

# RUSSIA'S AUTOCRAT.

## Strange Life Led by the Czar Alexander III.

An unhappy sovereign—He finds manual labor an absolute necessity to occupy his time—His home life.

The Czar's daily habits of life are those of a pope rather than of a secular monarch, his relaxations those of a prisoner rather than of a potentate, says the Contemporary Review. When residing at Gatchino he generally rises at 7 a. m., whereas few noblemen in the capital leave their beds much before midday; and I am personally acquainted with two who rise with the regularity of clockwork at 3 o'clock every day. He then takes a quiet stroll in the uninteresting, well-watched palace park, returns to early breakfast and engages in severe manual labor as a preparation for the official work of the day. The latter consists mainly in the reading and signing of enormous piles of edicts, ukases, laws and reports, all of which he conscientiously endeavors to understand. Upon the margins of these documents he writes his decision or his impressions with a frankness and "abandon" which laughs prudence and propriety to scorn. Those who maintain that he is kept in complete or even partial ignorance of the cruel measures adopted in his name, or else that his boasted love of his people is but the varnish of hypocrisy, are as much astray in the matter of fact as in their appreciation. Cold-blooded cruelty or savage hatred is not the correct name of the motives that inspired the slaughter of the Amalekites by Saul, or the autos de fe of Arbues de Epila; and it should not be forgotten that there is a moral element called a false conscience, the effect of which is to poison the action without vitiating its source. "Men never do wrong so thoroughly and so cheerfully," says Pascal, "as when they are obeying the promptings of a false conscience." To fancy, therefore, as many English optimists do, that the Emperor needs only to be informed of the facts in order to

tatingly puts his hand to any kind of work that has to be done, but his usual occupation is to fell huge trees, saw them into planks, plane them, and generally prepare them for the cabinetmaker. In winter the gardeners have strict orders not to clear away the snow from the avenues and walks in the park, which is invariably left for His Majesty, who, attired in a short gray jacket (tooshoerka), shovels it up into enormous mounds and then transfers it to a cart. It occasionally happens, when he cannot complete the task he had set himself within the time at his disposal, that his children lend him their assistance, and cart away the snow to a remote part of the grounds. Gatchino is a dull, dreary, dingy place for any man to retire to, especially in spring or autumn; and to enhance its natural drawbacks the Emperor, moved by peculiar notions of his own, has chosen the very worst suite of rooms in the palace to live in—a range of small, low rooms on the entresol, the ceilings of which he has no difficulty in touching with his hands. The lack of air in these apartments has more than once proved prejudicial to the health of the Emperor during a spell of indisposition, but she would never listen to the advice of the doctors to move away from her consort into more spacious apartments. All the clouds that lower over the house of Romanoffs seem to gather and condense over the Winter Palace, of which the Czar has superstitious horror. He never passes a night there. Even when residing in the Anitshkoff Palace he seems and feels considerably out of his element, for the even tenor of his life is broken by balls, official receptions, visits to various institutions and other uncongenial occupations. He never dines when staying in town, unless the necessity of entertaining foreign princes or diplomatists imposes a duty which is also a discomfort. At half-past 1 he lunches, four courses being served instead of three, and at 7 partakes of cold refreshments, after which he generally visits the theatre, which constitutes the

ONLY COMPENSATION AFFORDED HIM by city life for the inconveniences it compels him to endure. He rarely misses a chance of visiting one of the imperial theatres, where he appreciates good acting, and manifests his appreciation after the traditional manner of plebeians; and although he frequently encourages the Russian, and occasionally the French, drama by his presence, neither of the two affords him such genuine pleasure as the opera. After the theatre he never partakes of the tea and refreshments which are always served to the other members of the family, but retires to rest as soon as possible. Tasks of manual labor are much more difficult to find in the city than in the country, and he sometimes has recourse to curious makeshifts in order to satisfy his desire. Three years ago, for instance, he undertook to contribute his share in preparing the apartments of the Anitshkoff Palace for winter residence. Previous to that time the work of hanging the pictures used to be intrusted to a specialist in town, whose charge was seven rubles a picture (about 14s.). That year, however, he hung them all to his own satisfaction and that of the other members of the Imperial family, refusing all assistance except that of a workman of the palace named Sokoloff. As soon as the task was accomplished the Czar remarked with a smile: "This is the first money I have earned in my life." Had he learned the truth he would have been astonished to discover how small was the equivalent of his labor in money, for the wages of Sokoloff and the cost of the materials, instruments, etc., had well nigh absorbed all that he fancied he had saved. But in spite of his occupations, physical and mental, he has ample time to brood over his imperial loneliness, and sigh for the quiet pleasures of private life which he is destined never to know again.

