

criticised ; but as to the living, silence is golden. Certainly revolutions in China have been numerous, and the people have more than once shown very strongly the desire to expel foreign dynasties. But the Government has always been despotic, and a change of dynasty is only a change of masters. Thirty-five years have passed since the Taiping Rebellion commenced in China. They have mostly been years of weakness and disorder. A new period of prosperity has, however, now begun its course, and the cessation of the Chinese Emperor's minority just at this time will have caused many eyes to be directed to that country, which has so lately entered into diplomatic relations in a regular manner with all the great Powers of the West. The rebellions which have weakened it are at an end, and China is now a great Asiatic force. On February the 7th, 1887, at nine o'clock in the morning, the young monarch of that country, just fifteen years and a half old, was present at a special ceremony in the great hall of audience, where he received the homage of about four hundred princes, nobility, and officers of State, on the occasion of his personally undertaking for the first time the responsibility of government. The Empress-Regent last summer fixed this early time for the Emperor's attaining his majority, under the impression that he had shown great diligence and made rapid progress in his studies, and that the termination of the difficulties with France afforded a suitable opportunity for her to resign to him the reins of power. Her decision caused great trepidation to the Ministers, and a compromise was proposed and adopted, in consequence of which the Emperor has assumed personal authority, but the Empress assists still in the government as the Emperor's chief adviser. At the ceremony in question the Marquis Tseng, who has become so well known and esteemed in Europe for his ability and diplomatic success, was placed high among the near and favoured ones. To render the new Emperor's title valid in all respects, all was done that could be done at the time he was selected, when all the members of council signed a document by which they signified their recognition of him. China has not the law of hereditary right to settle the succession, the Government is despotic, and the Emperor can choose his own successor, but on the whole it is the eldest son who usually succeeds his father. The late Emperor was too ill to make a will, but one was prepared for him to which his consent was obtained, and the Empress Dowager named Tsaitien, son of the Seventh Prince, her younger sister's first-born. He was taken at once to the Imperial apartments where two dowager Empresses were in waiting to receive him. There he has been ever since, occupying that portion of the palace in which seven Emperors before him have resided since the beginning of the dynasty.

So much for the reigning Emperor. As to the Government, it is despotic, and is maintained by a system of examinations for the purpose of selecting persons who are "virtuous and prudent" to fill the offices of importance to the country, in which Manchos are frequently employed, but usually Chinese. The promotion of education is a secondary aim, the supply of competent officials being the primary intention. This works well for enlisting the people on the side of the existing Imperial régime, and their sympathies are everywhere with the Government. Those who do not obtain office with its emoluments obtain some amount of honour and influence through the literary degree they have secured, or some official title bestowed upon them as a reward for services rendered. The Government has titles not only for the able and scholarly, but for all military accomplishments—for the rich and successful in every branch of life. Those who can shoot well at a target, are made bachelors, masters, and doctors, just as those who can write a good essay or improvise a poem. The natural patriotism of the people is directed therefore towards the existing Government, because all are looking to it for themselves or for their relatives, with the ardent expectation that at the next scattering of honours and promotions some will fall to their share.

With regard to the Chinese Empire territorially, the boundary line across which the sons of Ham look at Russia is of immense length, in all more than 4,000 English miles. It consists chiefly of rivers for 2,000 miles, and for the remaining 2,000 of mountain chains. The river boundary is easily fixed and is as easily violated. Russia is more likely to cross the water than the mountain line, but all along both China is busy strengthening her position ; for this purpose about 5,000 men drilled in foreign fashion are maintained in the three eastern provinces. In the Manchurian Provinces a change of administration is being effected. The Chinese emigrant farmer workers have increased so much that the normal civil system of China proper, of which a tax on agriculture is the basis, is in course of rapid establishment there, and each military governor is now required to discharge the duties of the corresponding civil office.

It is easy to foresee that the old military system of Manchuria and Mongolia will be greatly modified, and almost replaced, by one whose main features are the use of foreign drill and European cannon, and a regular expenditure for frontier defence from the receipts of the foreign customs. In Chinese Turkestan similar changes have taken place. Surrounded on three sides by mountains, this region is protected naturally from foreign invasion, and the task of its defence is easier, while its agricultural qualities are vastly superior, the grass land of Mongolia being in many places exchanged for fertile gardens and cornfields. A great impulse to emigration from North China to these regions and those north and north-east of the Great Wall was given by the famine of 1876 and by the rebellions of the last thirty years. The floods of the Yellow River have also driven multitudes to such a peaceful home in the rich valleys of the north, and the work of colonising these extensive fertile tracts of land must go on increasing so long as peace shall continue. Naturally the policy of China is definitely expansive in this respect. The Government fosters emigration, and loses no time in appointing governors to new cities and colonies. Let us turn now to Corea and Japan. Corea was incorporated into the Empire in the second century

