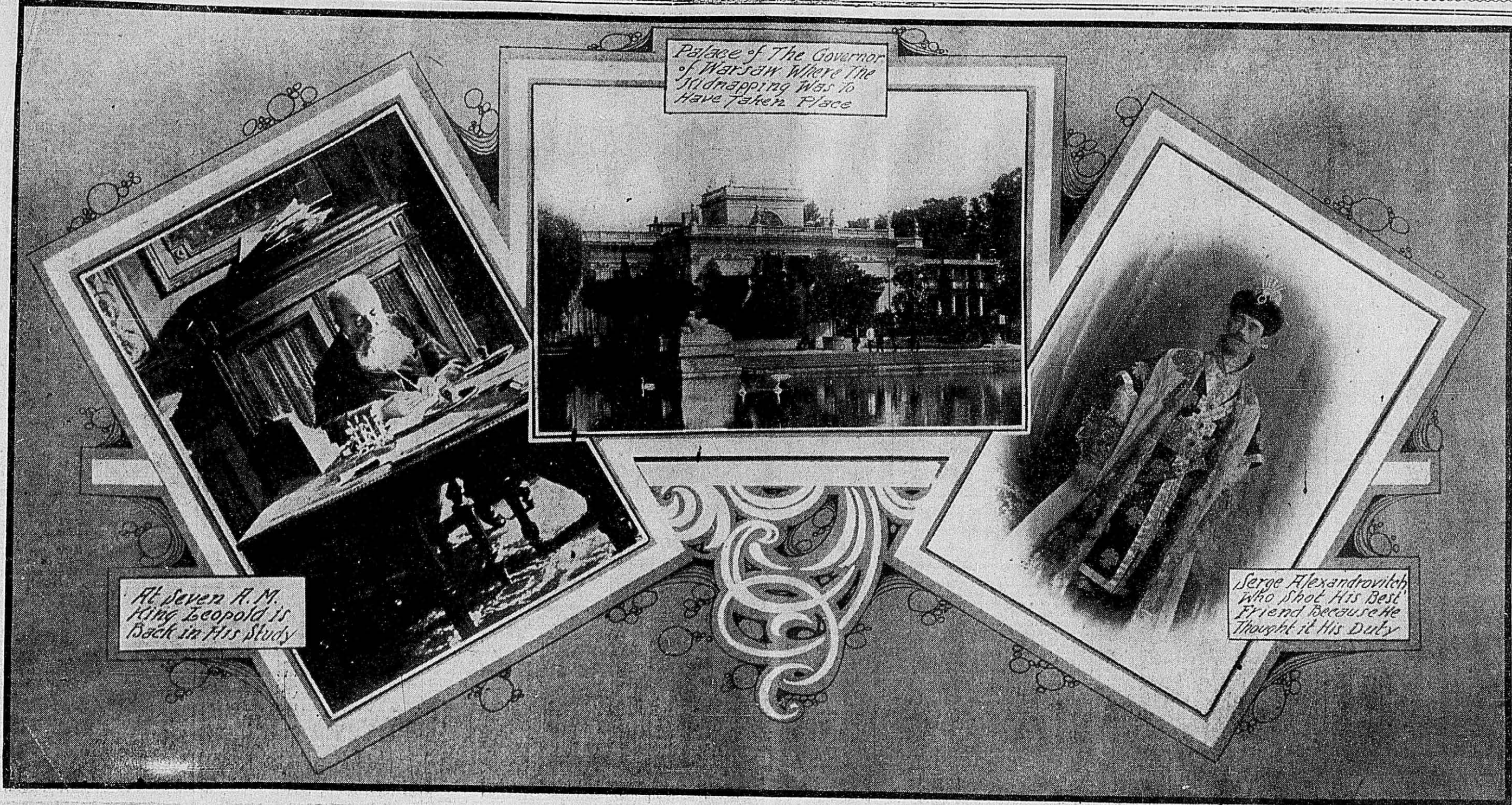


The Saturday "News" Special Foreign Service.



Appalling Details of Awful Cholera Scourge in Russia.

