

Great Britain and
China.

A demonstration is being made by a powerful British squadron on the Yang Tse Kiang, which may be the precursor of a more serious movement. The necessity for such measures being taken to coerce the great Eastern Empire in the hour of its humiliation is much to be regretted, but the course pursued by its authorities seems to leave the British Government no alternative, if the lives and property of the missionaries, who are British citizens and entitled to protection as such, are to be safe-guarded. All the evidence points to the conclusion that in almost every case the Chinese officials are primarily responsible for the outrages which have been perpetrated upon the missionaries. These officials make a show of yielding to the demands of the consuls for exemplary punishment of the perpetrators, but they content themselves with decapitating, in Chinese fashion, a few of the common people who were simply their tools in the dastardly work, or who have sold their lives for the purpose. English exchanges just to hand inform us, on the authority of late Shanghai papers, that, at the largest meeting ever held in Shanghai, Rev. Timothy Richard, who has spent twenty-five years in China, affirmed that, with perhaps one exception—the Kuangsi Province—the riots had taken place in all the Provinces of the Empire, and that they had all been instigated, directly or indirectly, by the Chinese authorities. The following resolution was carried without a dissentient, and with great enthusiasm:

"That it is resolved to appeal directly to our respective Governments for protection from outrage by Chinese, and against the apparently inadequate manner in which the persons guilty of former outrages have been and are being dealt with."

Bitter complaints are made of the apathy of some of the British consuls, especially those in Shanghai and Foochow. The conduct of the latter, Mr. Mansfield, is indignantly contrasted with the energetic action of the United States Consul, Colonel Hixson.

Who are Entitled
to Protection?

This fact, if such it can be proved to be, that the outrages in China have been instigated by the authorities, and are not simply uncontrollable outbreaks and riots by those who correspond to our hoodlums, is of the utmost importance in connection with the question of direct interposition by the British Government. Anything in the nature of armed interference by Government for the purpose of forcing the Christian religion upon any foreign nation, civilized or uncivilized, would be both beyond the proper functions of Government, and inconsistent with the genius of our religion. With regard to missionaries in the treaty ports, there can be no question of the right and obligation of the British Government to protect at all cost their lives and property, simply in their capacity of loyal British subjects, and as such entitled to the same protection as those engaged in any other pursuit. The doubt, if there be any, arises in regard to those who, under the influence of missionary zeal, have gone beyond the boundaries within which protection is assured by treaty. It would seem as if any such action should be taken on their own responsibility, and that it would be both unwarranted and ungenerous for them, when maltreated in such localities, to appeal for protection, thus tending to involve the nation in difficulties brought about by their own personal intrepidity or rashness, and on their own responsibility. The only ground, so far as we can see, on which intervention by the British Government could be justified in such a case would be that China, if opposed to the admission of the missionaries to other places than those covered by treaty, should have forbidden their entrance, but must not be permitted to allow them to enter and after-

wards maltreat or massacre them. That is to say, if the Chinese do not wish the Christian missionaries to have access to the people outside the bounds within which foreigners are permitted by treaty, they must take proper and civilized means to exclude them, but will be held responsible for their maltreatment by outrage and massacre, after their entrance has been permitted.

China Yields.

After the paragraphs on the Chinese question were in type the telegraphic announcement that the Pekin Government had made a virtue of necessity and conceded the just demands of the British Government came to hand. It was, of course, out of the question that the shattered Chinese nation, if such it may yet be called, could make any effective resistance to Great Britain, or that it could be so infatuated as to attempt to do so, but it is a relief to know that England has been relieved of the necessity of taking active measures against an antagonist already humiliated. According to the despatches the Pekin authorities have yielded with a very good grace, having deprived the treacherous Viceroy of his rank and forbidden his reappointment to office, at the same time censuring and warning his subordinate officials. There can be little doubt that the example thus made in the degradation of so high an officer will go farther towards preventing the repetition of outrages in the future, than the decapitation of a thousand of the common malefactors.

The Word "Socialism"
as a Bugbear.

Commenting on certain facts stated by its London correspondent, touching the extent to which what is called "State Socialism" prevails in many British towns where the municipalities own their own tramways, and either operate them themselves or lease them for short terms of years to private corporations, the New York Tribune argues at some length to show that these are not cases of socialism proper, though the system may, for want of a better term, be described as state socialism. The aim of the Tribune's article is to point out the folly of public corporations which permit themselves to be deterred by the fear of a word from engaging in enterprises which might be undertaken and carried on by the citizens in their organized capacity with great profit to all concerned. Financial results vary in the British Municipalities which own and control their own tramways. Some make a profit by them. Others run them at an apparent loss. "But in other respects the results are uniform. The employees are better paid and better treated than under private ownership of the lines, and fares are far lower and accommodations for passengers incomparably better than in America. A cent a mile is the usual fare, and a seat is provided for every passenger." It seems absurd, yet is doubtless true, that many a good and intelligent citizen allows his prejudices to be so wrought upon by the sound of the word "socialism" that he quite fails to consider on its merits any scheme which seems to involve that dreaded system. We believe, however, that another influence which operates still more powerfully, both in Canada and in the United States, to cause municipalities to entrust to private companies the conduct of local enterprises which might be carried on much more economically, and much more efficiently, by the corporation, is the experience and dread of aldermanic incompetency or corruption. While the truth and force of this objection must be admitted, it is not sufficiently considered that the very best way to bring about a change in the quality of the aldermen is to make them more directly responsible to the people. In the case of water supplies, tramways, etc., which affect the convenience of every citizen, any marked inefficiency is sure to be noted, with the result that the citizens generally will, in self-defence, take more interest in the elections, and thus appoint the right men to those responsible positions.