is the Hermitage Palace, also built by Catherine, and larger than its companion. Within its walls are stored the statues and paintings of the czars.

On the third floor may be seen the robes and diadems of former rulers of Russia. The imperial crown is like a mitre with a large cross of five large diamonds supported by a ruby, said to be the largest in the world. Other precious stones give a value of a million dollars to the bauble which Nicholas set upon his head in the Church of the Assumption at Moscow.

Alexander II had liberated 20,000,000 serfs in 1861. He was a man of liberal ideas, and was on the point of securing a constitutional government for his people when the nihilist bomb cut short his career and swept away the constitution he had prepared. He was to celebrate on March 2, 1880, the twenty-fifth anniversary of his accession to the throne, but two weeks before that date there was an explosion in the Winter Palace that spread terror and death. The emperor luckily escaped, but the nihilists announced another attempt for the day of celebration. That affair passed safely, but a year later the czar met his fate at the hands of the conspirators.

He had been to visit a cousin March 13, 1881, and was riding back to the palace in a closed carriage. He had gone but a short distance before an explosion occurred. A bomb had been thrown under the imperial carriage and badly damaged it. The coachman wished to drive on, but the emperor noticed that some persons had been injured, and he insisted on getting out of his carriage to look after the wounded. He was returning slowly and staid to his carriage when another bomb was thrown at his feet. When the cloud of snow and dirt had settled the emperor was seen in a sitting posture, but with his legs and the lower part of his body a mass of bleeding flesh and bones. Twenty other victims of the tragedy lay about him.

The wounded czar was hurried to the palace to die. Crowds gathered in front of the great building, and an hour later the falling of the Russian standard on the flagstaff told them that the nihilists had accomplished their purpose and taken the life of the only czar who offered any hope of free government to the Russian people.

Twice in the winter of 1881 was the explosion of dynamite heard in the Winter Palace, and young Nicholas, the grandson of the liberator, was old enough to understand its significance, for he was 13 years of age. Of the many other attempts on the lives of his predecessors the young czar has a lively impression. He has learned that the officials about him are open to suspicion, and he has only to read the history of his own family to learn that even fathers, mothers and sons have plotted the death of czars and heirs to the throne.

Let him look around the gallery of family pictures. The portrait of Ivan VI recalls his assassination, Peter III was deformed and strangled to death. Paul I was killed by the convivance of his sons. Alexander II's murder in 1881 has been told.

Let Nicholas pass over to the fortresses. There he may see the chamber in which Peter the Great secured and poisoned his son to death. He may look into the dungeon in which Peter's imprisoned granddaughter was drowned by the rising Neva.

Let him inquire into his own title to the crown. He will find that early in the century the Czarevitch Constantine was set aside by his mother in favor of the bloody Nicholas I, even after the heir to the throne had taken the oath of office. The family records may tell why Constantine renounced his rights, thus making the Nicholas of today czar instead of a grand duke, a secret carefully guarded from the world.

Wherever he turns he will be confronted with a record of horror. At every step he will see the stains of blood.

Every scene is eloquent of death, as well as a grave man to move through all these scenes, with his eyes in revolt and his steps dogged by assassins, without fear in his heart, but with weak mentally and physically sick bed only recently from a China Plague, where his father, in those six rooms, it is small wonder, therefore, that Nicholas should seek safety in leaving St. Petersburg. If it were not for the journey he might die in the del of the czars.

Nicholas was born in 1868, came to the throne in 1894 and was married in 1895, and the pomp of the coronation may be inferred from the statistics that the czar spent \$25,000,000 on the affair. Since his accession there have been many rumors that Nicholas was in danger of insanity and that his physicians now advise that he refuse on an imperial throne which would enable him to sail away with his wife and relieve him from the constant danger of the situation and the threats of the Nihilists.

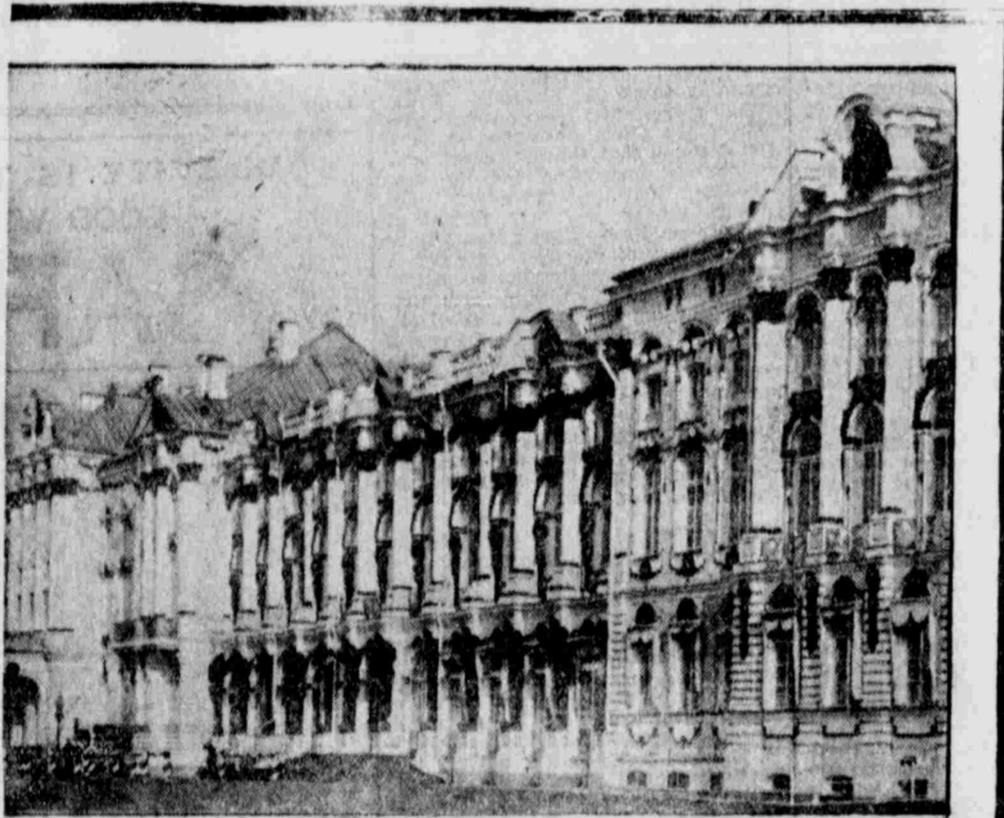
When Alexander II came to the throne he reversed the liberal policy of his martyred predecessor and resumed the old rule of oppression. It was this time expected that Nicholas would give people a milder rule, but there have been conflicting forces at work. Young czar's mother has a great expectation of his early death, and she seeks to carry the favor of the czar's empire by carrying out her husband's policy of repression. A wish she encouraged.

