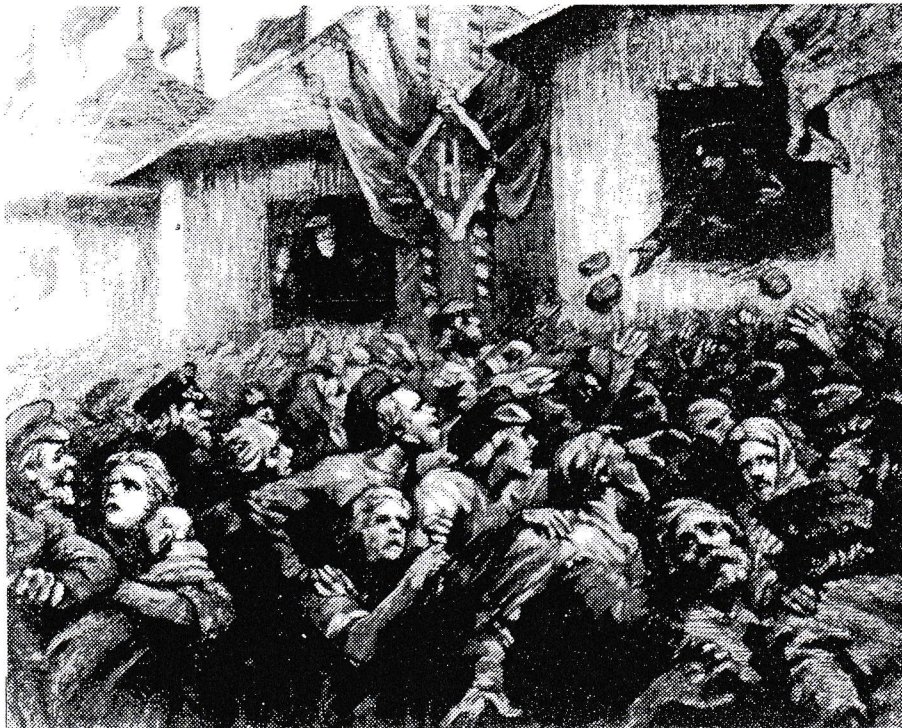


Coronation Day

From this extract, what can you tell about:

- a) Nicholas & Alexandra
- b) their subjects

Early in Nicholas and Alexandra's reign there was a terrible tragedy. Their coronation took place in Moscow in May 1896. On Coronation Day, according to an old tradition, free food and souvenirs were distributed to the poor. About half a million people gathered at Khodynka Fields to receive their gifts and to see the Tsar and Tsarina. Most of them were very poor, and when a rumour spread that there would not be enough food for everyone, there was an uncontrolled rush of people. [F] People were pushed into the open ditches that criss-crossed the fields and about 1,300 people were trampled to death in the crush. To the horror of people in Moscow, Nicholas and Alexandra were persuaded — against their own better judgment — to attend a great Coronation Ball that had been arranged for that evening, in spite of the tragedy.



[F] The disaster in Moscow during the Coronation festivities.