

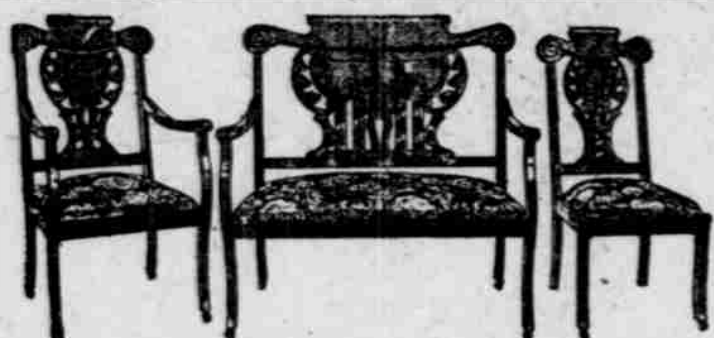


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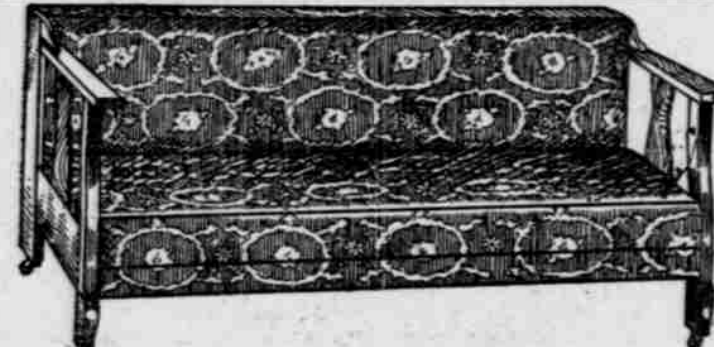
Parlor Suit, this style, three different patterns, in birch frames, finished a rich, dark rosewood, upholstered in velvet and silk tapestry; regular \$30.00, cut to.....**\$22.50**

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AMBER VELVETS; REGULAR \$1.35, THIS WEEK.....**\$1.15**
FIRTH TAPESTRY BRUSSELS, \$1.10; THIS WEEK.....**95c**
BRUSSELS RUGS, 8-3x10-6; REGULAR \$20.00; CLOSE OUT AT.....**\$16.50**
SAMPLE RUGS, 36 INCHES, WORTH 75c; NOW.....**35c**



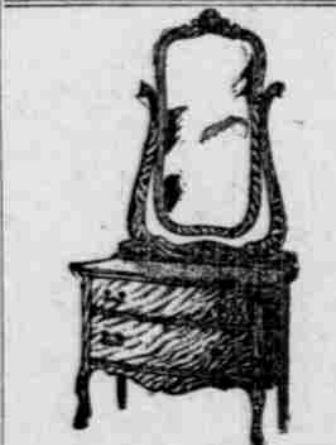
Home Queen Steel Range, guaranteed for 10 years; with reservoir as shown.....**\$32.50**
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Davenport Sofa Bed, exactly as shown in illustration, upholstered in A-1 velours with best quality of springs and guaranteed to keep its shape; back is adjustable, making a perfect, full-sized bed. Gadsby's price this week.....**\$22.00**



White Maple, Golden Ash, Imitation Mahogany Dresser, swell-top drawers, **\$15.00**
Or in solid Oak, **\$16.00**

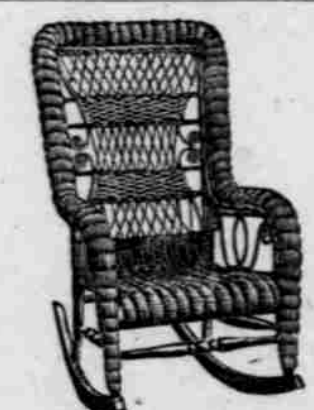
The largest and best assortment of Library Tables in Oregon. This one.....**\$12.50**



Princess Dresser, in genuine mahogany veneer, birdseye maple or quarter-sawn oak; Gadsby's price.....**\$23.00**



Rattan Parlor Chair, finest quality woven reeds; special Gadsby's price.....**\$7.50**



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Here's a beauty—adjustable, velour upholstered, \$13.50; now at.....**\$9.50**

Napoleon Beds, in quarter-sawn oak, mahogany and birdseye maple, beautiful creations, \$35.00 to.....**\$65.00**