Education for Body and Mind. Women in the last generation have learned to educate their minds but have not yet learned to educate their bodies. It is true there are certain wholesome aspirations in that direction but a great deal has to be overcome in the way of prejudice and false modesty before the movement is fully recognized. The cramping and confining monotony of a girl's school life is responsible for a great proportion of the narrow chests and shoulders of the women of modern times. The "sound mind in a sound body" does not seem to enter into the principles or practices of female educational establishments. In France, Sweden, Belgium and other countries of Europe the subject of enforced, or encouraged exercise for girls has excited legislative attention. The first-named country has recently added ordinary children's games to their compulsory school programme. It is a common reproach that when women are educated they become spectacled and blue-stockinged and more or less ungainly, but the education of the body, even when carried out to lengths that would scandalize Mrs. Grundy, tends largely in the opposite direction.

There is a manifest contradiction in the conduct of those demure damsels of classical proclivities who laugh at the suggestion of physical education for girls and who understand everything about ancient Greece except that power which really made her the exemplar of posterity. Far otherwise was exercise esteemed among the women of that nation. The young ladies of Sparta contended with their brothers in the gymnasium, and it is a remarkable circumstance that in the nineteenth century we can find no such forms for our sculptors as the ideal types of loveliness displayed in their time-stained statues.

One of the most notable of our recent English events, from the point of view of its significance as a sign of the times, has been the recent trial of strength between the old school and the new in the British Women's Temperance association. The fight between those who regard teetotalism as the Alpha and Omega of temperance reform, and those who look upon it as merely the most important plank in a broad platform which will deal directly and indirectly with every phase of the social evil of intemperance has been going on for a year within the executive committee, where the old school had a majority. It was fought out in a full meeting of the whole association, when the new school triumphed all along the line. The controversy was most educational and the victory of the progressive reformers is regarded as an event of good omen. The temperance women of this country are said to be in line with the latter. Both sides are engaged in a good work but more modern methods are bound to prevail. The age is one of progress and the antique is relegated to the museum.

BRIEF AND INTERESTING.

The best butter is made in Denmark.

A leech has three jaws, which form a triangle.

A ton of steel produces about 1,440,000 pens.

Many ladies are employed as bank cashiers in Finland.

A jelly-fish of ten pounds when dried weighs about ten grains.

Enough spiders' webs to go around the world, would weigh one half-pound.

The Chinese gardeners are the most expert fruit growers in the world.

Laundrywomen at Hamburg wash their dirty linen in the streams of water that flow around the town.

There are 1,000 submarine cables in use all over the world, which have cost about \$100,000,000.

It is stated that one-tenth of the men who die in Switzerland die prematurely from excess of drinking.

Among stevedores cotton is regarded as hardest to stow and railway iron as the easiest.

There are about 25,000 school libraries in France partly supported by the State and by the local municipal authorities.

There are two places in London where clergymen can buy sermons printed. They cover all subjects, and can be had for any season.

One of the most prosperous inventors of the day is Mr. George Westinghouse, whose wonderful brake has brought him in a fortune of \$20,000,000.

Melbourne now makes its own silver coin, instead of receiving it from the Bank of England. Previously the Melbourne mint only coined its gold.

So large is the collection of valuable historical papers in the State Department library at Washington that the work of indexing and binding them, begun several years ago, will probably not be completed within a decade.

"Trust in God and defend thyself bravely," is the motto on a sword presented by the German Emperor to his ten-year-old son.

The largest denomination of coloured Christians in the Southern States is known as the "Regular Baptist." It has about 1,230,000 members.

The newest fad in autograph books is one of cooking recipes. Each formula written in the book has the signature of the contributing friend under it.

There is a tribe in Central Africa among whom speakers in public debates are required to stand on one leg while speaking, and to speak only as long as they can so stand.

Since the great earthquake of 1801 no less than 1,110 and 2,025 shocks have been experienced in Nagoya and Gifu respectively, two provinces in Japan.