What goes on in the court at St. Petersburg is not always revealed to the public, but it is asserted that many of Nicholas' advisers are the real authors of the laws complained of by the people. The outside world is familiar with the high-minded man who is known in the history of the world as the liberator. He was not only a man of high character, but he was one of the most tyrannical and cruel of men. He was the author of the responsibility, though they may be directed by his mother and her court.

His critics roll on a tremendous torrent against his policy. They charge that taxation has increased 50 per cent, that the poorest prisoners have doubled in price to population, that palaces once open to the people are surrounded by triple cordons of soldiers and that the springs into outrage are being a permit from the police. Five dinner guests would constitute an assembly, and the police would have a record of their proceedings without the permission of a censor. A resident of Moscow, for example, may not invite an Austrian to dinner until he has secured a permit from the police. Five dinner guests would constitute an assembly, and the police would have a record of their proceedings without the permission of a censor. A resident of Moscow, for example, may not invite an Austrian to dinner until he has secured a permit from the police. Five dinner guests would constitute an assembly, and the police would have a record of their proceedings without the permission of a censor. A resident of Moscow, for example, may not invite an Austrian to dinner until he has secured a permit from the police. Five dinner guests would constitute an assembly, and the police would have a record of their proceedings without the permission of a censor.

REIGN OF TERROR.

All classes unite to overthrow the czar. Students and workmen fomenting revolution, jointly organize for first time in Russian history. Imperial palace at Tscharsko-Selo being closely guarded by armed force of secret police officials who suspect plots to mine palace.



THE IMPERIAL PALACE AT TCHARKOÉ-JELO.



THE CZAR

The rumblings of revolution are to be heard throughout Russia. For the first time in history, students and workmen are leagued together in secret organizations to strike a blow for freedom. The revolutionary spirit is spreading all over the country and it is impossible to say what will be the outcome. Plots to assassinate the czar and high court dignitaries are being frequently discovered. Above is a picture of the Imperial palace at Tscharsko-selo, near St. Petersburg, which is in constant danger of being demolished by the bombs of the Nihilists.

HUMAN HAIR ROPES FOR THE CLIFF SCALERS

Perhaps the most useful gift a bride can give to her fiance is a horse hair, or better still, a human hair rope. That is if they live on the lonely island of St. Kilda. The rock scalars there consider themselves rich, says the San Francisco Call, if their prospective brides are able to furnish to them a rope of this nature. The ropes vary in length, a really good one of forty or fifty feet being especially prized.

According to a woman traveler, who has spent much time in St. Kilda, the usual rope is a stout hempen cord wrapped round and round with sheep's wool, over this a lining of horsehair, finally strands of human hair. To manufacture such a rope is the work of years, but the St. Kildean girl saves her hair-combs religiously, also drying and bleaching the fibers of rough grasses that grow on the wind-swept island. These fibers strengthen the cable, while the elasticity of the hair prevents chafing against the rude cliffs during the rock scalars' descent.

A curiosity collector wished to buy a fine specimen of hair rope, but the \$100 offered was refused calmly by the professional egg-gatherer. The cord in question was venerated with auburn hair—the thirty years' collection from heads of parents, aunts, cousins and acquaintances. This may not seem remarkable to those who know little about St. Kilda, but when it is said that the population is about 200 and that a good weather could circle the island in two hours, a different notion must be entertained.

Occasionally an accident will happen to the best rope. Fancy yourself dangling in midair, the rope held by two or three men on the top of a cliff,

far out of sight. Thundering waters below and thousands of sea birds wheeling in frightened confusion above, and all around you. Then, when a sharp corner of the cliff interrupts, there is the sickening cutting of the slender string, for slender it seems under existing circumstances.

If the climber is agile he will swing toward a ledge, where, companion of the gulleinets and razor-bills, he must wait until a second rope is lowered for his deliverance. If no ledge is approachable, the angry foam hides him forever.

No wonder the rock scalars value his hair rope. A charitable woman saved a trunkful of hair to send to the climbers of the Hebrides, but, unfortunately, the house caught fire, and her three years' collection was destroyed.

An advertisement appeared in an Irish paper some time ago offering \$150 for a genuine St. Kildean hair rope.

Caught a Dreadful Cold.

Marion Kooke, manager for T. M. Thompson, a large importer of fine millinery at 1,658 Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, says: "During the late severe weather I caught a dreadful cold which kept me awake at night and made me unfit to attend my work during the day. One of my milliners was taking Chamberlain's Cough Remedy for a severe cold at that time, which seemed to relieve her so quickly that I bought some for myself. It acted like magic and I began to improve at once. I am now entirely well and feel very pleased to acknowledge its merits."

A Good Thing.

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