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Taft's Task

The good work which Secretary Taft has done here in Japan, so effective in dispelling the shadows of a war cloud which, tho wholly theatrical, was none the less ominous and disturbing, is now to be continued in the Philippines, where conditions somewhat resembling those of the management of the Russian Douma confront him. He is there to open a parliament largely made up of representatives of the exceedingly small constituency of the few people in the islands taking an interest in their political future, the majority having been chosen to advance some sort of a revolutionary cause.

It would be well nigh impossible to over-estimate the influence which the genial Secretary is likely to bring to bear upon the inchoate Diet he is to meet. Apart from the irresistible power of his engaging and attractive personality, he returns to the Philippines as an old and tried friend who first won them by the promise, ever since faithfully kept that the islands under the fostering care of America should not be exploited in the interest of Americans, and that the government would look solely to developing them for the benefit and advancement of the people thereof. It has not been his fault but that of a Congress blind to the interests of everything except those of hide-bound protectionism that the promise in one regard, that of the tariff, has not been fulfilled. His fight for its fulfilment has been strenuous and persistent, and his sincerity stands unimpugned. His task in the Philippines is not likely therefore to be beset with any difficulties which the genial Tsar will not be able to surmount.

Altho too much is often made of the travels of distinguished officials and potentates, it is safe to conclude that the change in the route of the Secretary's return is by no means without significance. Such a golden opportunity to cement the traditional

friendly relations between Russia and America will certainly not be thrown away, and in this day of ententes we may be sure that an understanding of the utmost strength, which America's traditional policy will allow, will follow the visit of Secretary Taft to St. Petersburg. During the recent excitement occasioned by the recent trumped-up war scare, the attitude which Russia would assume in the absurd event escaped the attention of no thoughtful Westerner. This knowledge, combined with the fact that there is a warm spot in every American heart toward the nation which so conspicuously stood by the cause of the Union in the Civil War, will make any errand with which Secretary Taft is entrusted easy of accomplishment.