

army was at last beaten it was by the Russian climate, and not by Russian soldiers. Before that, she was beaten by Persia. Going further back, Peter the Great was defeated by the Turks; and he was saved from utter ruin by the Empress Catherine through methods that were scarcely military. In his struggle with Charles XII of Sweden, Peter was also routed, although his troops outnumbered the Swedes by ten to one; and in the end he was victorious at Pultowa, only when the fatal climate and Cossack treachery had combined to decimate and betray, respectively, the heroic followers of Charles. The record of Russian diplomacy is, on the contrary, almost one unbroken series of triumphs. Occasionally in this field of endeavour Russia has been baffled, but only for a time. She has known how to wait; she has waited, and has secured what she at first desired. All that she lost in the Crimea in 1855, she regained in 1871, through her characteristic audacity. Disraeli baffled her for a time in 1878. She waited; and on the Afghan border, on the Pamiro, along the Amooirs, and in the Corea in the rich Chinese territory of Manchuria, on the New Chwang railroad and on the Han-Kow railroad, she has been uniformly triumphant. In other less known regions, Russia has been stealthily expanding her empire during recent years. A well-informed correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, of London, Eng., writing from Persia, says:—

"Russia has succeeded in checking an English loan to Persia, based upon the Customs revenue in the region of the Gulf. A "certain Power" has been looking for a coaling station in that region, and Russia is reported to have secured a sea-board protectorate that threatens our control in the Red Sea.

"The great bulk of the trade of Persia is passing into the hands of Russia. This I say deliberately, and with a full knowledge of the fact that a considerable amount of Indian produce reaches Persia via the caravan tracks of Baluchistan, and that some two-thirds of the Persian Gulf trade is in our hands. But at one time we had a firm hold upon the trade of the north, for large quantities of British goods reached Persia through Russian Caucasia. The Russians checked this traffic by prohibition Customs duties, and followed up the advantage by political action. A concession was granted to a firm of engineers for a road from Resht, on the Caspian, to the town of Kavin, in the central plateau, a point on the highway to Tehran. This road was to replace a caravan track over the Elbruz mountain, over which a heavy trade annually passed, but which, owing to the difficulties of the Kharzan heights, was by no means so extensive as might have been the case. The Russian Government saw their opportunity. Already they had an eye upon Resht, and had carefully fostered trade to that port. The Shah is not even permitted to fly other than the Russian flag if his little steam yacht leaves Enzelli—the port of Resht—for the Caspian. The Russian flag floats at Enzelli; the Russian Consul is the great official at Resht. The Governor is practically nowhere. In fact Resht is to all intents and purposes a Russian station, except that troops have not yet taken possession.

"What is the use of the road from Resht, over the mountains, and the Persian plain? Will it pay on the

basis of mere tolls? Not a bit of it. There is a road already from Tehran and Kôm, a busy caravan track, and financially the concern is a failure. No, the road is wanted for another purpose. The Russian Government has an eye on this concession, and it is now being constructed by their own engineers. It is, in fact, practically completed. And, moreover, it has been surveyed for a light railway, and constructed upon such a principle that a line can be laid down without much further difficulty. It is the beginning, in fact, of the Russian invasion. Previously the track was almost impassable in bad weather, commissariat difficulties would have been in-urmountable, none but the lightest of mountain guns could have crossed the Kharzan Pass, and these only in sections slung upon mules. Now, in a matter of a few hours, thousands of troops could be poured upon the Persian plain, within 100 miles of Tehran itself, for the mere trouble of laying down a light railway, for which the track has already been prepared. And the matter has been done so quietly as to have been almost unnoticed.

"Meanwhile surveys have also been made for a trunk line running across the north of Persia, and this also is under Russian auspices."

Is it unreasonable to suppose that the sudden, ardently expressed desire of Russia for universal peace—a desire which leaves France in the lurch, and places Germany's emperor in a quandary from which he can extricate himself only at the cost of considerable humiliation—is the outcome of a fear of a signal defeat in China at the hands of British troops, on one hand, and a desire to gain delay, in order to mature deep-laid plans, on the other? Sir William Des Voeux, in a recent letter to the *Times*, of London, Eng., says that Russia has not 60,000 capable soldiers in Asia, and that were Great Britain to give favorable terms to Japan in Manchuria and Corea, that nation, in alliance with Great Britain, could very shortly drive Russia, Germany and France out of China and Corea, bag and baggage, once and for ever. Time will tell.

FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE ASSURED.

(An eloquent address by a Western Judge).

Judge Koon, of Minneapolis, can give expression to his views upon the ordinary, everyday subject of insurance in a manner adapted to excite strong emotions in his hearers. He is credited with having aroused a perfect tempest of applause by his address upon "Insurance from the standpoint of the Assured," at the recent meeting of the National Association of Life Underwriters, held at Minneapolis. We have the pleasure of acquaintanceship with the learned Judge, and can well understand the feelings of the Chicago editor who remarks: "To say that the address was well received does not nearly express the enthusiasm aroused and the delight which was shown as the Judge went on."

From the extracts we are able to give in *THE CHRONICLE* may be gathered some idea of the forcible thoughts and well-chosen language of this eloquent Western lawyer; but we cannot reproduce his easy and effective utterance and impassioned manner.