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**MEMOIR OF THE CZAR NICHOLAS.**  
 Nicholas Paulowitch, late Emperor of Russia, was born at St. Petersburg on the 7th of July, 1796, being the third son of the Emperor Paul, by his second wife, Mary of Wurtemberg. Of his father, whose brutal eccentricities amounted to insanity, and who was murdered by his nobles in consequence of an alliance which his infatuated admiration for the Emperor Napoleon the First had induced him to contract, it is unnecessary to speak. The boy Nicholas was not five years of age when the night palace murder of March 23rd, 1801, made him an orphan. His brother Alexander was enthroned, and took the oath at the hands of his father's assassins, having been privy to the murder, and having been, when it was perpetrated, in the room immediately below. The Empress, his mother, a woman of intelligence, superintended his education, which she committed to General de Lambsdorf, who was assisted, amongst others, by the Countess de Leiven, the philologist Adelung, and the Councillor Stork. At an early period Nicholas applied himself with great ardor to military pursuits, in which he evinced considerable proficiency, especially in the art of fortification. He also studied the science of political economy, and became as familiar with the French, German, and English languages, as with his native tongue. He cultivated music, a taste which he gratified after his accession to the throne, not only by composition of several military airs, but by attracting to his capital the most distinguished musicians of Europe. However, in youth, his instructors formed no high estimate of his abilities. He was taciturn, melancholy, and when not engaged in his military studies, absorbed in trifles. In after life he distinguished himself as a patron of the fine arts, to gild with the tinsel of an imported civilisation the native and barbaric splendor of his court. When the French invasion took place Nicholas was too young to take part in the noble defence which Russia made, or to join in those great military operations which ultimately led to the overthrow of Napoleon and the occupation of his capital. He was, however, old enough to be an observant, though distant, spectator of the greatest struggle in which the people that he was afterwards called upon to govern were ever engaged; and the recollection of the enthusiasm and devotion then exhibited by them, in a just cause, may have lured him on to those fatal and boundless schemes of aggression which now suddenly have been brought to a close. On the restoration of peace in 1814 he left Russia to travel, and visited the principal battle-fields of Europe. In 1816 he arrived in England, where he received a cordial welcome. On returning home he visited the different provinces of Russia, for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the actual condition of the population. His first public act was a letter written to the Archbishop of Moscow, in which, with many professions of humility and faith, he announced his intention to erect a church in honor of Saint Alexander Newsky. In July, 1817, he married Charlotte Louisa, the eldest daughter of Frederick William of Prussia, and sister of the present King. Four sons and three daughters are the issue of this marriage, the eldest son, Alexander Nicolaiewitch, having been born in the year 1818.

At this time Nicholas had little expectation of obtaining the imperial crown; but in the year 1825 his eldest brother, the Emperor Alexander, died at Taganrog, in the Crimea, it is supposed by poison. The next heir to the throne was the Grand Duke Constantine, who was then at Warsaw, and Nicholas hastened to take the oath of fidelity. Constantine, however, whether voluntarily or by compulsion, had entered into an engagement with Alexander, in which he renounced his eventual claims to the throne, and the documents attesting this act was in the hands of Nicholas, when he received the news of the Emperor's death. Nicholas, whether sincerely or otherwise it is not known, refused to accept the homage offered him by those who were aware of the actual state of things, and loudly professed his allegiance to Constantine, the new Emperor. Meanwhile, Constantine, who was at Warsaw, was taking the oath to Nicholas, in accordance with the act in question, which he had secretly signed on the occasion of his marriage with the daughter of a private Polish gentleman. Nicholas, with expressions of regret, then ascended the throne; and now came a terrible struggle. A vast conspiracy, composed of two classes—the enthusiastic lovers of liberty and the old Russian party, the supporters of Constantine—was formed. Their tactics were to spread a report in the garrisons of the empire that the abdication of Constantine was a forgery, and to appeal to the soldiers, in the name of loyalty, to rise and put down what they represented to be a *coup d'état* against legitimacy. On the 26th of December, the oath to Nicholas was to be taken by the garrison of St. Pe-

tersburg. Several regiments swore allegiance; but the Moscow regiments, the Marines of the Guard, and the Grenadiers refused the oath, and marched through the streets and squares, shouting for Constantine. Nicholas saw all from his palace windows.