A Liverpool policeman, who, as he thought, swallowed a sixpence thirteen years ago, recently had a severe pain in his throat. A fit of coughing came on, and the long-lost coin, half of its original thickness, was released from his throat.

Another room at Hampton Court Palace has been thrown open to the public. The apartment is about 400 years old, and the carved panelling which ornaments the walls and the elaborately-decorated ceiling are in an excellent state of preservation.

St. Luke's, Camberwell, has a "Brotherhood" composed of men banded together for mutual help, each determined to find work or employment for an out-of-work brother in the days of his affliction.

The largest lead pencil in the world is carried by Mr. Gladstone, to whom it was given by a pencil manufacturer in Keswick. It has a gold top, is 39 inches long, and the British statesman uses it as a walking stick.

Twenty thousand butterflies are in the collection recently given to the California Academy of Sciences by Dr. H. H. Behr. He had been forty-eight years gathering them, and among them are specimens from all sections of the world.

There has just died at Mietschisko one Herr Wendt, in his 100th year. A born Pomeranian, he took part in the war of freedom against Napoleon, and had both eyes shot out. Herr Wendt bore his sorrow to the day of his death with fortitude and resignation.

The ant has a brain larger in proportion to the size of its body than any other known being. Writers on that branch of entomology declare that ants are not only endowed with a high quality of instinct, but that they display reasoning ability and good judgment, as well as powers of reflection and calculation.

A large python from West Africa, in the zoological gardens at Breslau, Germany, is said to have recently swallowed a boa which measured nearly 7 feet in length and correspondingly thick. The circumference of the boa throughout its length was from 23 to 28 inches, and its skin was expanded to double its usual size.

The wardrobe "boy" on board a man-of-war is often as old as many of those he serves, but the old-fashioned title and form of address stick to him. Wardroom boys usually are coloured men or foreigners. When a Haytian or Jamaican negro is obtainable he is regarded as a catch. This is truer still of the Jap. The latter seems to understand by instinct, to remember a multitude of details without effort, and obey promptly and without question.

Climatic considerations must be taken into account by different nations in their bed-making arrangements. The Russian day and night hogs sheepskins around him, and the Pacific Islander finds in palm leaves a sufficient coverlet. In the tropics mats of grass answer the same purpose.

In former times live oak was largely used in naval construction, and warships had their frames and planking made principally of this wood, so that a web of historical sentiment and romance has been woven about the tree. The wood is still used to a considerable extent in building ships, but its value has increased largely on account of the diminished quantity now available.

For a prisoner to attempt to force an entrance into a cell is quite a rare occurrence, but this, it is stated, happened lately at a goal in Berlin, where, at night, a person scaled the prison wall and safely landed in the goal yard. He was arrested, and it was found, upon his being examined, that

he was a former prisoner come to visit a friend he had made during his involuntary stay.

Count Edward Romero, one of the wealthiest men in Portugal, recently lost his life through a bet. He had wagered 20,000 francs that he would perform a feat that was carried out by a lady rider at a circus, which consisted in falling head over heels to the ground from the horse while it walked on its hind legs. The horse, however, fell backwards on the count, who died after several hours of great agony.

An average of 5 feet of water is estimated to fall annually over the whole earth, and, assuming that condensation takes place at an average height of 3,000 feet, scientists conclude that the force of evaporation to supply such rainfall must equal the lifting of 322,000,000 pounds of water 3,000 feet in every minute, or about 300,000,000 horsepower constantly exerted.

Photographers are now beginning to realize that the dark-room lantern should become a relic of the past, and a number of the more progressive members of the fraternity are installing storage incandescent lamps. They say that this improvement has had a marked effect upon the health of dark-room operators, and is considered a boon to those whose time is spent continually in that unwholesome atmosphere.

A Jewish junkdealer in Winnipeg imposed an old muzzle-loading musket on a green English immigrant a few days ago, along with thrilling anecdotes about Indian incidents. The greenhorn found the barrel plugged up with what seemed to be wads. He took it to a gunsmith to be cleaned, and the smith poked out of the barrel \$705 in good Canadian bank notes. According to the latest accounts the junkman was being closely watched by his friends.

No Cause to Grumble.

