

once misruled by the incapable, venal, and oppressive government of the Porte. Not only would such a change render foreign intrigues helpless, and secret societies useless, but it would exercise the happiest influence upon Russia herself. It is impossible that the Slave and Greek nationalities on her south-western frontier could be in the enjoyment of such a free system without creating among the Russian people a desire to possess a like freedom themselves. It might very possibly not take just the same outward forms, but in one shape or another it would assuredly make its way into the land of the czars. Russia can no more escape the influences of liberty and progress than France, Italy, and Austria have escaped them. The Bonapartes, the Hapsburgs, and all the former rulers of Italy, have had either to accept free institutions, or else have been overthrown by them. The Romanoffs equally will have to adapt their rule to the liberal movement which has overflowed the whole continent of Europe, or share the fate of those who offer to it a blind and unavailing resistance. The more completely Russia is surrounded by free nations the more certain is she herself to swell their numbers. Nor are the signs wanting that she is capable of wise and timely reform. The abolition of serfdom, the enlargement of communal and municipal liberties, the reform of civil and criminal procedure, the institution of juries, the furtherance of national education, the more equitable system of taxation and of conscription, the lessening of press restrictions, are all proofs,—given within the last twenty years,—not only that Russia has to submit to the great law of progress, but that she is capable of adapting herself to it. The formation on her southern frontier of new nationalities, freely governed and contented, in place of a system at once corrupt and tyrannical, based upon polygamy (the degradation of woman) and slavery (the degradation of humanity), cannot but be productive of good. Such a change furthers the cause not only of liberty, but of order; it is the victory alike of justice and of progress. As such it harmonizes with the interests of all Europe, and, from the latest advices, it would seem that the fearful results of a war between England and Russia would be happily averted, and all that we have been picturing as desirable for the populations of the disputed territories would be secured to them through nothing so much as the good offices of the British government,—a government which has maintained a firm and determined policy in this whole Eastern diffi-