Folding Bed, royal oak or mahogany finished, with handsome birch-brace shelves, and French mirror on top; has cable supported springs; price.....**\$23.50**

The handsome Morris Chair illustrated above is of solid oak, or in birch, mahoganyized, with choice velour cushions; special one week at.....**\$9.50**

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No. 2 Buffet, weathered oak or golden, quarter sawed, polished, size of top 44x22; Gadsby's price.....**\$25.00**

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M. Witte, Russia's Man of the Hour

A CHARACTER SKETCH OF THE PEACE COMMISSIONER, BY ARCHIBALD J. WOLFE IN THE NEW YORK TIMES

WHEN, in 1903, an imperial rescript of the Czar elevated M. Witte to the position of Chairman of the Council of Ministers, persons not familiar with the involved mechanism of the Russian administrative apparatus were led to believe that the omnipotent Minister had reached still higher stage in his brilliant career and was destined to become another Chancellor Gortschakoff. Nothing was further from the truth. It was soon seen that the new dignity was one of the sort that serve as cushions to break the fall of deposed statesmen. It was then that a foreign diplomat uttered these prophetic words: "Witte has fallen and is now a cipher. But he is only 45 years of age and may yet live to see Russia involved in entanglements from which no one might be able to disengage her save him alone. And then his opportunity may come."

However, no such entanglements seemed imminent two and a half years ago, and to all appearances Plehve was installed for all time as the real ruler of Russia. While Witte, his rival, had been relegated to a position of "innocuous desuetude," as the holder of an office which was like the famous Lichtenberg sword—sharp and double-edged, but lacking a handle. But what a transformation has taken place within a little more than two short years! Plehve is dead, the victim of revolutionary vengeance; the clique of officials who had pursued Witte for years with bitter calumny and relentless hatred are discredited in the eyes of the world at large and of Russia; the position of Northern Empire as the arbiter of peace in Europe seems irretrievably lost; the Manchurian enterprise which Witte had so strenuously opposed has ended in a ghastly fiasco; the immense surplus which was solely due to Witte's genius has been swallowed by the voracious requirements of the demon of war, and now the Czar turns again to his former friend and veteran counselor to extricate his country from a very critical situation.

And there is still heard the bitter wrangling over his appointment behind the scenes, where the Ducal intrigues and the machinations of courtiers exert a powerful leverage on the vacillating mind of the Czar, in the hope that the feelings of petulant indignation which in 1903 had led him to retire his Minister of Finance may still lead him to supplant Witte as plenipotentiary at the forthcoming peace conference, or at least so to circumscribe his powers that he would be led to resign voluntarily.

A personality which can arouse so vehement a hatred is naturally interesting. Add to this the astonishing fact that diametrically opposed views are held of M. Witte's policy relative to the important matter of reform and constitution in Russia. In all the countries he is believed to be a Liberal and a reformer. In Russia, if possible, he is more hated by the revolutionists than Plehve was in the heyday of his power. He is called by them a "time server" and a "pillar of the autocracy." At the same time, the most powerful reactionary cliques also loathe and despise him, but their feelings are of a personal nature rather than political.

To Americans he is doubly interesting, not only because he comes to this country on a mission unique in American history, but also because he embodies within himself the ideals of what a business man, a railway administrator, and a manager of huge enterprises should be. In the course of this study of M. Witte's character it will be seen that were this democratic upholder of the autocracy to exchange his allegiance and transfer the marvelous executive capacity with which he is gifted to the land of the Stars and Stripes, the largest corporations of this country might well vie with each other in making a bid for his services at a record-breaking salary.

He will, however, vastly disappoint the expectations of the social set. For he has never been the man to care for social frivolities. He feels uncomfortable in evening clothes. He despises the small talk of the salon. He appears incongruous and out of place in the brilliant atmosphere of a court function, and his natural place is at his desk.

As to his exterior, it cannot be said that Witte's features are profoundly impressive, although his forehead and eyes convey a distinct impression of more than ordinary intelligence. The lines about his mouth denote a rare amount of will power. His general appearance is not attractive, but on the contrary somewhat ungainly. He is very tall of stature, heavy in build, stiff and formal in his deportment, cumbersome in gait, cold in manner, unpolished in address. Hard, almost clumsy, angular, slow to speak, prompt to act, he is devoid alike of physical charm and of the cheap arts of seeming and pleasing.