Special Correspondence. St. Petersburg, Oct. 20.—To the happier inhabitants of lands where cholera is either known or kept well in hand, the orgies of death which that terrible epidemic is holding in some of the smaller Russian towns would be incredible. There, due to the lack of organization and grossly unhealthy conditions, victims have been lying ill in the streets, neglected in the hospitals and unburied in the cemeteries. I have had reports of mortuaries so overcrowded that the corpses are stacked up from the floor to ceiling. Those coming to claim relatives who died of other diseases have been obliged, in some cases, to spend hours in the pestilential air, till they could find the bodies they search and could pull them from amongst the cholera-stricken.

HORRIBLE CONDITION. When the cholera was first declared in other provinces a commission was appointed in St. Petersburg by M. Rezkow, the president of the town. But the chairman, M. Oppenheimer, left for Carlsbad before any arrangements were made to combat the epidemic, and practically nothing was done. There is no drainage in Petersburg, worthy of the name. All the sewage is thrown into canals, which are never cleaned more than once a year, and send up a most terrible stench, as soon as the ice thaws in the spring. The first victims of the epidemic were working men, cab-drivers and porters, who drink the water out of these canals, which is poison at the best of times, let alone when cholera is about. Now, the police have put up placards at the street corners to forbid them, under a threat of paying five dollars' penalty, to drink this water, and the magistracy has made arrangements for hot tea to be distributed gratis in all principal streets. The sale of fruit has been strictly forbidden, and it, therefore, goes to other towns from the cholera-infected districts.

HALF OF CASES FATAL. Considering these things, it is therefore, not surprising to find three and four hundred cases occur daily, of which at least 50 per cent prove fatal. The dreaded disease has now found its way into the best-to-do houses and into the Cadets' college. This hospital and town ambulances are quite unable to cope with the work, for people fall ill who feel perfectly well a few minutes before. It is hard to believe that most of them are sent in cabs and public conveyances to the hospitals; but such is the case and, what is more, these vehicles are not even cleaned afterwards, to say nothing of being disinfected. As the poor cabbies are often not paid for taking a sick man to the hospital, because nobody has any time to bother about them, they whip up

their horses and get away as soon as they see a man or woman on the pavement in contortions, and the victim is left alone till one of the sanitary inspectors or a policeman sees him. HOSPITALS INSPECTED. When taken to the hospital the patient cannot receive proper care because there are not half enough doctors; and medical students, though offered good pay by the town, refuse to help. One doctor often has 400 patients to look after in a day. Nurses are almost unknown; there is nobody to give the patients medicine or try their temperature, so that the result is a huge percentage of deaths. As one harassed, worked-to-death doctor said, "If they get well they do—and if they don't, it's not my fault, for I've only one pair of hands and legs." Patients suffering from other complaints have as bad a time of it as anybody—not only do they get no attention now, but many of them have been sent away because they must make room for cholera cases. Several large barracks are also full of them—but what is that when hundreds fall ill daily?

RIGID RULE ABOLISHED. There is in Petersburg a hospital regulation to the effect that every patient who dies within 24 hours of admission must be dissected. It is characteristic of Russian red tape, that this regulation was adhered to for several days after the cholera broke out, so that the operating theaters were piled high with dead bodies which nobody had any time to dissect. At last it struck one of the inspectors that it is impossible to dissect 400 corpses daily, and the regulation was abolished.

ALL NIGHT IN CEMETERY. The victims are buried outside the town, so that the coffins must go by train. Thirty or forty trucks are filled with the coffins of those who have died a day or so before and two or three thousand coffins are put on for the dead people's friends and relatives. Such a train started yesterday by the Mikolajevska railway carrying 150 coffins. On arriving at the cemetery it was found that 34 coffins, brought the day before, were still awaiting burial. Though the grave diggers had worked hard till midnight it was impossible to bury all, and the rest were piled up for the night in the cemetery, the mourners waiting there till daylight, afraid that, if they went away, others would arrive in the morning and get their dead buried first. These scenes are repeated daily and many wait for a couple of days before they see their dead relatives and friends buried. All disquieting symptoms have disappeared, but with tar, and no inscriptions are put on them, very few people know which box really contains the remains of their dearest ones. The result is that the most terrible scenes of despair and protestations occur whilst the wallings of women and children fill the air. In the provinces things are no better, and disinfection is almost unheard of in small towns. In one village called Karinki in the government of Tver, 400 out of 600 died. It was decided to burn everything, corpses, houses and barns together. The police came and, giving the 20 survivors time to get away, threw five-brands into the place. This drastic measure seemed to be the only way of preventing the epidemic spreading all over the provinces.

