

Neues Palais, 4. XII. 1903

Dearest Nicky,

Enclosed I send you some interesting material for your amusement. Articles about politics, about naval matters, a description of foods in Petersburg — which I do not know whether it is right — and an illustration magazine about the last manoeuvres. Perhaps you will find topics which will remind you of our last conversation, and show how the development of events is looked upon in Europe, perhaps sometimes different from the aspect at Petersburg. If they are old news I beg your pardon, but as you said at Wolfsgarten, it did not matter, provided it were news relating to the interests common to the surety of our 2 nations I venture to submit them to you; they come from cuttings from quite different sources and papers.

How glad I am that Alix is all right again and free from that abominable pain! The shooting results are very fine and I wish you “Weidmannsheil” with all my heart. I sent Gen.-Adjut. v. Loewenfeld to London to give the long service cross (25 years) to uncle Arthur and in the same time to reconnoitre the frame of mind and the flow of public opinion about the Eastern question. His mother is an English Lady so he speaks it very well. What he saw and heard I shall let you know.

The Officers in Command of my troops in China have been for a long time already ordered closely to survey the intercourse between Japs and Chinese Military and the growing influence of Japan with the Chinese Army, 2 days ago I got a report that the Japs are clandestinely arming the Chinese behind your and my backs against us. That they have concluded a secret Engagement with China to provide the army with 20 000 new repeating Rifles and ammunition, 40 field guns, and 12 Mountain guns (rapid firing) with ammunition to be there till next summer. The Chinese troops are drilling day and night and, as the people who watched them for instance at Pao-ting-fu saw, remarkably well! Commanded by Jap instruction officers, whose numbers are steadily increasing! Nice business! I believe the Chinese might not to be allowed to have Japs in their Army! They are sure to rouse Chinese hopes and inflame their hatred against the White Race in general and constitute a grave danger to your rear in case you would have to face a Jap. adventure on the Seashore. Begging your pardon for my liberty I have taken, I hope the Admiral of the Pacific will not be angry with the Admiral of the Atlantic’s signals, who is always on the look out! Ta, ta, best love to Alix from

Your devoted friend and cousin toujours

en vedette!

Willy.

Berlin, 11. II. 1904

Dearest Nicky,

The answer to your kind letter of congratulation for my birthday which made me so happy, was already begun, when the events occurred which led to the war between you and Japan. I thought it better to wait for some sort of communication from you, in case I should be able to answer you. The outbreak of hostilities has had sad consequences for your brave Navy, which have deeply moved me! How could it be otherwise seeing that I am Russian Admiral and proud of this rank too! Evidently the serious events show that the warning news I could send you through my ciphers were absolutely correct, and that since long the Japanese Government were in bitter earnest and decided to have war. Part of the ships at Port Arthur are known to me by my inspections, and also their officers and crew and my heart is full of sympathy for the poor families stricken by the loss of many of their number.

I can well imagine how sore at heart you must feel that all your pains to secure peace were of no avail. But on the other hand this gives you a good conscience and a clear one too, which allows a man — as I often say — to march to the fray without knapsack or impediments. It seems that Heaven — on whose help and will we both rely — has willed that it should be so! Then you must look upon the events in the light of a Trial for yourself and your country, which is to enable you and them to show and develop all the great qualities which are dormant in the Russians, which they already once proved in the great times of the first years of the 19th century!

It is my wish that — subject to your kind approval — if possible a Prince of my house should accompany your troops as spectator to learn the art of war. I would choose the Prince Fr. Leopold, my brother in-law, who is burning to go and speak Russian. Perhaps you will kindly let me know whether my application can be granted.

You may rest assured that day and night my thoughts are occupied with you all! I send this letter through Schenk — your Colonel — who is to offer you the “Grenadier Cap” which the Alexander Regiment begs you to accept. I pray Heaven may shield and protect you and all your family through coming times. Warm- est love to Alix and your mother from

Ever your most devoted friend and cousin

Willy.

The news I gave you a month ago concerning the sale of arms to China — Yowanshi-kai — from Japan is confirmed. I managed to get a copy of the contract signed last October with the Firm of Okwa and Comp. in Japan.

- 1) 14.000 new Jap. Inftry Rifles (Meyji) with cartridge boxes etc. 22 taels each and 7 mill. cartridges to be delivered at Tientsin April next.
- 2) 48 (Arisakha) field guns 7,5 at 5668 yen each.
- 12 (Arisakha) mountain guns 7,5 cm, 1710 yen each.
- 48 ammunition carts at 8 yen.
- 200 shell at 10 yen, 200 shrapnel at 8 yen per gun.

The raw steel material is boxing produced in France (Creuzot) — your Ally! — and to be finished in Japan. To be delivered at Tientsin in May next. The Vice Roy of Nanking has ordered from the same firm in September, 1903, 200 000 chests of Ammunition and Knapsacks for 70 000 Men.