

Advance in Korea.

BY REV. GEORGE HIEBER JONES, SEOUL,
KOREA.

A general impression seems to prevail in the Church that the great war between Japan and China over Korea, the very disturbed condition of the country itself, and the recent intervention by Russia have seriously interfered with our work in Korea, and that little can be done there along missionary lines until the present undetermined political status is finally settled.

Such is far from being the case. Since July 23d, 1894, when a new order of things was inaugurated for Korea by the capture of the royal palace by the Japanese at the point of the bayonet, the attitude of each successive ministry has been one of official non-interference, while the "official" or personal attitude of the high ministers in notable individual cases, and on some occasions even as a body, has been that of extending recognition to the missionaries and their work as an important factor in the reformation of the country. When cholera was raging in Seoul the Government placed a large appropriation from the public funds at the disposal of a commission of missionary physicians and committed to them the Government measures for the suppression of the scourge. When the Government school was crowded with pupils the Ministry of Education made a contract with our mission school at Seoul for the education of such students as the king might appoint, to the number of 200, these students to be subject to the Christian regimen in force in the school. When the ministers of State, on behalf of the king, gave a great banquet last October to celebrate the Declaration of Independence from China, all the missionaries at Seoul and Chemulpo were invited.

At the present time the returns in immortal souls saved are cheering the hearts of the workers. Only three or four years ago the church at home was gladdened by the report that the Church

in Korea had doubled its membership in one year. The annual meeting, when returns for the last year (1895-96) will be in, is still to be held; but from news to hand there is every indication of a gain of 50 or 60 per cent., and a possibility that again we may double our members.

Little has been heard in the home church of Wönsan, the northeast port, where Dr. McGill has been laboring most successfully for four years. In a letter dated June 20th, 1896, to the writer, Dr. McGill says of the infant church at Wönsan:

"Dr. Scranton was here and baptized 19 persons and admitted 4 to full membership. We have had over 60 in our Sunday meeting, but about 40 or 50 is the rule. We have a number of whole families attending, and a dozen of women or more. One of the members got into prison for debt, and the members raised over 8 yen to get him out—a remarkable sign of brotherly love for a Korean. We have over one hundred probationers. I am very busy building, and also visiting the sick, having treated 2500 patients this year, and my receipts for the three months now ending will amount to 225 yen."

Dr. Scranton, as superintendent, finds himself at the head of an exceedingly busy and overworked body of men, and cries loudly for a reinforcement of six new men. Brothers Appenzeller and Bunker have more than 130 young men and boys under their charge in the college. Brother Hulbert, in charge of our press at Seoul, is working day and night, turning out thousands of Christian books and tracts, which are already being felt as a regenerating force intellectually and morally. Dr. Busted is redeeming the bright promise of the beginning of his missionary career as a successful physician of the bodies and souls of men. Dr. Folwell has intrenched himself in Pyöng Yang, the strategic center of North Korea, taking over the work which the sainted Hall bequeathed to the mission as a sacred and desirable heritage. And Mr. No-