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EDITORIAL

## OUR GRAND-DUKES.

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**T**HE system of the Russian governmental machine, together with the history that it has made, can be put in a nut-shell. The head of the nation is the Czar, from whom the system of government receives its name. But the Czar himself figures only as a necessary, not as a leading, central figure. The ideal Czar in such a system is an individual weak of stamina and strong only in the acquired viciousness of inherited usurpatory perverseness, such as happens with the “glorious monarch” who now fills the place. Such is the ideal Czar. The reason why such a Czar is the ideal one will appear when the other few wheels of the exceedingly simple mechanism of Czaristic Government are considered. These wheels are the Grand-Dukes, nearest collateral relatives of the Czar himself. The Grand-Dukes are the real heads of departments. They are the heart of Czarism. They enjoy not all its splendors, but they enjoy its real power. They decide, they order, according as their interests may demand; the Czar echoes their wishes. A Czar of weak physical fibre readily submits while profiting by the glamor and the plums. A Czar of strong physical fibre chafes under the dictation of the Grand-Dukes—and then he dies. Death has ever been a trusty ally of the Grand-Dukes. It has ever stepped in at the nick of time. Now, we also, here in America, have our Czar and Grand-Dukes governmental system.

President Roosevelt, like many a Russian Czar of strong physical fibre and proportional empty-patedness, that is empty of every thing except vainglory, is trying to pose as a great liberator, and he has chosen the matter of railroad rates as his stalking-horse. The regulation of railroad rates would affect the yoke of capitalism upon the neck of the American Working Class just as little as any of the “progressive thoughts”, that have periodically taken possession of a physically strong of fibre but vainglorious Czar, would in anyway have affected the yoke of

Czarism upon the Russian subject masses. But the President's thought, the same as similar tawdry "progressive thoughts" on the part of some Czars, is of a nature calculated to annoy and greatly disturb the comfort of our own Grand-Dukes, that is to say, of the American capitalist magnates, who, like the Grand-Dukes of Russia, really control the situation, and are perfectly willing to allow the central governmental figure to derive all the glory that may be reflected upon him from their own material comforts, but rear in anger at having to suffer material discomfort through the tomfool rays of glory that he would like to emit upon himself. In the case of the Russian Grand-Dukes, actual poison or physical daggers have made the speedy quietus of Czars who seek such self-glorification. The method differs in America but the end, adapted to American conditions, is the identical one that our own illustrious Grand-Dukes pursue. The American capitalist magnates, the heads of our capitalist bureaucracy, being, of course, in all his secrets, ever have ready a large supply of poisoned arrows with which to "kill off" a troublesome President. They are now at it, and shooting them off at Roosevelt.

The President has only just entered upon his "valorous" railroad-rates campaign. But three arrows have already whizzed through the air and are now quivering in his lacerated flesh.

One arrow flew on February 3 from the bow of President Stickney of the Great Western Railway. Addressing the Washington Economic Society on that evening, railroad Grand-Duke Stickney said:

"The interstate commerce law forbids discriminations in rates, but it also prohibits free transportation of passengers. It has made the acceptance of a discriminating freight rate or a free pass by an individual a misdemeanor, each punishable alike by a fine or imprisonment.

"If we inquire into the heart-burnings growing out of railway discriminations, which are breeding class distinctions and class hatred, and even anarchism, among the so-called lower classes, we will find that the bitterest feelings are aroused by being compelled to pay fare while richer men ride free."

And, as if to make the hit clearer, and impart to the arrow extra swiftness, Grand-Duke Stickney quotes the following passage from one of the sermonettes of our railway-pass-using President:

“No one can too strongly insist upon the elementary fact that you cannot build the superstructure of public virtue save on private virtue.”

Before this arrow had struck home, another flew from the bow of the Interstate Commerce Commission pointedly charging the President’s present Secretary of the Navy, Morton, with having “flagrantly, continuously and deliberately” violated the law during his incumbency as traffic manager of the Santa Fe road.

And thirdly, from behind the entrenchments of these Grand-Dukes, the hand-grenade is now thrown at the President convicting him of having lifted, in violation of the law enacted by Congress and signed by McKinley, \$98,420 from the Indian School funds and appropriated them to sectarian and campaign purposes, by giving them to Catholic schools for the purpose of securing the aid of the Catholic hierarchy in carrying “twenty doubtful congressional districts”—a hand grenade that has forthwith raised against the President the ire of the Protestant elements, whom the President had refused aid to, on the ground of the non-sectarian law which he subsequently and so full-handedly violated for sectarian and political purposes.

Our Grand-Dukes are at work—and it serves the vainglorious American Czar right.

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