



PEASANT GIRL, ALLEGED FORTUNE TELLER WHO IS NOW THE TRUSTED ADVISER OF THE CZAR

ST. PETERSBURG, Sept. 15.—(Special Correspondence of The Sunday Oregonian.)—Strange stories of a sorceress at the Russian court are related by those acquainted with the internal affairs of the Czar's household. The Czar's tendency toward mysticism is well known, and it has caused him to become the dupe of several successive hypnotists, spiritualists, fortunetellers and such persons. At one time it was the French hypnotist, named Phillips, who contrived to gain such a remarkable ascendancy over the Czar, and at another time the deposed ruler of 130,000,000 subjects was entirely under the influence of a quack weather prophet named Dempitschko. At present a sorceress named Zenobia Galatschka is in high favor at the Russian court.

Zenobia Galatschka was introduced to the Czar's notice in a curious way. Previous to her appearance in St. Petersburg she resided at a remote village in the Russian province of Volhynia, where she earned a living by foretelling the fortunes of the ignorant peasant inhabitants. A Russian nobleman, who was residing in that district of Volhynia, heard of the fame of the fortune-teller and went himself to hear his fate from her prophetic lips. Zenobia Galatschka, who appears to be a woman with exceptional powers of observation and unusually sharp wits, told the young nobleman so much about himself that was true that he became a believer in her reputed supernatural endowments. When he returned to St. Petersburg he related his experience to the Czar, who was keenly interested in the story of the Volhynian sorceress.

Within 24 hours Zenobia Galatschka was visited by two police officials of her district, who communicated to her the surprising intelligence that the Czar had summoned her to St. Petersburg. She was ordered to go to the capital and to remain there until the Czar's departure and to provide for her comfort on the long journey. The news of the unusual honor conferred on Zenobia Galatschka by the Emperor spread quickly throughout the district and an immense number of admiring admirers followed the fortune-teller to the nearest station, many miles away.

On her arrival in St. Petersburg the young woman was taken to the Imperial Palace and lodged there in a suite of elegant rooms. At the first interview she was shown into the Czar's presence, where she was delighted with her powers of penetration and divination, and she was immediately installed in his favor. Since that day Zenobia, whose father was a field laborer, has been the trusted adviser of the Czar, who seeks her opinion on questions of state policy, on problems of military strategy and on all sorts of other important affairs. She occupies a suite of six gorgeous rooms in the palace, which offer a striking contrast to the miserable one-



ZENOBIA GALATSCHKA.

room hut in which she first saw the light of the world. She is waited on by a staff of eight trained servants and has probably forgotten that she herself has tried to be the rough-and-ready girl of material work in her humble home. The Czar has granted her a salary of \$10,000 a year out of his private purse, and other members of the imperial family honor her by seeking her advice.

According to the latest reports from court circles, Zenobia Galatschka is in danger of being supplanted by a theosophist named Beuninggen. Beuninggen, who was formerly a colonel in the Russian army, has contrived to at-

tract the attention of the Czar, who has manifested interest in his prophecies of the future. Beuninggen predicts that the last Pope will be deposed and the Vatican destroyed in 1933. He also predicts that America, England, Germany, France and all other great powers will be subjugated by Russia by 1933. After this date the Emperor of Russia will rule over the whole world and the sun above the power which he now possesses over his more limited dominions. The Czar was highly pleased at this prophecy and Beuninggen seems to stand a good chance of becoming No. 1 in the imperial favor.

CYRIL R. LININGTON.

One Night of Terror in New Zealand Bush

Sir Joseph George Ward, the

New Premier, Tells of a Criminal's Mistake and His Own Escape.

SIR JOSEPH GEORGE WARD, K. C. M. G., the newly-appointed Premier of New Zealand, in succession to the late Premier Seddon, who is now in New York on his way home from London, has had a remarkable career. Although only 49 years old, he has held nearly every important post under the New Zealand government. Starting in a clerkship in the postal service in 1869, he has held successively the post of Minister of Railways, Colonial Secretary, Postmaster-General and Minister of Industries and Commerce. He has also been three times Mayor of Wellington. In 1888 he went into business as a grain exporter, and is now head of one of the largest grain concerns in his country and a man of wealth.

