

Nowadays, however, the railway has brought the Russians in force on to the northern frontier, and with the completion of the Great Siberian Railway, a few years hence, in place of the weak and scattered tribes of the last century, Manchuria will find a strong civilised military power weighing down upon her. Similarly steam navigation has not only strengthened the position of Russia on the Manchurian border, by enabling her firmly to establish herself on the northern ports, which she filched away from China, at a time when she was fighting both ourselves and the French; but it has brought military and commercial powers like Japan and Great Britain right up to the doors of Manchuria. Distant powers, which in themselves are yearly growing more powerful, have been brought as it were into almost direct contact with the country, which is thus being compressed by a number of forces never felt before.

The result of this new pressure must inevitably be advancement and development. It may mean the effacement of the present rulers, and the substitution of rulers with more capacity for military organisation. But in