

NINETY-EIGHTH YEAR.

SUNDAY MORNING, AUGUST 6, 1905.

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

The Man of the Week—Sergius de Witte

How the Head of the Tsar's Peace Commission Rose from a Humble Occupation To Be Russia's Great Statesman and Diplomat

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

At last, willingly or unwillingly, the powers that be in Russia, which is not one man power whatever else it may be, have selected Serge Julevich Witte, the maker of modern Russia, as the chief plenipotentiary to the peace conference in Washington.

The patriotic duty now devolves on Witte to save what he can from the wreckage of an unsuccessful war, the inception of which he combated with a vigor and a boldness which led the St. Petersburg courtiers to rub their hands with glee and say: "Witte has killed himself; the house of Romanoff can never forgive such ungrateful opposition; he is finished."

And so, courtier-like, they passed him by with averted faces or with supercilious smiles.

Whether they have forgiven him or not is another matter and remains to be seen, but they sit at his feet to-day and no other one man counts for so much in the empire as he.

He has fought his fight alone, as did Vladimir Monomach, the "stalwart alone standing" Duke of Moscow, whose name, a great crusader, went down in the sea of Japan the other day with her colors flying and her orders to fight to the last mailed to the fighting tops.

A great many wise men believe that Russia is ruled by those who are born to the purple of various hues and degrees of richness, of course—but born to the purple he must be if he would rise in Russia.

On the other hand, a great many Russians believe that there is no other country in the world where the administrative career is so widely open to the talented of whatever social category as in Russia.

The truth probably lies somewhere between the two contentions. At all events, it is quite certain that there is not a single member of President Roosevelt's cabinet who began his career in a lower rung of the ladder as did Prince Khilkoff, the Railway Minister of the great empire, and M. de Witte, the former Chancellor, who is summoned from disgrace to bear the brunt of the peace negotiations with Japan, which will shortly open formally in Washington and actually in Portsmouth, N. H., where center heaven blows than in the national capital on the Potomac.

RULER OF THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY.

Khilkoff, the Prince to-day and letter than that, the man who will live in history as the great organizer of transportation, the ruler of the Transiberian Railway, the one man on the Russian side who comes out of the war with his reputation not only intact but deservedly increased, began his career as a railway engineer.

Many Americans who have had the good fortune to meet him be has delighted with the stories of his adventures while a section hand on the Pennsylvania system and a machinist in the shops of the New York Central.

He came to be a contractor on a small scale in Venezuela where he had built the wonderful railway for which the German bankers have never paid.

Then he returned to Russia and began at the bottom, at about the same time as Witte. Though he had enjoyed a fairly good education, he found that for want of influence he could not enter the civil service, which was his dream, as it is that of most Russians, but needs must enter the employ of a little private railway in the Province of Odessa, where he began that career which has carried him so far, as a freight clerk, and indeed at times as a baggage-man. His opportunity soon came, however, fortunately long before his spirit was crushed and his initiative dulled by the hopeless routine of his monotonous duties.

He averted a grave disaster by prompt action in a crisis, and he was immediately promoted to be station master. He had saved his company money and safeguarded their credit with the traveling public, and so won for himself the best of credentials.

Then the Russo-Turkish war came and the railways proved more inadequate than they have done in the great struggle with Japan, and, of course, there was not the excuse of transcontinental distances to be overcome.

Witte by this time had risen to be the traffic manager of a large section of the railway, and it began to be noticed that on this line things got through, while on others they did not. Commanders of army corps at the front got into the habit of appealing to their requisitions for supplies the urgent request that they be sent via Witte's road. His efficiency might have received no further attention but for a controversy in which the rising young railroad man became engaged. Indeed, it has been said of Witte that every step in advance he has made is the result of a personal controversy fought out to a successful finish.

Whether this be true or not, it is certain that the man who holds the destinies of Russia in his hands to-day is a fighter, and not a colorless compromiser, who has attained powers by making concessions to those who could hinder or retard his advancement.

HOW HE ENTERED GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

The story of how at last he entered the Government service, and "got in the running," as it were, is illustrative of the man and of the adverse conditions against which he has successfully contended. It chanced that during the critical days before Plevna, when Osman Pacha had fought the Russians to a standstill and apparently checked their march upon the Bosphorus, two trains claimed the right of way over that vital section of the railway where Witte was in control.

One train carried provisions and munitions of war for the front, where they were greatly needed, the other a certain magnificent but useless personage, who was anxious to get as near to the front as he could without endangering his precious person. Witte never hesitated for a moment. He gave the provision train the right of way and directed the train carrying the illustrious personage in a swampy siding, which was unfortunately infested by mosquitoes.

