

19th Century literary non-fiction

Source B

This 1894 article details the wedding of Czar Nicholas II of Russia to Princess Alexandra, which took place in St Petersburg. Their wedding was brought forward because Nicholas's father died, making Nicholas ruler of Russia. This extract reports on people getting ready to watch the procession, and their reaction once the wedding has finished.

Royal Wedding

MARRIAGE OF THE CZAR* OF RUSSIA.

BRILLIANT FUNCTION AT ST. PETERSBURG.

A Reuter's telegram from St. Petersburg says: – In spite of the dull, cold, grey weather and threatening sky the city, having put off all its morning, to-day wears an aspect of full festival.

5 Almost as soon as it was light the movement of the public began towards the centre of attraction, the Newski Prospect, the great Morskaia Prospect, and the large square in front of the Winter Palace, along which the Imperial bride and bridegroom were to pass on their way to the church. Within the precincts of the palace by seven o'clock a crowd had gathered and every moment increased in number. There was a striking note of gaiety among the people,
10 who seemed desirous of forgetting in the happy occasion of the present the prolonged mourning of the past week. The troops were already at their stations, forming loose lines through which a fair view of all that was passing could be gained. But very many people who brought benches, camp stools, and chairs, standing on which the soldiers. Then, amidst the crowd were vans and carriages on which seats could be had at a cheap rate. Elsewhere
15 ladders were propped against houses with a spectator on every other rung. The greatest good humour was displayed on all hands, and many cries and laughter passed from group to group. In Russia the windows in winter are closed and sealed with felt, and few casements* were to-day opened, but behind each could be seen beavies* of onlookers. Happily, though the sky was lowering, the streets were dry. A few moments before the clocks chimed the
20 quarter after eleven the majestic strains of the Russian National Anthem suddenly broke forth. Every head was uncovered by the time that a light open carriage, drawn by four white horses, drove past. In it was the Emperor Nicholas, in the brilliant uniform of the Hussars of the Guard. By his side was his Majesty's boyish brother the Grand Duke Michael, also in uniform. The cheering which arose was deafening. Every man shouted "Hurrah" at the top of
25 his voice. The women and children joined in.

[...]

The clocks had just struck half-past one, and at the same moment the booming of guns from the fortress announced that the ceremonies in the church were over, and that the marriage of the Emperor and Empress was an accomplished fact. Forty thousand poor people were to dine to-day at the Imperial expense. All schools and educational establishments were to be
30 closed for three days, and the theatres re-open to-morrow.

A TRIUMPHAL PROGRESS. ST. PETERSBURG, Four p.m.

35 The Emperor and his bride have just left Kasan Cathedral for the Antichkoff Palace, amid carillons* from church towers and the thunder of saluting guns. Their drive to the famous church from the Winter Palace was a prolonged triumph. The people, swayed by intense emotion, cheered and cheered again as their young Sovereign and his wife drove through their midst, and they pressed so on the edge of the troops who lined the way that the Imperial carriage was almost brought to a standstill.

Glossary

- * Czar – ruler or Emperor (sometimes spelled Tsar)
- * casements – windows
- * bebies – large groups
- * carillons – musical instruments made of many individual bells usually housed in the bell towers of churches

Sample Paper 2 Section A Question 3:

03 You now need to refer only to **Source B** from **lines 26 to 37**.

How does the writer use language to suggest this is an important occasion?

[12 marks]

This article is from the *Weekly Mail* (1st December 1894). The full text can be found online at <https://newspapers.library.wales/view/3369740/3369752/105/>.

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