In summing up the advantages of living in Canada, it should not be forgotten, as the Mail points out, that we have next to no cyclones and tornadoes such as trouble our neighbors to the south. There are people who are inclined to grumble at Canadian weather if it be in the slight test degree "of colour." They are distressed by a few extra degrees on the thermometer, up or down, they wilt at a little vapour in the air, and are hopeless after a day's rain. It would be well if these individuals would total up their blessings instead of their curses. It is something to be free from the tornadoes which since January 1st have visited nearly one-half of the United States, carrying devastation with them. The U. S. Weather Bureau has just issued a special bulletin giving the facts in connection with these calamities. The circular emphasizes the fact that the recent terrible tornado in Iowa was predicted twenty-four hours in advance, and it urges that residents of the Mississippi and Missouri valleys especially prepare places of refuge in view of such emergencies. Summing up the States so far visited by these storms this year, the bulletin enumerates Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, Arkansas, Missouri, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Illinois, New York, West Virginia, Iowa, Indian Territory, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, Texas, Minnesota, and Michigan. Thus nearly one-half of the States of the Union have been visited by tornadoes, causing the loss of 170 lives and nearly \$1,500,000 worth of property. The detailed accounts of these disasters are sad reading, comprising as they do the death or bodily injury of many persons, and the sudden carrying away of their effects, the work perhaps of patient years of toil. The only good result of these terrible storms seems to have been the impetus it has given to the meteorological departments, which have undoubtedly arrived at a considerable degree of perfection in fortelling the approaching disturbances. Incidentally they have thus added to the resources of the weather departments of other nations.

WOODS WAS UNFAITHFUL. Became Popular, Won a Lady's Affections and then Shipped Out.

A Halifax, N. S., special says:—About nine months ago W. S. Woods, an Englishman, presented himself to the Supervisor of Schools, Mr. McKay. He stated that he had just arrived from England and had taught successfully at Eton. He was desirous of securing a position of teacher in Halifax and quite willing to take an unimportant position to start with. Mr. McKay was favorably impressed with the man and decided to give him a trial.

One of the departments of the Maynard Street School being vacant, Woods was given a position at a salary of \$600 per annum. When asked for credentials, Woods submitted quite a number.

Subsequent events have made it evident that these were bogus. Woods quickly won the confidence of the officials of St. George's Episcopal Church in the city. He was warmly received by the rector and the members, and soon won their esteem. He stated he had frequently taken part in services in churches in England, and would have no objection to assisting at the services of the Episcopal church in question. His smoothness of tongue and genial ways and winning manners, resulted in the rector allowing him to read lessons. One day Woods appeared attired in clothes of sombre hue. When asked reasons for change of attire, he stated that his wife died in England.

An introduction to a young lady of the congregation led quickly to courtship, and a report was soon current that Woods and the young lady were to be married. This report proved true, as last week Woods stated to his rector that he and the lady would be married on Tuesday of last week.

Preparations were made for the wedding and even the hour fixed. Tuesday night came, but the groom failed to put in an appearance. It was subsequently learned that Woods had bought a ticket for Boston on Monday afternoon, and that he had left by the train on the same night. So much confidence was placed in the man, that it had been decided to send him to Ship Harbor to assist the rector of that parish during Wood's school holidays.

In the human body there is said to be more than 2,000,000 perspiration glands communicating with the surface by ducts, having a total length of some ten miles. The blood contains millions of millions of corpuscles, each a structure in itself. The number of rods in the retina, supposed to be the ultimate recipient of light, is estimated at 30,000,000. A German scientist has calculated that the gray matter of the brain is built of at least 600,000,000 cells.

BY RAIL TO VICTORIA NYANZA. The Road Has Been Surveyed and the Officials Say It is Practicable.

The railroad between the Indian Ocean and Victoria Nyanza which was surveyed at the expense of the British Government is likely to be built. The report of the surveyors has been published, and the friends of the enterprise are gratified to hear that there are no serious difficulties in the way.

Nearly every enterprise in Africa which involves surveying usually brings to light some striking errors in the maps. The surveyors of the Victoria Nyanza railroad have discovered an important error in the position assigned to the eastern shore of the lake. It has been made on our maps to extend too far east. The result is that the railroad will be about a hundred miles longer than was supposed from the estimate made in 1891. The most direct route possible to the northeast shore of the lake has been followed, and it is found that the road will be 657 miles long.