Witte's official head was immediately demanded and readily given. The directors of the private railway were thunder-struck at their subordinate's audacity and gave him a curt dismissal, but Witte was not a man to be dismayed or to lose courage in the face of highly placed enemies. He determined to carry the matter before the Tsar, and, wonderful to relate, he succeeded in doing so.

Fortunately for the young railroad man, the Tsar Alexander had been in the trenches before Plevna himself. He knew that provisions were needed there and not gratuitously uniformed personages. He summoned Witte to his presence and at the end of the audience handed him his commission as a high official in the Railway Ministry.

From that red-letter day to this Witte's career has not been plain sailing. In real life it probably never is. It is certain that he has been buffeted by many storms and survived many a cunningly laid plan to wreck his ship of state. He has often been defeated, but he has never desisted. Witte is a rugged, many-colored personality. He has not a supple tact nor does he command any of the arts and graces which help to carry diplomats of the older hereditary school over rough places. His offenses against Russian conservatism have been many, but the greatest and the most unpardonable of these is one for which he should be as wise as he is responsible.

The anti-German feeling which has grown so strong in Russia during the last generation would seem to have centered upon his devoted head.

His father, a Dutchman and a storekeeper of Tulle, in Transcaucasia, where the boy Serge was born in 1860, the heir to no very brilliant prospects. Superstition's friends have traced the great statesman's family tree back to a family of Holland, who were distinguished in the wars and the statescraft of the Low Countries in the days of Charles V and Philip II, but this pedigree, whether spurious or authentic, was of little use to Witte in his early days.

He was the son of a man who was considered a German and was undoubtedly a storekeeper and not a rich one. In spite of these handicaps he became, in 1888, head of the Railway Department, shortly afterward Minister of Railways, then in succession chairman of the Tariff Commission, which tried to build a protective wall around the infant industries of the great agricultural empire; then Minister of Finance, and at last the highest rung of the ladder—Imperial Chancellor.

From first to last, from porter to Prime Minister, he never received a promotion because people liked him and wanted to push him, but simply because he made himself indispensable and there was no help for it. He had to be advanced, though a "German" and the son of a shopkeeper, though a rough, plain-spoken and, to be strictly truthful, a somewhat uncouth man even for a member of the middle class in Russia.

And today this Dutchman, born in Asia and in the service of Russia, comes to America to take part in the conference upon the result of which the world's peace depends, not by favor of Princes or the vote of masses, but simply because it is recognized that he is the most available man of all the millions of Russia for the onerous, thankless task which lies before him.

If "Who's Who" were in vogue in Russia Witte would have to confess to his amusements, or rather his recreation. He loves a locomotive, and when Minister of Railways he traveled all over the Empire on an engine with a simple caboose attached.

When he takes a half holiday he spends it, as likely as not, upon a locomotive cab, talking over railway matters with the grizzled engineer and sharing his black bread, cheese and vodka. When the great financier went to Paris and interviewed the bankers there they were shocked at his clothes, which were rusty and ill-fashioned. Soon, however, the overpowering genius of the man showed itself, and such matters as clothes and manners were forgotten.

SOME OF M. WITTE'S FAMOUS EXPLAITS.

Some of Witte's schemes have savored of state socialism, and he has never shrunk from exposing the corruption of the bureaucratic system whenever he was justified in so doing. His work on the great committee appointed in 1902 to investigate the agricultural and industrial depression of Russia was denounced as revolutionary by his enemies, but it was not—Witte is not a revolutionist. It was anti-revolutionary. In the sense that Witte stood to rob the "reds" of their just ground for complaint.

It is probably his opinion that if a social cataclysm should bring underground Russia into power the revolutionaries would make as great a mess of it as did the mutineers of the Black Sea on the blood-stained deck of the battleship Potemkin. Indeed, while the former Chancellor has liberal leanings and wishes to have the people of Russia enjoy some measure of self-government after they have been educated up to the responsibilities of their new position, he is the greatest enemy of the revolutionary movement, in that he shows by his life and his achievements

that the bureaucratic system under an autocrat is not entirely rotten.

Many reasons are assigned for the frequent changes which have been made in the personnel of the Russian peace embassy. As chief of the mission, M. de Neldoff gave place to M. Mouravieff and the latter has given way to the disgraced and despised M. de Witte, who, it was confidently announced less than a month ago from St. Petersburg, and upon the best authority, would never again hold office or enjoy the slightest measure of the confidence of his sovereign. For, after all, imperial nature is very like human nature, and it must be very unpleasant to have around and come in contact daily with the statesman who two, and even three, years ago sounded the alarm and prophesied the dangers which menaced Russia from the Manchurian adventure.

