



CURRENT COMMENT

SHAH OUT.
CZAR IN.

Monarchs seem fond of theatricalism. It is strange. The Shah of Persia certainly made a strong melodramatic exit. But this is one of the privileges of being a ruler. The honor of always having several different counties in waiting to receive the fragments that remain must be very exhilarating. Then, the daily possibility of this novel experience should greatly relieve the monotony of reigning.

Close upon the news of that potentate's assassination comes the announcement of the Czar's coronation—followed by descriptions so brilliant and vivid as to fill the soul of even Bulwer Lytton, or any other historical novelist, with burning envy. The emporiums of all the *costumiers* in Europe must have been ransacked to provide for the glittering pageants of those splendid ceremonies which, as Sir Edwin Arnold wired to the *London Daily Telegraph*, were never equalled on any stage. The wizard of the Lyceum has been outdone by the Grand Master of Ceremonies. The cost was only a hundred and forty million dollars.

To convey to their myriad readers some faint idea of the dazzling splendor of the imperial functions at Moscow, the newspapers have drawn upon all the resources of language and used all the arts of rhetoric. No device of the consummate word painter has been spared that would add to the glory of the picture. Even an emigration agent could not have done any better. The ceremonies were comparable with nothing in modern or ancient times, except the representations one's imagination conjures up of those triumphal processions that the Cæsars used to revel in in Rome.

The *hoi polloi* of Russia apparently enjoyed the displays of fireworks, military, millinery and royal gew-gaws as if

they were not footing the bills. But, as they would have to pay anyway, they were unconsciously quite philosophical, as the great public generally is.

Funny in the extreme, though, was the ostentatious equipage of the representatives of the French Republic. And fancy the descendants of the revolutionists and communists spending eighty thousand dollars for a supper given to the tyrannical Czar of Russia—and in the city that ruined the army of Napoleon! The world it do move—backward.

Entertaining it undoubtedly was to read of those theatrical displays described by such clever press correspondents, now visiting the realm of which Siberia forms so integral a part. But one cannot help being somewhat grateful that one lives in an empire free from the weaknesses of democracy, as well as from the extravagances of autocracy.

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JUNE
23RD.

The age of boodling has gone, for some politicians—the days and nights of explanations have come, and the glory of an election contest is not all it's cracked up to be. The trouble of getting elected over again, is like Madame Sans Gêne's having to dress for the court ball—it's such a deuced nuisance. But three weeks more, and it will all be over. For several the die is already cast: they stay at home. For others the star of hope is rising: they will have the privilege of franking letters and lying frankly.

The issues of the campaign are before the people. Without doubt, the electors of Canada will do their duty and fulfil their trust. Meanwhile, the orators continue to talk, the people listen patiently—the latter often less credulous than the former. And all await the day of fate.