Aside from his public career, Sir Joseph in his younger days saw a good deal of life in the New Zealand bush, and in the course of an interview at the Waldorf-Astoria he related an exciting experience he had when on one occasion he was caught at night in a remote and wild spot in a valley known as Funeral Gorge, situated near the base of the Southern Alps, in South New Zealand.

"The name of Funeral Gorge is not inviting one," said Sir Joseph. "In New Zealand you find the fact more clearly when riding down its narrow track at one in the morning on a beaten horse and in a rising rain. 'And when—just as the first angry raindrops fall and the preliminary snap of the New Zealand gun-wester dashes down the gully—the turn of a corner discloses a stranger of peculiar villainous appearance, even the trained busman has some excuse if he feels that there have been pleasanter situations in his life.'

"Such a turn makes my feelings when, while riding down Funeral Gorge late one night many years ago, I was caught in a 'southerly buster.'

"You always know when you are caught in a New Zealand sou'wester. It is like the rolling Yankees in that it is quick to make itself felt and act upon it. You could time with a stop-watch the change from a broiling nor'-wester to a storm of ice-cold rain; you could almost see the glass rise and the withered grass grow, and the rain is worth dollars a minute to the horse 'runholder.' You don't think it's going to be 'over,' or 'expect the warm weather is over'; you turn your horse's tail to the wind and gallop wildly for shelter."

"I did not hesitate, therefore, when the unkempt stranger had stumbled across me to address him, 'What's your name?'

"He was steadily enough, though I could see nothing definitely unfair in his play. I noticed, however, he held the right and left bowers suspiciously often, and occasionally 'bridged' the pace when I was about to pass him. This had given me some suspicion of sharking, and I took out the 'bridge' by gently squeezing the pack between my fingers. This increased his respect for me immensely."

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had played the title role in a scene of sensational criminal trials in the New Zealand courts. And there I was in the power of the man who would think no more of cutting my throat than of eating breakfast. His gang had carried me off robbery under arms, as an ordinary punishment for many years. Their household included a forger, two murderers, an excellent cook, badly wanted for bigamy and a gentleman who, between reprieves and escapes from jail, had received so many sentences that had he served his full time he would have been 150 years in prison."

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food and a hiding place the criminal who has been preying upon it for years.

"I had now no doubt that my life might be in serious danger. He had seen my ring upon my finger; and in a single glance had sized up the excellent hunter I had been riding, instead of the usual 'goat' horse."

"The problem that troubled me now was how I was going to spend the night with my host and insure being alive in the morning."

"As we talked he carefully examined my clothes, my shoes, the ring on my finger—in fact, everything except my face."

"He had suddenly stopped. 'Hullo! I was heavy and hung at an unusual angle, and irregular habits had set their unmistakable seal upon his brow. Yet under the rough veneer which bush life invariably produces there were traces of education and refinement. But the more I looked at him the more cold and calculating was his manner. I had seen him before, and under discreditable circumstances, though for the life of me I could not recall the occasion."

"Well, tea was over, and, with the storm shrieking furiously outside, we sat down to enjoy a quiet evening. First he invited me to throw for sixteen pence; the dice were so palpably loaded that I felt the offer to be an insult to my intelligence. He then proposed suchcease, to which I acceded for the low points, so that I could not be too readily recognized, glancing at the dice box more than once. I was not too obtrusively marked and that there were not more than six aces to the pack. I also furtively examined his coat sleeves for a secret card box or a holdout. He pressed me to sit where I should have a looking-glass behind me, and I did so, for a moment, to take a look at myself. The man known as Funeral Gorge, situated near the base of the Southern Alps, in South New Zealand.

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