M. de Neldoff, who was in the first instance designated as envoy, twenty-six years ago signed on behalf of the Czar the treaty of San Stefano, which was so notorious for Russian arms, although afterwards at Berlin most of its important provisions were nullified. Naturally he has no wish to end his long and not wholly successful career by signing such a treaty as now must be concluded between the two belligerent Powers if peace is to be attained.

Old age and its consequent infirmities was an excuse offered by or for M. de Neldoff, and then the ungrateful role of chief plenipotentiary of a defeated nation was offered to M. Mouravieff, who is now the Russian Ambassador at Rome, and who at various times has been Minister of Justice and of Foreign Affairs, and who is frequently spoken of as a probable successor to Count Laschdorf.

REASONS ANNOUNCED FOR REMOVAL.

A score of reasons have been announced for the removal of Mouravieff's removal from the unenviable post to which he was assigned, but probably the true one has not been made public. Japan may have objected to his appointment because of public utterances which Mouravieff is reported to have made since the war began, far from complimentary to the yellow empire of the East. Yet from the very beginning of the peace movement the Japanese have made no concealment of their hope that M. Witte would be their antagonist in the diplomatic journey which opens in Portsmouth in a few days.

Not that Tokyo regards him as a weak man, but that he is really a weakling because in the Japanese capital he is regarded as a strong man, who offers guarantees that any other living Russian possibly could that the treaty to which he affixes his signature will be entered into in all its details.

But to my mind the most powerful factor in the withdrawal of Mouravieff was a sentimental reason, the feeling being as potent in the council of nations as in the humbler affairs. That of Mouravieff is a great name throughout Russia, but in the Amoor province and in Trans-Baikalia Mouravieff is a name to conjure with.

In the forties and the fifties of the last century, when Russia began to consolidate her far Eastern possessions or oppressions, it all depends upon your point of view) a Count Mouravieff, the father of the uncle of the present Ambassador, was Governor General of Siberia. Those to-day his name lives and appeals to Russian pride as does that of Cive in British India. Mouravieff was a mighty empire-builder; he did not want the empire he wanted all the good land that adjoined the territories of the Tsar, and most of them he secured.

He lives in Russian history as the great Siberian expansionist. "Mouravieff of the Amoor," the man who logged out the great lonely steppes with mile posts, all pointing to the Pacific, and all bearing the legend, "This is the way to the ocean." Alas! for Russian hopes that it should have been the way to the Sea of Japan, and to Tokyo's seemingly invincible arm.

There may have been other reasons for the withdrawal of M. Mouravieff from the peace mission, but in view of his antecedents the important part which his family have taken in the expansion of Asiatic Russia, it is easy to understand why he should be reluctant to sign his name to a treaty which must sanction at least a partial curtailment of the same, and so the bears role and the difficult task devolves upon the former fourth clerk of a trader, even up to the responsibilities of their country from the fate which with singular precision he foresaw and in outspoken beat warned his countrymen against.



M. de Witte

JOINS PORTIONS OF SEVERED LEG AND CHILD MAY YET USE MEMBER

Olvin Casper, Two and One Half Years Old, Is Now Recovering From Remarkable Surgical Feet—His Leg Had Been Cut Off by Binder, the Bones Being Completely Sliced Through—Operation Five Hours After Injury Occurred.

After the leg of a 2-year-old boy had been severed by a field binder, the bones being completely cut through and the limb left hanging by a tendon, a surgical operation has reunited the parts, and it is believed that the child will again have perfect use of his limb.

This feat of surgery has recently been accomplished by Doctor H. M. Julian of No. 722 Virginia avenue. The patient, Olvin Casper, 2½ years old, is well and on a fair way to recovery.

The boy is fast recuperating at the home of his uncle, No. 722 Virginia avenue and when seen yesterday as he lay on his cot he appeared as merry as any 2-year-old in the best of health. The left leg, which was almost severed, is still in splints, but Olvin amuses himself with the other foot and takes great pleasure in trying to kick his toes.

The accident that almost deprived little Olvin of one of his legs and his life occurred on his father's farm, about seven miles from Oakville. That was on July 4, and his mother, Mrs. Carrie Casper, had been out in the fields cutting pumpkins. William Casper, the father, was cutting oats with a binder nearby. Olvin wanted to watch his father, and he and his mother walked over to the binder. The binder stopped the machine to speak to his wife, and Olvin approached the horse, in that way bringing himself directly in the path of the binder.

Olvin remarked to his mother that the horse was bad and she, seeking to placate her boy, playfully struck at one of the horse's legs with a stick, exclaiming: "Bad horse, you let my Olvin alone!" The horse, seeing his rider at the stick and sound toward, bearing down on the child. Olvin stepped to one side to avoid

was the most severely injured, and he clasped operations on the right leg, which was badly cut in front. Several arteries in the right leg had been cut, and these had to be tied and the wound sewed up, taking fifteen stitches in all.