Monarch of Seventy-Three Years Of Age Renews His Youth.

King Leopold of the Belgians Has Taken on a New Lease of Life Since He Quit Tobacco and Alcohol and Works Harder Than any Three Men in Belgium. He Gets Up Every Morning at Five O'clock.

THE writer of the following article is the author of "King Leopold II, His Rule in Belgium and in the Congo," and is a recognized authority on Belgian affairs and better able, perhaps, than any other writer to get intimate first-hand news of the king's doings. One interesting subject, on which her obvious reasons he is unable to touch, is what may be stated here as an absolute fact, however often it may have been printed as a rumor and afterward denied, viz., that the "household" to which Mr. Aice-Donnell refers consists, in addition to the usual officials, of the lady known as Baroness Vaughan and her children as well as the king's wife, who is undoubtedly the wedded, though morganic, wife of the king.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE. BRUSSELS, Oct. 25.—King Leopold has got a new lease of life from his doctors, and he is determined to do all that man can do to retain it. He has set his house in order, and all the world can see that his is the well-regulated life of a tranquil citizen. The king disdains to live in private. At this moment his is the central figure of the crowded pageant of Ostend, subject and foreigner alike may gaze from the digne at the Chateau Royal and see the king seated on its veranda, surrounded by his household, calmly examining dispatches and discharging the business of the state. Nothing can be more grotesquely false than most of the stories told of King Leopold. His life is neither simple nor austere, nevertheless it is the life of an astute and hard-working man. Every Belgian works hard, but all admit the king is the hardest worker in Belgium. Quick in thought and act, in one day than an average man could do in three, and he does his work himself. He is not content to sit and direct while others labor. From morning till night he works with hardly a break, and secretaries and aides de camp have to strain their wits and stretch their legs to keep pace with him and dispatch the orders he heaps on them.

KING LIKES TO WALK. King Leopold was all his life a mighty pedestrian. Latterly a growth of stiffness in his right leg made it difficult for him to walk, and it was the fear of a cripple's life which led him to place himself in the doctor's hands. They have cured the king completely. All disquieting symptoms have disappeared. His health is robust and the stiffness has gone from his leg. He has hung out years from his age and is full of the joy of life. The doctor who has interfered with his smoking of the strong cigars he loved—and his staff detested—but that is a small matter in his eyes, compared with the fact that he is able to stride out on his daily walks once again and even to mount on horseback, a thing his stiff knee prevented him from doing for many years. About 11 o'clock the king returns to his study, drinks another pint of water and resumes his correspondence. He hunches at midday and dines early, whenever he is alone with his household, always rapidly and always with a good appetite. After luncheon King Leopold grants

audiences, visits exhibitions, attends popular sports, or, if he has the good fortune to be free, sets off again on one of his interminable promenades. He comes little for music or the theater, and in the evening when he has dined he turns quietly to read the newspapers, home and foreign. Tradition has it that the last paper he reads is the London Times, which induces somnolence. MONARCH LOVES ARMY. King Leopold loves his army and emphasizes its importance. He seems most himself in the undress uniform of a general—made comfortable by long wear—which is his ordinary dress in Brussels and at Laeken. It was his influence which led the Belgian parliament recently to vote a huge sum for the strengthening and extension of the fortifications and defenses of Antwerp. "The loudst pistol pointed at England," and it was he who forced the government to protect Belgium against invasion from France or Germany. Before the end of the present year the king's energies will be exerted to influence the chamber to remodel the Belgian army on the lines of compulsory service. Notwithstanding all this, it is the business of civil life with which King Leopold is preoccupied.

PROVIDES FOR MARKETS. In order to create markets for the manufacturers of Belgium he has established connections with every newly opened country, and obtained concessions for the construction of railways, and such like, which are worked by companies formed under his incentive. He has not only provided the capital, but also the colony should be an outlet for Belgian energy and a market for Belgian wares. The supply of materials for the great railways now under construction in the Congo will occupy Belgian foundries for years to come, and soon there will be a demand for materials for working the Congo mines, which the king intends Belgian manufacturers to supply.