All these outward deficiencies, however, are more than counterbalanced by a keenness of intellect which borders on and is akin to prophetic vision. Scarcely has a statesman been so completely vindicated by events, taking as an instance only his position with regard to the "Manchurian adventure," as he has been termed. The eternal enmity of several Grand Dukes, of Alexieff, of Kokotefem, who succeeded him later as a Minister of Finance, (after Plehve's retirement), and of the almighty war party was the result of his attitude to the war, and this enmity has not been softened by the fact which fate has hammered into their black heads that Witte has been right after all.

Sergei Yulievitch Witte, called generally after the French fashion, Monsieur de Witte, does not like to be addressed as Count, although this title was granted him a few years ago. He was born in Tiflis, on the Caucasus, 18 years ago as the son of a wealthy official, a member of the Council of the Viceroy of Caucasus. He was graduated with honor from a university in the south of Russia, where he had taken up a course in higher mathematics and physics, and it is said that if he had devoted himself to pure science he would have achieved more than ordinary distinction in that calling.

But apart from his love of abstract science, Witte was blessed with an unbounded energy and a desire to become a man of affairs. He entered the employ of a Southern Russian railway in an executive capacity, and demonstrated his astonishing ability to make things hum. He was located at Odessa, and his work in placing the railway of which he was an important official on a paying basis attracted universal attention. A place was offered to him with the Ministry of Finance in St. Petersburg, where at the age of 23 he became the head of one of the most important departments.

While a resident of Odessa he learned to know and married a lady of Jewish extraction, who is reputed to have been an actress, and of whom a great many wild rumors have since been circulated. The facts of the matter are that neither M. Witte nor his wife cared much for social frivolities, and their comparative seclusion during the first years of his career in St. Petersburg has given rise to the belief, prevalent abroad, that the society of St. Petersburg had "cut" Mrs. Witte because the match had been considered "unsocialistic." Russians, however, are not much given to scruples of this nature when affecting the wife of a powerful Minister, and in the course of time the doors of society not only opened to her invitingly, but the very same "exclusive" importunately knocked at the doors which led to the select intellectual circles of the "net" of Mrs. Witte's own making.

It is in connection with this remarkable showing in the way of budgets that opinions so greatly differ concerning Witte abroad and at home. The man who conceived the genial idea of creating national industries by a ukase and by government assistance; who introduced into Russia the system of trusts, with the government as the trust par excellence; who was the actual builder of the Trans-Siberian and many other railways of local importance; who presented Russia with a 2,000,000,000-ruble budget; who took upon himself the role of a temperance apostle by falcating the liquor traffic; who was the preacher of peace—might well be called great abroad. But what did the Russians think of him? The following characteristic anecdote will show.

The people tell that Countess Imperator (the Lord Emperor) had once a very strange dream, in which he beheld three cows—one fat and sleek, one very lean, and one merely foolish. The agitated Czar summoned Pobedonosteff, but this high dignitary failed to interpret the dream. Finally he called Father John of Cronstadt, the wonder-worker, and the latter connected to explain the significance of the vision.

"The lean cow, Your Majesty, is the Russian people; the fat cow is the Minister of Finance."

Here the saintly priest stopped.

"Go on. And who is the foolish cow?"

"Your Majesty, I dare not speak, for I fear your wrath."

"Speak and fear not," answered the Czar.

"The foolish cow is the Czar, our Little Father."

The policy of Witte was expressed in this dictum of the famous statesman: "The concentration of all wealth in the country in a single hand, and that the hand of the state." It was a policy similar to that which in certain quarters in America is apt to be ascribed to Rockefeller. With a view to this end, Witte, on the plea that the Russian people were being ruined by drink, created the sale of spirits a state monopoly. This stupendous undertaking, which consisted of taking over every still and saloon in the land by a mere operation of law, was hailed abroad as one of the most wonderful achievements of an enthusiastic temperance apostle. Witte, however, had no such sentimental notions. He took over the monopoly of spirits as a means of raising money. Like a model trust, the government monopoly increased prices all around. The publicans and saloon-keepers sold vodka at 6 rubles per vedro, and the state sold it at 7.50 rubles. Considering that the annual consumption of vodka by the Russian people was 60,000,000 vedros, the money thus taken out of the peasants' pockets can easily be calculated, which may serve to illustrate the vision of the three cows.