A rude splint was made for the left leg by Doctor Julian and he ordered the parents to bring the child to the city, that it might be more properly cared for. That night William Casper brought his little son to town and since then he has been rapidly improving. So much so, in fact, that Doctor Julian says the boy will be on his feet within three weeks.

Mrs. Casper was asked yesterday what she thought of the case. "I never expected to see my little Olvin alive again after that accident," she replied. "When I carried him into the house I thought he would die in a short time and when I saw the blood coming out of the wounds I tried to stop it as much as I could, so that my little boy would live as long as he could."

Little Olvin did not appear to mind his injury when he was seen yesterday. He lay on a cot near an open window and was talking and laughing with several children who live in the neighborhood. At times he would reach down and get hold of his right foot and try to lick his toes. His mother said he persisted in doing this, although she had told him it was not for him to do it.

"I got new, new leg now that Doc put on for me," was the way Olvin spoke of the feat of surgery that had been so skillfully performed by Doctor Julian. "I soon got out and play with the little boys, and my new leg will be all right. It hurted me awfully at first, but it no hurt now, except when Doc come to look at it. Doc had, he hurt me."

Olvin has been an exceptionally good patient, his mother and father say. He stays in his cot, and does not mind the wooden splints on his leg in the least.

Doctor Julian remarked that he had had many a navy patient during the many years of practice, but none that could beat Olvin. While the operations were being performed, it was not found necessary to administer any sort of anesthetic and the little chap lay on a table holding his mother's hand without a word of protest and with scarcely a groan.

The most remarkable case I ever had

FEARING DEATH FROM ASSOCIATES BURTHARDT TOOK POISON IN JAIL

Prisoner Who Confessed to Many Burglaries and Implicated Companions Soaked Matches in Water and Drank Mixture—Unconscious When Found, but is Pumped Out—Condition Not Considered Serious.

Fear of his companions in their alleged crimes, is believed to have prompted Edward Burthardt to attempt to end his life in his cell at the city jail, yesterday afternoon, by swallowing water in which he had saturated matches.

Edward Green, cellmate of Burthardt, found him unconscious and summoned Chief Guard Charles Gockley. Burthardt was unconscious when Gockley reached his cell.

A call was sent to the City Dispensary and Doctor Ernst and a nurse were taken to the jail in an ambulance as fast as the horses could carry them.

The stomach syphon was brought into use. Doctor Ernst said the prisoner's condition was not serious. Burthardt wrote the following letter to his parents before taking the poison:

Dear Mother and Father, Sister and Brother: I am very, and all know about me being arrested, and my heart is broken. It said in the paper that I confessed of the stealing, but I did not. I told them that I sold some of the clothes, but I did not steal them. What I told the captain is the truth. Well, I will try to end my life, and I don't want to disgrace father or mother, nor Stella or Charlie.

But they tell me I will go to the pen, and you all will be disgraced. Then don't take it hard, for I am all right. I am innocent, but will take my life, for the company that I got acquainted with.

I will give the Lord Jesus Christ before I die, so I will go to heaven. He will forgive me for what I am going to do, for he knows I am innocent. These fellows made threats to chase me to-day in the cell, and told me they would kill me, so I will give them the chance. I will not suffer till myself. I am suffering too bad to live. I want to tell all of my friends goodbye, and tell them I am sorry I ever got in bad company, and tell them to keep away from such people.

Well, mamma and papa, write express up right

MANY AT A FREE PICNIC. Salvation Army Entertains Crowd on the River.

More than one thousand persons attended the Salvation Army river excursion and picnic yesterday. Long before the hour of starting the boat was crowded with mothers and children waiting for the boat to start up the river.

The Crown Spenser left the foot of Olvin Casper yesterday morning at 9 o'clock and the passengers were dropped at the North St. Louis Hunting and Fishing Club, about two miles below the Mississippi River, on the Illinois shore. Here Adjutant Hawkes, who had charge of the picnic, prepared a luncheon. After four hours of rumpling and playing over the grass, the Crown Spenser picked them up again and landed them at the starting point at 5:10 in the evening.

"It was the merriest picnic party we have had this season," said Captain Henry Broelski. "In fact, I have never in all my life seen people enjoy the river as these little fellows did today, and I have been a river tramp for fifty-one years."

ILLINOIS TOMATO SEASON CLOSURE.

Also Pass, Ill., Aug. 6.—With to-day's shipments, the tomato season in southern Illinois practically closed. The crop has had unusually large profits, as have all fruits and vegetables in "Egypt" this year. Near Baboon, in this county, one man cleared \$200 on cucumbers alone and the "Egyptian" growers are doing little business.