

IV.—EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

The Japan-Corean-Chinese war is a conflict, the philosophy of which is not as simple as that of many conflicts; and, in view of possibly wider complications, it may be well to fix in mind a few facts.

In Corea there has been for some time a revolution, or, at least, reaction, against corruption and oppression in connection with public administration, and Japanese merchants have been among those who have suffered from such maladministration. A certain party, known as "rebels," while not assailing the king, charges government officials with making the civil examination grounds a market-place, and government an article of merchandise, raising money by selling office, and then using the proceeds of such barter for the enriching of base men.

One of these "rebels" escaped to Japan, but was lured into China, and there, by order of the Corean king, slain, and this caused an outbreak. Corea has of late years been seeking to become independent of China's control, and has had a certain recognition, as independent, from Western nations. Nine years ago the premiers of China and Japan agreed on a treaty whereby each country was not to bring military force into Corea without first conferring with the other; and both countries were to unite in any measures tending to reform and protection in Corean affairs. The King of Corea has sent annual tribute to the Chinese emperor, whose representative at the capital has hitherto wielded a commanding influence.

Japan has made no protest or opposition openly; but a few months since Japan sent a military force there to protect Japanese interests, without any conference with China. China proposed that both governments withdraw troops, but Japan rejected the proposal, and offered to join China in interfering to reform Corean matters. China in turn rejected Japan's proposition and so began the acts of hostility.

What the issue may be God only foresees. Japan is the weaker numerically, having scarce more than one tenth the population of China; but Japan is the greater master of the art of modern warfare, and has both a better-disciplined and equipped army and navy. Whether other nations, like Russia, and possibly even England and America, may not be drawn into the whirlpool of war is a question now awakening no little interest. Meanwhile the United States, Britain, Germany, and Italy seem united in preserving forcibly the neutrality of the treaty ports of China; and thus far the missionaries are unmolested.

Rev. F. Ohlinger says: "The political complications in Corea threaten to bring the 'Eastern Question' to the front. Russia wants Wonsan or Lazareff almost as badly as she wants Constantinople."

According to the *Christian Work*, a Chinaman, who wished to be baptized, when asked where he had heard the Gospel, said that he had never *heard* it, but that he had *seen* it. A poor man in Ningpo, who had been an opium-smoker and a man of violent temper, had become a Christian, and his whole life had been changed. He had given up his opium and had become loving and amiable. "So," said his neighbor, "I have seen the Gospel, and I want to be a Christian too."

Mr. W. D. Powell, evangelist, Toluca, writes: "There are 11,000,000 people in this republic; 10,000,000 of that number never saw a copy of the Bible. The majority of Mexican people are so ignorant as to be little more than children. Since I wrote to you last, one of our candidates for baptism has been killed, and another stabbed seven times and left for dead. But the work goes forward. I beg for thousands of tracts in Spanish—short, direct, simple Gospel tracts."