Before his fall Witte had in view the monopolization of tobacco and tea by the state, and the addition of grocery departments to every state-owned saloon. Drunkennes did not diminish. One curious effect of the monopolization was seen during the riots in connection with the calling out of reserves. During the riots the latter regularly stormed the vodka shops on the plea that the soldiers belonged to the government, and that the vodka belonged to the government and that the vodka might well be inside of the soldier.

The peasants began to believe that all merchandise would soon be fiscalized, and in one province rumors were current that the vodka stamp would be taken to the peasants' foreheads, which would enable them to buy groceries of the government.

Witte realized that the establishment of factories and plants would materially increase the wealth of the country, and he fostered the founding of new manufacturing enterprises. During his administration the number of factories at his disposal. Like an Oriental despot, or like some fabulous god breathing his "fiat lux," he attempted to create national industries by ordinance, and in many cases was successful. He brought the element of finance within reach of the Russian officials, he substituted a steady gold currency for fluctuating banknotes, and thus arrayed against himself the powerful clique of financiers who lived by easy speculation, for he made such speculation on the rise and fall of the paper value of the ruble a criminal offense.

The autocrat of M. Witte when he was Minister of Finance was open to everybody. There never had been a Minister so accessible. The lobby was thronged by promoters who had pet schemes to present to the wielder of the money power, foreign investors, intending manufacturers, Zemstvo schemes, faddists, and business men cooled their heels in his reception-room. He saw them all and he spoke to them all, but he could appraise the value of a proposition in an instant.

Witte was anxious to get the foreign manufacturer and investor interested in Russian industries. He often said: "Why will foreigners not come directly to me? I can set them right in about three minutes, and if I am too busy, I will place the chief of a department at their disposal, and he will take up the matter with them. Instead of this, they intrust important decisions to unscrupulous agents and promoters."

M. Witte is indirectly responsible for the Hague tribunal. It was he who introduced Nicholas de Bloch, the peace dreamer, to the Emperor, and it was the latter who enthused the Czar with the idea of peace. It seems like the irony of fate that poor Nicholas II, on whom the servile courtiers some years ago bestowed in all seriousness the title of "Pacific Czar" or "Czar the Peace-lover," ("Czar Miratorov"), should have become involved in no great and illustrious war. And perhaps this consciousness of incongruity led the Czar to fight so stubbornly the idea of appointing Witte as chief peace plenipotentiary until the force of circumstances compelled him to give in.

Witte was an enemy of all irritating measures. "Leave the Finns alone, leave the Poles alone, leave the Jews alone; give them a chance to pay taxes." The paying of taxes and the increase of the imperial budget he conceived the prime duty of every Russian. Witte had no religion. He had no passionate love for the Russian language. He was willing to let the Poles speak Polish, the Finns speak Finnish; he was willing to let the Catholics, the Protestants, and the sectarians worship in their own particular fashion. If there were a tax on heathens he might have connived at wholesale conversions of orthodox Russians to Shamanism. But he was not without heart. He was capable of an occasional tear for the peasants he beggared by giving them a local railway to take their wheat to the market at a cheaper rate.

Owing little to fortune and nothing to favor, he is silent, ready, resourceful, a man of pith and grit, a massive volcanic figure, wont to bear down opposition and to sweep hindrances from off his path. He was forced during his tenure of office to fight with enemies, against whom, in the words of Dillon, the very gods would wage war in vain. The supineness of unenlightened, shortsightedness of self-complacent colleagues, the crass stupidity of administrators, the greed of the capitalists, running a breakneck race for riches, the listlessness and the helplessness of the great masses of benighted people, periodic droughts, frequent famines, losses entailed by the unfortunate sugar controversy and tariff war with the United States constituted a few of the difficulties with which he was called to cope.

Meanwhile colleagues clamored for money which they did not always spend well or wisely. Journalists would sing out some really sensible measure as a proof of his incapacity, bankers taxed him with folly, while personal enemies fouly pursued him with calumny and sought to swamp him in a deluge of filthy abuse such as would not be tolerated in any other country under the sun. In the midst of this chaotic vortex of disaster and folly Witte had only himself to turn to for counsel and courage.