These troops had previously sworn fidelity to Constantine, and not understanding the reason for the change of masters, they remained faithful to the oath which they had taken. When the ceremony commenced the officers stepped out of their ranks and denounced Nicholas as an usurper, and declared that he held Constantine in confinement. The soldiers followed their officers with cries of "Constantine and the Constitution." Milardovitch, the Governor of St. Petersburg, and the veteran favorites of the army, were sent to parley with them. The Archbishop appeared in his Ecclesiastical robes; but all in vain.—The populace began to sympathise with the troops, and the scene which followed has thus been described—"The tide and tumult of death swept on to the imperial palace. The Emperor and the Empress had proceeded alone to their chapel, and on their knees upon the altar steps had mutually sworn to die as sovereigns. Then, placing himself at the head of the guard that yet remained loyal, the Czar rode out and confronted the rebels. Standing before them with haughty bearing he cried in a firm tone, 'Return to your ranks—obey—down upon your knees!' The energy of his voice—his countenance calm, though pale—and the veneration with which every Russ regards the person of his sovereign—prevailed. Most of the soldiers kneeled before their master, and grounded their arms in token of submission. They say in Saint Petersburg that while he harangued them one of the conspirators four times came forward to kill him, and shrunk back in fear. One thing is certain, that to the intrepid self-possession of that hour he is indebted for the continuance of his authority. Victory was now easy. He retired from the spot; wherever resistance was made the artillery played upon the gathering crowds, and the fire of musketry completed the work of destruction." The hopes of the Liberal and old Russian party having been thus quenched, Nicholas found himself the sole and absolute master of the gigantic Russian empire. The Marquis de Custine, who had a conversation with the Emperor as to the memorable events of that day, records the following words used by Nicholas: "I did nothing extraordinary. I said to the soldiers 'return to your ranks,' and at the moment of passing the regiment in review I cried, 'on your knees!'—They all obeyed. What gave me power was that at the instant before I had resigned myself to meet death. I am grateful for having succeeded, but I am not proud of it, for it was by no merit of my own." On another occasion he said, "My honor was at stake, and it was well worth while for me to appear courageous." In the punishments inflicted on the rebels, Nicholas evinced the most unappeasable severity, thus affording a melancholy spectacle of an union of chivalrous bravery with barbarous cruelty. Immediately after five scaffolds were erected on the esplanade of the fortress of St. Petersburg, thirty-six noble persons were executed, and eighty-five sent to Siberia. From that time Russia Proper has been exempt from outbreaks, if not from conspiracies, and the late Czar was left free to carry out his ideas of government.

In September, 1826, the Emperor was crowned at Moscow with great pomp and ceremony. Absolutism was henceforth his darling doctrine. To the Marquis de Custine he said, "I have no conception of a representative monarchy. It is the government of falsehood, fraud, and corruption; and, rather than adopt it, I would fall back to the borders of China." Again; "Despotism is the very essence of my government, and it suits the genius of the land." Shortly after his coronation war was declared with Persia, which, after continuing more than a year, was concluded by a treaty whereby the Shah ceded two fine provinces to Russia, and bound himself to pay twenty millions of silver roubles as the penalty of resistance. About a year afterwards Nicholas declared war with Turkey, Adrianople opened its gates, and Constantinople was itself in danger, although the Turks in the Balkin, and in the defence of Sillistria and Varna had covered themselves with glory. In 1829 the peace of Adrianople was concluded, by which Nicholas was permitted to retain authority in Wallachia and Moldavia, and the Porte agreed to indemnify the expenses of the war by a payment of eleven millions and a half of Dutch ducats, a sum from which three millions were afterwards deducted. In 1830 the Polish revolution broke out; but England and France remained neuter, and Austria and Prussia aided the Czar in crushing the insurgent patriots. After a heroic resistance Poland was reconquered—the Russians entered Warsaw, and an iron despotism was substituted for the semblance of con-

