

or, rather, like two chess-players, deeply studying every possible move. Both are strongly entrenched, and reinforcements are moving up from East and West. The battle when it comes will probably be decisive of the issue of the campaign. It will not close the war, that is certain. For both belligerents have gone too far to recede, and Russia has a great deal more at stake than Manchuria. But the Tsar, while determined to fight to a finish, is aware of the unpopularity of the war amongst the Russian people. The symptoms of national discontent, assuming in many places the proportions of open revolt, are too plain to be misunderstood. The Tsar has accepted the true import of the outburst. The necessity of the Government is the opportunity of the friends of liberty. Against the advice of his mother (who, daughter of Denmark as she is, and sister of our Queen, is yet first amongst the reactionaries), of Admiral Alexeioff, the genius who muddled the Manchurian affair, and of M. Pobiedonostzeff, Procurator of the Holy Synod, Jew-baiter and author of the tyrannical methods employed in Finland, the Emperor has permitted delegates from the Zemstvos, or rural and municipal councils, to meet in congress and to formulate their recommendations. It was a bold course to take, and lovers of freedom in every part of the world must hope that the grandson of the Tsar who freed the serfs will be courageous enough to grant his people constitutional liberty. The suggestions—they might indeed be termed the demands—of the Congress read like the famous document of the Chartists. They embrace a constitution, guarantees of freedom of speech and conscience and a free press, the right of public meeting, enfranchisement of the people with the right of legislating, primary education for the masses, and one or two other minor privileges. So much comes to us by cable, with the further intelligence

that the Tsar has consented to receive a deputation from the Congress. The mere enumeration of the things asked for will sufficiently discover the nature of the tyranny under which the Russian people are ground down. They want nothing that the people of the British Empire and America have not possessed for more than two centuries, or what Frenchmen have not enjoyed for the greater part of a century. Their minds cannot conceive any privileges beyond those that we hold, though with them, as with us, there is a minority who will never be satisfied with any reform that falls short of the qualities of the Millenium. Theoretically the Tsar has the power to grant what the Zemstvos ask for. In practice it will be found that the decision rests with the evil geniuses that surround the Throne, including the persons named above, the host of Grand Dukes, and the leading members of the aristocracy. Such a combination has made and unmade rulers in the past, and may be trusted to act as it always has acted under certain given conditions. There has always been an unpleasant suspicion that the liberalising tendencies of the last two Alexanders was responsible for the manner of their death, the one by bomb and the other by poison.

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The American Presidential Election resulted, as most people inside and outside the Republic expected, in the return of Mr. Roosevelt by an overwhelming majority of more than two to one. The majority would have been much greater but for the sentiment of loyalty that clings to the Democratic Party, whose great traditions belong to the time before the Civil War, and are surely fading. It is abundantly evident that the American people have determined to maintain the position of the States as a world power and an enrolled member of the civilised Concert. There will be