Chiefs of departments would say to him: "There is such and such a sum available; why may it not be given me to be spent on my department?" "Yes, quite so, but not to be mispent." And the money was not allowed to flow into channels so near an official pocket.

Witte is unpopular with the upper classes, for he despises the fawning and artificial life of the "smart set." He despises diplomatic euphemism, misreading, half truths, and is a stalker for plain, unvarnished facts. At the same time he is polite when necessary. Underneath his opaque exterior and rugged traits there lie hidden sparks of genuine fire, and in the heat of the discussion his eyes flash lightning.

And now to the story of his fall. He was hated when as a young man he became the chief of a Ministerial department. Men who had spent years in frivolous pursuits which they mistook for services rendered to the state could not forgive him. He was friendly to the Jews as a financier, and because he realized that in them was an element of industrial vitality. This aroused the hatred of Plehve, who was Witte's colleague, being the Minister of the Interior. Plehve did not for a moment imagine that Witte was opposed to the autocracy, which he only mistook for the see that Witte's reforming proclivities were limited to a desire to pour oil on the troubled waters, so that nothing should disturb the increasing flow of money into the treasury. But Plehve, who was sincere in his way, also realized that the loosening of the grip on the bayonet opened the eyes of the people.

Witte's taxation policy made the people think. And forthwith creatures of the type described in Maxim Gorky's novels began to think and ponder and therein lay the danger of the autocracy which the financiers had overlooked. Witte's tactics let loose upon Russia hordes of Socialists who were not of the scientific kind, but whose opposition to the state of things is shown in mob spirit and in a sudden, determined and ineradicable hostility to the government. And yet Witte is a confessed upholder of the autocracy, and the moment any of the reforms upon which he diplomatically smiled a benign smile of approval threatened to interfere with the revenues of the state he was ready to drop them like a hot iron. And yet he introduced and sought to force reforms in many ways which did not seem to threaten his financial policy. He incurred the eternal enmity of Pobedonosteff by championing the removal of the church from state control and placing it under a patriarch—a movement which would have had the effect of doing away with the position of the procurator of the holy synod and with the holy synod itself. Pobedonosteff wrathfully exclaimed: "If the Holy Orthodox Church be deprived of the power of protection of the state, hundreds of thousands of the weak children would fall into the meshes of the sectarians. When merely the change in the form of the crossing gesture caused in olden times the defection of millions, such a change as is proposed by M. Witte might be the ruin of the Church of Christ in Russia."

Russia moves forward very slowly, with an almost imperceptible motion, like a glacier, and Witte made the mistake of using an Archimedean lever and pushing it forward, while he should have felt his fortune when he found no artificial obstacles in his path. In attempting the superhuman task of introducing reforms without reforming the autocracy itself, Witte unchained a spirit which became manifest in its results at the present time. Plehve foresaw the danger to the autocracy. Pobedonosteff lent the Minister of the Interior his ardent support, cliques of courtiers gathered to the flag of revolt against Witte, and suddenly, quite unexpectedly for him and for the world, the imperial rescript mentioned in the beginning of this article overwhelmed him like Archimedes amid his circles.

He was supplanted by the man who undertook to cow the Russian people into absolute obedience. The genial advocate of peace, temperance, industrial liberalism, of exported eggs and of refrigerators, of railways and Ministerial interviews, was shunted where he could not endanger the autocracy by bold experiments. The man who had sown reforms, not with the hand but with the sack, who had failed to ingratiate himself with the powers that be by persecuting students, Finns, Jews, Poles, etc., was succeeded in power by the man who did all these things with the ardor and sincerity of a Turcoman.

Other men sowed the wind which has brought a cyclonic harvest to Russia. Events have brought the autocracy to the verge of the precipice. The Russian Empire is a moral and financial bankrupt, and the country now turns to the business man and railway exploiter, to the financier and trust wizard, for relief. In her mad plight Russia is lucky to be able to trust her fortunes to the one of her statesmen who is gifted with common sense. He will need all his ability and diplomacy, all his shrewdness and pertinacity, in short, all the peculiar features of his genius to do the best for his country at the forthcoming conference in the Portsmouth navy-yard.