stitutional government, which previously had been permitted to exist. A citadel was built on the heights above Warsaw, and when, in 1835, the citizens went out to compliment the Czar, pointing to the citadel, he exclaimed—"You see that fortress; if you stir, I will order your whole city to be destroyed—I will not leave one stone upon another, and when it is destroyed it will not be rebuilt by me." When the cholera invaded St. Petersburg the ignorant populace accused the physicians of having poisoned the sick in the hospitals, and put some of them to death. Nicholas rode to the mob, and shouted in a voice of thunder, "Down upon your knees before God, and ask pardon of Him for your offences. I, your Emperor—your master—order you." The populace obeyed, and Nicholas, in describing the scene, said to the Marquis de Custine, "These moments are the finest of my life. I ran in the face of danger without knowing, as a King, how I should retreat. I did my duty, and God sustained me." In 1839 war was declared with Circassia—a war which, with little honor to the Russian arms, has continued up to the present time. But, whatever may have been his designs against the empires of the East in the earlier period of his reign, they were suspended, and a different character was given to the policy of his reign for twenty years by the French revolution of 1830. From that moment it was against the free governments of the west that the Emperor Nicholas reserved his strength. He drew closer his ties of alliance with Austria and Prussia, inasmuch that those states continued for many years to act as the tributaries of his empire and the vassals of his policy. He heaped contumely on the constitutional monarchy of France. With England he endeavored to remain on terms of good will, though not of close amity; and he is known to have professed through life the belief that a rupture with this country, especially if it were allied with France, would be an event of the most fatal import to Russia, and to the prosperity of his reign. He lived long enough to verify the prediction, without having the prudence to avert its consequences. During the period from 1830 to 1840 his influence on the affairs of Europe was neither very energetic nor very direct. He had in 1831 crushed, with considerable difficulty, but with unsparing rigor, the great Polish insurrection, which might have wrested from him the western provinces afterwards incorporated in the empire. He succeeded in 1832 in establishing a Russian army on the Bosphorus, and extorted the treaty of Unkiar 'Sklessi from the failing hands of Sultan Mahmoud. Throughout his reign the under-current of Russian intervention in the affairs of Turkey may constantly be traced until it reached, in 1853, that catastrophe which has for the last two years convulsed Europe. In 1840 the insidious propositions of Russia, being adopted by the British government and by that of Austria, led us to the brink of war with France, and engaged us in military operations in Syria; but, with this exception, the peace of the world remained undisturbed until 1848. Upon the occurrence of that earthquake, which overthrew half the thrones of continental Europe, the Emperor Nicholas alone seemed completely prepared to meet the shock, and completely unmoved by its violence. His forbearance was equal to his strength. He sought no pretext for interference in the affairs of other states, although he did not refuse his succor when it was required; he took no unfair advantage of the weakness and confusion of other countries, and the advice he tendered was invariably favorable to the cause of order and of peace. The conduct of the Emperor Nicholas during those eventful and perilous years, from 1848 to 1851, raised him higher than he had ever stood before; he was regarded as one of the wisest, as well as one of the most powerful, Sovereigns of Europe; and those even who detested his despotic government could not deny that he had shown moderation, temper, and a strong desire for peace.

The causes which have led to the present war it is unnecessary to detail. The two ruling passions of the Emperor's life appear to have been to consolidate and extend despotic institutions not only within his own dominions, but in neighboring countries, and to acquire, at all sacrifices, Constantinople as the seat of his great empire. His claim to exercise a protectorate over the Christian subjects of the Porte may be contrasted with his persecution of Christians differing from the Orthodox Greek Church in Russia. He never recognised the sovereignty of Louis Philippe; and by that astute policy for which Russian diplomacy is distinguished, in 1840, in reference to the Egyptian question, he endeavored to detach England from the alliance of France. The principles of the late ruler's domestic administration have been well explained in recent popular works: "It was to employ every instrumentality of civilisation to keep his subjects—his children," he called them—in ignorance, superstition, and slavery.

