

the triumph of Christianity over all kinds of unbelief and false belief will appear to be nearly complete.

The attention of the friends of Christian missions cannot, therefore, too often be called to the grave political and social changes which are now taking place in those countries, and which promise to strike a fatal blow at the superstitious religious systems of their populations. They are in the midst of a crisis which cannot fail to lead to astounding results, and which holds out prospects to the missionary efforts of the Christian churches such as they have never had before.

From China we learn that the city of Nankin, the last stronghold of the rebels, has been captured by the Imperialist troops. This will probably put an immediate end to the gigantic rebellion which has devastated the Chinese empire for many years. The hopes which a large portion of the Christian world had been induced by some of the Chinese missionaries to indulge with regard to the religious condition of the Taepings, the Chinese insurgents, have been wholly disappointed. One result only of their acquaintance with Christianity has remained—the knowledge and veneration of the Bible among large numbers of the Chinese. At the same time, the war, like so many great wars in ancient and modern times, seems to prove a turning point in Chinese history.

The imperial government owes it mostly to the advice and the aid which it has received from the governments of the great Christian countries, that it has carried the war to a successful end. Its leading statesmen have begun to appreciate the superiority of Christian civilization, and they have given during the past years many proofs of their wish to enter into more amicable relations with the Christian countries. They are introducing important reforms in all the departments of the administration. The trade of the great seaports of China is every year becoming of greater importance. It is expected that within a few years, Peking, the capital of China, will be connected by telegraph with Russia, and thus with the entire civilized world. Greater concessions have recently been made to France and other countries, and it is generally expected that soon communities of European and American Christians will not only be formed in all the seaports, but in all the important inland towns. A company for connecting a number of the large cities by railroad and telegraph has already been formed, and will greatly accelerate the advance of civilization. The liberty which is granted to the Christians of all confessions is almost unlimited. It is obvious that unprecedented prospects are thus being opened in China to Christianity.

The Japanese are seeing the impossibility of breaking off their relations with the Christian powers, and the future of the Christian congregations which have been planted there may be regarded as secured. A new embassy has been sent to France, and has bound Japan to France by fresh treaties.

In Further India, France has concluded a new treaty with the Emperor of Anam, which gives to her three of the most important seaports of the country, the protectorate over six provinces, and the promise of unrestrained liberty, for all French missionaries to preach Christianity. This treaty may, for the present, only benefit the Church of Rome, yet the indirect influence which the increase of commerce and the contact of these countries with Europe and America will exert upon its pagan population will, no doubt open a way also for the Protestant missions.

Schools, railroads, telegraphs, steamboats, and other attendants of modern civilization have almost uniformly, in modern times, displayed a wonderful power in dispelling the ignorance of barbarous countries and raising the social rank of population. We regard it as certain that they will prove equally efficient in the vast countries of Eastern Asia. An immense change is now going on in each of these countries, and we must expect that the rapidity of this change will increase every year. The missionary force which is now engaged