before Christ and again in the seventh century. Its inhabitants speak a language, half of which is their own and half Chinese. The same is true of the Japanese. Both nations long ago adopted the Chinese educational system. Corea is legally subordinate to China ; her king is a vassal of the Manchoo dynasty, and he and his queen receive their investiture from China. Geographically, Corea ought to belong to China, if China were able to keep it, but she has enough to do taking care of her own coast line. As to the internal economy of Corea, it is not China that can do her much good ; she had better be a neutral State, and facilities ought to be afforded to Europeans to work her coal, copper, and iron deposits, which are very abundant, with western capital and appliances. Corea could then be brought into a flourishing condition. The great coal deposits of North China are continued through the Corea into Japan, and this fact alone insures the commercial prosperity of the former.

The emigration from Japan to the Corea is steadily increasing, while very few Chinese go there, and it may be concluded from present signs that the trade of Japan with Corea will steadily augment, while the progress of maritime trade between China and Corea will be slow. China is now at peace with Japan, after some months of troublesome negotiation arising out of a quarrel which occurred last year between some Japanese and a party from a Chinese ship of war. These two Powers were glad to have matters amicably arranged, and it is only in Corea that they are likely to come into collision.

China's position in regard to the Western Powers since 1842 is an entirely new departure in her history. Her Ministers sit with the diplomatists of Europe in the same council chambers—as equals with equals—This change must have a vast influence upon her in coming times. She is too strong not to be respected, and she has treaties with all the Powers whose ships come to her shores. Towards France if she bears any malice she has discreetly concealed it, and French residents in China were during the short war of 1885 in no way disturbed. The sale by the Pope of the Peking Cathedral to the Chinese Government, with the consent of France, has greatly pleased the court ; and the French clergy in Peking are in possession of high honours conferred most cheerfully by the Chinese.

The feeling of China towards England has visibly improved. After all the mischief done by opium to China, her statesmen have none the less been quick to perceive that friendly relations with England should be cultivated. Her consent to a high duty on opium after a long hesitation was very pleasing to the Government, and the position of England in the trade with China is a security for the continuance of friendly relations between the two countries ; it amounting in the year 1885 to £26,000,000. The movement of China at the present time is a slow assimilation to the European type. She has always studied politics, and she has had political writers from the time of Confucius. Her high ethical school is opposed to free trade, and in favour of exclusiveness and isolation. The system of Confucius tends in this direction, but she is now retreating from it, and is adopting the language and attitude of a Western Power.

E. S.

SEAMEN OF SPAIN.

TAKE to your oars,
Seamen of Spain !
Bring me my lover
Across the main !
Captive he's lying
Amongst the Moors ;
Seamen of Spain,
Take to your oars !

As round your galley
The billows roll,
Wild thoughts are swelling
Within my soul ;
Hoist up the sail,
Fresh is the breeze ;
Bring me my lover
Across the seas !

Tho' cold be the water,
And chill winds blow,
My love's fire burneth
While falls the snow ;

Cleave through the billows
Fly with the breeze ;
Bring me my lover
Across the seas !

Dark rocks are frowning,
The risk is great
To thread the pass
Of the narrow strait ;
God will assist ye,
Go with the breeze ;
Bring me my lover
Across the seas !

The winter is over,
No time to wait ;
On through the pass
Of the narrow strait !
God bless the galley,
And bless the breeze,
That brings my lover
Across the seas !

—J. G. Gibson (Translation).

A JEWISH HUMOURIST.

THOUGH humour is hardly a prominent quality of the Jews, and many are possibly of Carlyle's opinion, that they have no real sense of the humorous, there is a good deal more drollery in the sayings and doings of those reared in the Synagogue than outsiders generally suppose. Be that, however, as it may, the Jewish race can claim to have produced in the person of Moritz Gottlieb Saphir, an Austrian journalist but little known in this country, the foremost wit and humourist of the German-speaking people. As ready in retort as Jerrold, as brilliant a conversationalist and raconteur as Sheridan, he was as graceful and effective a punster as the immortal Tom Hood. The right of his co-religionist, Heine, to rank among humourists is often questioned in German literary coteries ; but Saphir's pro-