King Leopold is proud of the life he leads. When I spoke of his wonderful energy which makes the efforts of young men seem futile, he explained that he owed his vigor to his simple life "I am very old," he said (King Leopold is 73 years of age), "but I am strong and able to work because I lead a regular life. I get up early, I take a great deal of exercise out of doors—and I don't get drunk." The king laughed as he said these last words, but if anything he understated the truth, for King Leopold is now a water drinker in a land where from infancy men quench their thirst in beer.

ALSO AN EARLY RISER. Early rising is an old custom of his. He is up every morning at five o'clock. By six he is dressed, has drunk his morning pint of cold water and is ready to set out for his morning walk. This walk he takes alone, reading whatever the post has brought him overnight. At seven he is back in his study, has disposed of the papers he had in his hands and is ready to receive the chief post of the day. The king's post bag is always heavy and the assistance of his private secretary and his aid de camp is necessary to deal with its contents. When the post is disposed of the king has earned his breakfast.

This is a light meal, such as is customary on the continent, but the king drinks tea at it instead of the customary coffee. While he is breakfasting his orders relating to the dispatches he has received are carried to the offices of his secretaries. Each order is written by the king on a small square piece of note paper. Ordinarily mounted on horseback or on bicycles carry these orders to the king in the course of half an hour. After breakfast the king, accompanied by his aid de camp, sets out for another walk. Recently, in all the delight of his perfect cure, he purchased four new saddle horses, and while he remained at Clergeon, in the Ardennes, he took his morning exercise on horseback alone. At Ostend the king walks on the long terrace which he has built from his chateau to the raccourse, above the public walk on the digue.

DISLIKES SOCIALISM. At Laeken King Leopold's walks on the public road are taken toward some spot where work is being carried out by his direction or to some place he plans to improve. At Ostend the king is the children's friend. He is the friend of the working class at Laeken. All the workmen he meets he speaks to and he delights them all by what they call his simple manner. King Leopold detests socialism, however, and has no sympathy for trades unionism. In transferring the Congo sovereignty to Belgium King Leopold has only slightly loosened his controlling hand. His voice dominates the Belgian Cabinet. He will continue to rule the great Congo companies, in which the state holds 60,000,000 francs' worth of shares, which have for directors men accustomed to look to him for guidance.

COLONIAL INSTITUTIONS. Two great colonial institutions, set up by King Leopold in Belgium, remain untouched by the transfer of the Congo. One of these is the tropical garden at Laeken, where everything that can be grown with profit in the tropics is cultivated, whence millions of cases of seeds and plants are distributed over the Congo every year. The other is King Leopold's Colonial school. This school is intended to fit young men for a worldwide career. All that it can be useful for those to know who adventure into new countries is to be taught in it. The youth of all nations are to be admitted to its classes. King Leopold is building an exquisite palace in the Park of Turvuren to house the Colonial school and the Congo museum. This is at once the crowning work of King Leopold's Congo sovereignty and the opening of the new era in the Congo. Many of King Leopold's thoughts are centered on his Colonial school. It is safe to predict that his time will be given largely and his money spent freely to make it a success. King Leopold claims that his expenditure is all for the good of Belgium and of Belgium's colony. All can see that the king stops short at no expense to gain his ends. A great statesman, who has held office as prime minister under him, summed up his life when he said to me, "King Leopold wants much money and is determined to die poor."

JOHN DE COURCY MACDONNELL.

Puts Duty Before Love and Shoots His Dearest Friend.

Special Correspondence. WARSAW, Oct. 20.—Serge Alexandrovitch, a young officer in one of the regiments of dragoons stationed at the town of Nilawa near the German frontier, has been compelled in the performance of his duty to shoot his dearest friend, a Polish patriot who became mixed up in an unsuccessful attempt to kidnap the governor-general of Warsaw. Yet, terrible as the tragedy may appear to the reader in the United States it is but typical of the conditions which prevail today in Russia.

Jan Pietrowski, Alexandrovitch's Polish friend, served his time in the Russian army in the same regiment as his future executioner. The men became boon companions. Upon the expiration of the compulsory term the Pole resigned and came home to Warsaw. The two young men, however, remained firm friends and constant correspondents. Presently, when he could obtain leave, Serge Alexandrovitch came to visit Jan here.

