

protested, and were silenced or forced to resign. Thenceforth the development of the new imperialism was more rapid. In 1876-77 was the Satsuma rebellion, led by General Saigo. It was not directly connected with liberalism and was personal in its origin, but its repression was followed by stringent political measures. One by one the political rights already granted were curtailed or abolished, and an open tyranny was established. Freedom of the platform and of the press was overthrown. Political meetings were broken up by the police, and public speakers were hurried off to prison at the will of petty officers. The privacy of the mails was invaded, and spies entered the homes of suspected Liberal leaders. The press was intimidated or bribed, justice was corrupted; there was false imprisonment of political opponents and no hope of redress. The powers of the local assemblies were so reduced that men of position refused to enter them. The governors of the provinces were given great powers, and became the mere creatures of the Tokio executive. The police and army were strengthened and force became the ruling policy. Taxation became more and more oppressive, the administration was grossly extravagant—in short, all the evils of political tyranny followed. The government has finally agreed to establish a parliament in 1890, but it will be a parliament with little power to benefit the people, since every change during the past ten years has been in the direction of centralization and personal government. The events of December, 1887, are only the last in a long series, and show that the right to petition has ceased to exist. The ministry stands between his Majesty and the people, and the most moderate petition is refused a hearing. Nobles and men influential in the restoration of the Emperor are denied all access to him if their politics displease the men in power. The Liberals sum up their charges in an adjective and call the government Russian.

The Imperialists are ready with their reply. The men in power are not reactionists; they are not tyrannical nor intolerant. They are the very men who have been most instrumental in the advancement of Japan. All the progress of the past is owing to their wise statesmanship. They are not even conservatives; they are leaders of young Japan. In other lands governments are goaded to reform by public sentiment, but here reforms have been in advance of popular demands. The nation follows, the government leads. The story of the past fifteen years is the all-convincing evidence of good faith. It must not be forgotten that a few years ago Japan was feudal, and even now the ignorant people know nothing of politics. Surely England is too advanced to be a safe guide at once for Asia. Men who can lead Japan from Asiatic feudalism to German constitutionalism in a single generation are not tyrants. Progress is as rapid as safety will admit. The promise of a parliament in 1890 is enough to satisfy all reasonable men. The leading Liberals are carried away with crude ideas of English poli-