A French writer has said—"In all Russia there is but one man;" but one will moving freely in its natural sphere. The Church and the secret police were his great engines of government. To the Church, which taught Russia to reverence him next to God, he allowed no more power or freedom than to the lay corporations. Autocracy he carried even into the calendar, advancing or degrading a Saint by ukases with as little compunction as he would promote or reduce an officer of his staff. The Holy Synod he governed by the medium of an epauletted aide-de-camp, appointed by him its president. This artful and perpetual substitution of the earthly potentate and pontiff for the Divine object of religion has succeeded so well that Russia, a week ago, could probably have furnished 50,000,000 persons to whom the Czar was as a god. The secret police formed in Russia a terrible inquisition; its agents, bland and smiling, were everwhere, "to mark the noble actions of the good, and to discover and punish vice," as it was said. A father not long ago denounced his son; it was rewarded as heroism. Under Nicholas, delation and treachery so effectually did their work, that it is exceedingly rare to find in a Russian city a man who can look you straight in the face. To suppress liberal studies was always a great object with the departed Czar. The universities of the empire, maintained with great ostentation, were kept up in order to educate men in those sciences which can be utilised in war or in economic administrations. Generous and ennobling literature was systematically discouraged. The policy of the Czar abroad is too well impressed in passing events to need illustration. Nicholas only followed the traditions of his house in his wars of conquest in Persia, Turkey, and the Caucasus, and in his recent attempt to erect at St. Petersburg a court to which 12,000,000 subjects of the Sultan might incessantly appeal against their master.

One or two personal traits of the Czar must complete their brief notice. His habits were ostentatiously simple, dramatically soldierlike. The luxuries on his table were not for him. His military form was but upon rare occasions to be seen enclosed within a covered carriage. His industry was as remarkable as his temperance; to inspect fortresses and review army corps he would travel days and nights. Shrewd enough always to suspect the basis of his empire, he demanded that the outward signs of awe should encounter him wherever he went, and withholding an act of reverence has often cost the offender an imprisonment. To impose an opinion, to create a prestige, was the object of his never-failing anxiety, whether he promenaded in St. Petersburg or visited some foreign capital. An autocrat, professing that he would rather cease to reign than permit the least abridgment of his power, he was constantly inquiring how he stood in public opinion. He was a devourer of newspapers, not of the few feeble reactionary journals published in free countries—those he despised, but of such newspapers as he well knew represented the independence and intelligence of the communities where they were produced. A list of the newspapers which the Emperor daily scanned might possibly astonish some persons.

The Emperor's death was sudden and unexpected fatalities have been too frequent in the line of Romanoff not to suggest grounds of unfavorable suspicion. Four princes have worn the imperial crown of Russia in much less than a century between the death of Peter the Great and the accession of Alexander—viz., between the years 1725 and 1801. The following are their names and their respective fates:—

- Peter II., deposed in 1727.
  - Ivan VI., deposed in 1750, murdered in 1762.
  - Peter III., murdered in 1762.
  - Paul, murdered in 1801.
- Of four emperors one was deposed, and three were murdered within 76 years. It cannot, therefore, be matter of surprise if a suspicion that Nicholas has followed the fate of his father and grandfather may be excited by a decease so sudden and unexpected.
- The Hereditary Grand Duke Alexander has, in the ordinary course of things, succeeded to the Russian throne. He was born in 1818, and is married to the Princess Mary of Hesse.

**DIARY OF THE SIEGE.**  
 Feb. 18.—Shot and shell still going up to the front. The mortality among the horses does not diminish; and the wretched oxen intended for conversion into beef die rapidly of emaciation. There is a report that Sir R. England has been recalled, and that higher personages are resigning or going home, and a retirement of the head-quarters staff *en masse* is spoken of.  
 Feb. 19.—The drying winds continue, and the plateau to the south of Sebastopol can be traversed easily on horse or foot, even at the bottom of the ravines. With this fine weather the good spirits and energies of our men have returned; but I regret to