PLANNED CONSPIRACY. Several months ago some hot-headed but impractical Polish youths in Warsaw began plotting against the Russian administration which, according to their poorly-laid plans, was to be overthrown in a night and replaced by Poles. All was satisfactorily arranged on paper—and Jan was among the conspirators, though he had little more than a passive hatred for the government. Serge noticed a change in his friend when he went up to Warsaw. All the youth's spirits seemed to have left him. "What is the matter?" he asked one night at a gay supper, after he had vainly striven to bring a smile into the other's face. "Nothing," was the reply. "I'm sleepy and will go home to bed." Instead, he left the supper table to attend a secret meeting at which lots were cast as to who should be intrusted with the task of kidnapping and holding prisoner the governor-general. The fatal choice fell upon Jan and final arrangements were soon made. Dressed in his dragoon's uniform he was to go to the governor-general's summer residence on the outskirts of Warsaw and demand to see him, saying he bore private and pressing dispatches from the garrison at Nilawa concerning the Germans, who are continually looking hungrily across the Russian frontier. Once in the governor's presence there was no fear of his being taken away, because the conspirator had chosen a day when men who were known to harbor grudges against the official would be on guard at the house.

POLICE IN INTRIGUE. As these supposed secret dispatches were timed to arrive in the evening the young soldier would be received in the governor's private room overlooking the park. The men on guard there were Poles, who had pulled the police to be used unless absolutely necessary. Simultaneously with the capture of the governor general all the other high Russian military and civil officials would be seized and imprisoned in various quiet country houses. If the czar quailed the demand of the conspirators for autonomy these men would be released, if not, they were to be killed and an attempt made to forcibly secure the reins of government. It was as mad, daring and hopeless a plot as ever youth concocted. ONE SPOTTER A SPY. Although few people were acquainted with the existence of the plot it

happened that one of the most trusted of the plotters was a Russian spy. The arrangements once completed this individual lost no time in putting all the details, together with a list of the conspirators and the parts they were to play, into the hands of the police. This happened on the 2nd of June, the day before that fixed for the carrying out of the plot.

IN WOMAN'S ATTIRE. Through a friend in the police, word reached Jan that he and his friends had been betrayed. Jan, after warning his fellow conspirators, decided upon flight. He had no choice of routes because he happened to be at the country house destined for the governor general's prison—a little place in the government of Plock, not far from the German frontier—when the news of betrayal came. Having no passport, such as is necessary to go abroad, he borrowed one from a lady named Madama Gadamaska, living near at hand. He quickly dressed in woman's clothes, and as he was young, slight and beardless, disguise was an easy matter. With false hair and a thick wig, such as women wear when traveling, he was soon ready to pass the cursory scrutiny customary among frontier officials. His friend put him into a closed carriage and he set out.

FRIEND PUT ON TRAIL. It was three hours' drive to the frontier station and the road lay on the outskirts of Nilawa, where his old regiment was still stationed. Unfortunately for the young Pole, the same spy who had made known the plot to the authorities also disclosed the whereabouts of the several arch-conspirators. So panic-stricken was the governor general that upon learning the identity of the man who planned to get rid of him he telegraphed to the colonel of Jan's former regiment to search the frontier for this desperate character and shoot him on the spot. Serge Alexandrovitch among others was ordered out with his troop. He pulled when he heard the fugitive's name, and his colonel, nothing loath, said: "You know him better than any of us. If fate puts him into your hands it is your duty, not only as a Russian, but the czar's servant, to have him shot." Serge saluted in silence and went out to watch the road along which the fugitive must pass on his way to the station.

BETRAYED BY SCAR. It grew dusk; many peasants' carts and humble vehicles had passed and each time the young Russian heaved a sigh of relief as he satisfied himself that he had not seen the man who his friend he loved better almost than a brother. The dull, slushy day was closing in when a shutty carriage, drawn by four good horses, came in sight. It was the first conveyance of the kind that had passed. Serge Alexandrovitch ordered his men to stop it with a light heart. Doubtless some lady was traveling in state he mused. The driver pulled up with reluctance, protesting that his mistress was in a hurry. Walking up to the window Serge saluted and asked courteously for the lady's passport. They faced one another in the dusk—Jan recognized his friend without being recognized himself. But, unhappily, he had taken off his glove, which was tight. The right hand bore a large scar on the back—the result of a cut given him by Serge Alexandrovitch while they were playing with balls one afternoon in the barrack yard. Serge saw and remembered it; his own hand trembled as he took the passport. "Your name, madame?" he asked. "The woman inside nodded towards

(Continued on page fourteen.)