

periodicals devoted to the subject of missions is constantly on the increase, and most of them seem to be well supported. And, although the literature on the subject is already very large, seldom is a new book published which sheds any additional light upon it, in any of its branches, that does not find a ready and an extensive sale. These things show that the heart of Christendom is right on the subject.

CONSTITUTIONAL government in an oriental country is an almost startling novelty. So far as we are aware, it has never existed before. It is, however, now an accomplished fact in Japan. The Emperor has redeemed the pledge given to his subjects on his ascension to the throne. And after a most thorough study of the governments of Europe and America, a constitutional monarchy has been substituted for the "feudal despotism tempered by assassination" which was abolished in 1871. The new constitution has been received with great rejoicing; but, as some of the most thoughtful men among the Japanese themselves understand, in order to have a moral basis for the successful working of a popular government they must have a religion which, while it commends itself to the judgment and consciences of men, will thoroughly conserve the morals of the people. They see that free popular institutions, such as they are adopting, are really the product of Christianity, and have never been successfully worked apart from its influence. It is this which leads them to look so favorably upon the propagation of the Gospel in their country.

Editorial and Contributed.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE *Missionary Review of the World* (Funk & Wagnalls, New York) is one of the very best of the class of publications to which it belongs. The June number comes to us richly laden with valuable matter. The opening article, by Dr. Arthur T. Pierson, is an able review of the great Missionary Conference which met in London last year. While strongly affirming the unique character and incomparable importance of that great gathering, Dr. Pierson thinks that it was marred, and its usefulness impaired by certain mistakes in its management and the conduct of its business. The selection of a large number of chairmen to preside at the meetings of the Conference, with a view to putting as many people of importance as possible into positions of prominence, instead of selecting one or more persons as permanent presiding officers, with special reference to their fitness for that work, he holds was one of its most conspicu-

ous mistakes. This was a mistake of the Committee of Management, but the speakers, too, according to his view, made some mistakes. Among these, he notes apologies, the introduction of irrelevant topics into their addresses, and the flaunting of denominationalism. The multiplicity of meetings, too, Dr. Pierson thinks, was a mistake leading to more or less confusion, and the loss of that sort of unity which is necessary in order to secure that peculiar "cumulative-ness of impression" which is even more important than the unity itself. Then Dr. Pierson thinks that the Committee made a mistake in hampering the Conference with unnecessary restrictions, especially in determining in advance, that no resolutions should be introduced into the Conference. Another mistake was, that no special attention was given to what the writer calls "the great uprising of young men in our colleges and seminaries." He says, "The last five years have witnessed a sort of crusade of missions in which the main movers, the leaders, have been students." And in illustration of this fact, he adds, "As we write, word comes to us that 3,000 in our own country (the United States) alone have signified a willingness to enter the foreign field when their course of preparatory study is completed." Dr. Pierson is of opinion that more should have been made of this fact. And finally, "It seemed to many delegates a very serious mistake—so the article in question affirms—that no provision was made for permanent and closer bonds of fellowship in missionary work" in the form of a permanent Standing Committee of a thoroughly representative character, to whom might be referred many matters needing careful consideration.

Dr. Pierson's article on the mistakes of the great Missionary Conference, a summary of which has been given, will be read with interest and attention, especially by those who were present at that memorable gathering. And it will be read with all the more interest on account of the writer, who will be remembered as one of the ablest and most active members of the Conference. But few probably will, however, be able to see along the same lines with him, or to accept his conclusions. Even the appointment of chairmen, to which he objects, had its advantages. It did honor to a considerable number of distinguished men who had rendered signal service to the cause of missions, without assigning them such a part in discussions as would have practically shut out many of the humbler members of the Conference who, on account of their actual connection with the practical work of missions, had a right to be heard. As to the mistakes of speakers, which the article in question points out, they were so few as to be scarcely worthy of notice. The