

THE ELECTIONS.

Upon the dissolution of the Diet a heated political campaign began at once. Ireland itself is not more passionate than Japan. Murders and mobs were many. The turbulent young men found ready employment and seeming immunity. In many of the provinces the authorities and the police were strangely powerless. It is significant that the majority of those killed were of the opposition party, the government adherents taking the lead in violence. This is thought to explain the apathy of the local authorities. The government will be stronger in the new Diet, but no one can foresee the course of events. The warnings are many that the political world contains seismic forces of unknown power.

THE ATTACK ON THE CZAROWITCH.

The great earthquake agitated Japan no more than did the attack upon the Czarowitch. The assailant found no sympathizer, never was the nation more unanimous in sentiment. The attack was taken as an affront to the Emperor of Japan as truly as to the Czar. No Western people could have expressed more plainly its detestation of the act of a half-crazed assassin. Yet had the deed something of exceptional significance.

Beneath their soft and friendly manners the Japanese too often conceal passions that only await opportunity to become deadly. Young men walk the street with the mien of scholars; they delight in books, poetry, and flowers, and yet are ready with dynamite or knife to destroy men whose opinions cross their own; and with desperate bravery the assassin plans to seal his murder with his own blood, while the populace with indiscriminating praise applauds the suicide as a hero. Self-destruction atones for any crime. So statesmen must surround themselves with guards, and public men are in constant danger of murderous assaults. Nowhere does life seem, on the surface, more contented and sunny, and nowhere is it thrown away with such unconcern. The spirit of old Japan remains beneath the modern garb.

LICENSED PROSTITUTION.

Prostitution is licensed by the government, and sections of the towns and cities are given up to vice without concealment or thought of shame. Parents sell their daughters with the sanction of the authorities and agents travel through the provinces and return with troops of young girls. The destruction caused by the great earthquake gave opportunity for this traffic and prices ruled very low. At the railway stations agents from these establishments openly seek guests, and the newspapers display advertisements as a matter of course. The sentiment of the people begins to show symptoms of revolt. Years ago some Christians began an agitation and formed a society which is already large and influential. Its membership is not confined to Christians. In several provinces it has already attained its ends, and even in Tokyo the adverse majority diminishes year by year.