The estimated cost of the projected railroad is \$11,200,000, or an average of \$17,245 a mile. The gauge proposed is three feet six inches. No tunnels will be necessary, and none of the bridges would be considered in other countries even second class in point of size. Steel rails, weighing fifty pounds to the yard and from thirty to thirty-six feet in length, are recommended, and also steel transverse sleepers, each weighing seventy pounds. It will not be economical and hardly practicable to use wood for sleepers. If the road is built entirely of steel it will be practically indestructible by such mechanical appliances as are within reach of the natives. It is also better to use steel, because the custom of firing the grass and the temptation to use the wooden sleepers for fuel, or for building huts would expose a line laid with timber sleepers to many risks. White ants also are numerous, and timber can hardly withstand their assaults.

Only a local traffic is expected at the outset, and in order to keep down the working expenses the surveyors recommend that the stations at first be built at least thirty miles apart. Additional stations will be provided later at such points as the traffic demands. The terminal stations will be at Mombasa on the coast and at the northeast corner of Lake Victoria. During the construction of the railroad a telegraph line will be necessary, and the constant movement along the line will render the telegraph line free from any danger of destruction by the natives. The surveyors anticipate that the construction of the railroad will have a revolutionary effect, and will entirely do away with the Masai raids upon the territory adjacent to the railroad.

For the first two years it is expected that the bulk of the labor on the railroad will have to be imported from India. It will also be necessary to maintain a special railroad police force. The route passes through some of the richest cultivated districts and most populous regions in East Africa. From its terminus on Lake Victoria communication by steamboats plying on the lake will connect the railroad with the fertile districts around the shores and grant the outlet that is so necessary for the development of these countries.

The general average speed of trains is estimated at twelve miles an hour, including stoppages. On sections with easy gradients, and these include the greater part of the line, a speed of twenty miles or more an hour may be permissible. When the line is first opened trains will be run only by daylight. This gives a running time of ten hours, or a total distance travelled each day of about 120 miles.

The officials take a favorable view of the earning capacity of the road. They say that, in their opinion, the actual working expenses of the road for the first few years would not exceed \$316,000, and it is probable that the road at the outset would be nearly able, from the freight and passenger traffic, to pay working expenses. This does not include the interest on the investment, and at first there would be a deficit on the required amount of gross earnings to pay all expenses of about \$300,000 a year. They do not think, however, that this deficit would be for many years a tax upon the enterprise.

Great Britain has now assumed the control of Uganda, and as the building of this railroad is virtually necessary to the development of the lake region, there seems little doubt that the Victoria Nyanza railroad will be the next enterprise of the sort to be carried out in Africa.

Dairying in Nova Scotia.

In Nova Scotia as well as Ontario greater attention is being given to the dairying industry. Driven by decreased returns from cattle-raising, the farmers are seeking a more profitable sphere of labour in the production of butter and cheese. The Provincial Government is doing a good work in inculcating a scientific knowledge of dairying. In the School of Agriculture at Truro, the most improved appliances are now used in addition to the ordinary instruction in the institution, special lectures are being delivered for the advanced pupils of the Normal school. These are followed by practical demonstrations, which enable the students to apply the knowledge they have acquired. During the vacation a special butter class will be formed, so that students may give their undivided attention to the subject. The general public is not to be neglected. A course of practical instruction to farmers' wives and daughters will be given in August for two weeks. This is a genuine method of improving trade. Let the products be the best, and they will always command the best prices.

How They Telegraph in Persia.

Telegraphic communications in Persia it is said to work fairly well in dry weather, but in times of rain and damp it is unfortunately far otherwise. This arises from the fact that the insulators are not fixed to poles of wood or iron as with us, but are driven into trees that have branches growing round the hooks and touch the wire, thus intercepting the current. When a large tree is not available a small one is resorted to, which often breaks, or the shaking of the slender tree by the wind dislodges the insulator or hook on which it is fixed, and the wire trails on the ground. It is no uncommon thing for the wires to be seen lying right across the high road, which is followed by hundreds of mules both in Ghilan and Astrabad. A case is officially reported of a high foreign official telegraphing to Teheran from Europe, announcing his intended arrival at Rehit, in which the telegram was received in the sender's presence eighteen days after its dispatch.

DELIGHT IN MANUAL LABOR which, in his case, is a physical necessity no less than a favorite pastime. He unhesi-