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EDITORIAL

## WELCOME, PERSIA!

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**P**ERSIA has hitherto been known as “a buffer state” for England, or a “bone of contention” for Russia—and the Oriental population of Persia “liked it.” Occasionally, some religious fanatic killed a Shah. But that was all “in the business.” For the rest, Persia trudged, or seemed to trudge on in the old ruts. Shah succeeded Shah, and the first official act of the sovereign was, in regulation, to pick out fifteen wives from the thirty maids of “high families” presented to him to take his pick.

While all this was going on, other things were also happening, though not quite so ostentatiously. Railroads were built, many more planned; factories—not many, but enough to leaven things—were set up. Stocks were floated and “located.” The consequence was the introduction of some decidedly western notions; these wrought their effect. The upshot is the commotion now in Teheran.

The happenings of recent days in Persia’s capital are not happenings of the regulation type. When foreign armed forces invade a weak foreign territory in behalf of Law and Order, the invasion is usually brought on to collect some fraudulent debt, as Venezuela is threatened to be treated. No debt, fraudulent or otherwise, figures in the Cossack-led turmoil in Tehran. Quite freely the fact is admitted that the Cossack forces “fired upon the houses of the liberal leaders,” that “homes of liberal leaders were attacked as the pretext for later looting,” and some more such tell-tale items, prominent among which is the item that the “Persian House of Parliament has been bombarded.” All this sounds confused. Perhaps some internal American event may furnish a tip to what it all means.

In the days of Populist ascendancy, the State of Kansas was captured by the movement—that is, the movement thought it had captured Kansas. It elected a Governor; it elected a State Judiciary; and it elected a legislature. At least Populism

thought it did. When the legislature convened it was found there were nearly twice as many claimants for seats as there were seats to fill. The trick consisted in that a lot of defeated Republican members claimed to have been elected. They sought to “organize” the lower house. The Pops refused. The consequence was that in the same hall there sat two bodies, each claiming to be IT. A deadlock ensued. The Populist Governor ordered a Gatling gun to be pointed at the legislature. The gun was rolled in position, and when it was to be used it was found to be unusable. The Republicans had disabled it. Thereupon the Populist house took a recess. And then the house was broken into. The weapon used was an axe in the handle of which were burned the letters S.F.—the initials of the Santa Fe Railroad, which, of course was violently anti-Populist. The long and short of the affair was that “vested rights” found themselves endangered in Kansas, with the consequence that they resorted to physical force to secure their privileges.

It is so now in Teheran. Persia has fairly joined the Sisterhood of Nations—and the Persian Cossacks are the chaperons who are introducing her, low-necked and short-sleeved, “into society.”

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