

protect Japanese interests and citizens, and proceeded to look after her own affairs in that neighboring domain, while China asserted her exclusive right to help the Korean king to maintain order in his kingdom. This claim goes, according to Chinese tradition, as far back as the twelfth century before Christ, and is founded on the fact that at that remote time some Chinese fugitive of high rank found a friendly asylum on the peninsula, after which time the Chinese emperors—for such seems to have been their peculiar notions of what constitutes rights of possession—have claimed the country as an integral part of the Flowery kingdom. Japan's claims do not go as far back as these, and they are founded on successful invasions—the right of gunpowder, as Mr. Spurgeon used to say—and although the Japs were afterwards virtually driven out of the country, they never considered the title to it forfeited. Korea seems to be a case of Alsace-Lorraine in Asia.

But this fact alone would hardly have determined the mikado of Japan to let slip the dogs of war. It is claimed that he was almost forced to do something in order to divert the attention of his own subjects from the internal administration, in order to prevent rebellion. The fact is that the millions inhabiting the Japanese islands have not been able to follow the rapid strides of civilization that have been taken among them. A great number view the decay of the old institutions and the progress of foreign customs with dissatisfaction. There is fanaticism enough left in Japan to kindle a flame of hatred against those who grant to Christian religions privileges which they think are due only to their own. The war was therefore declared, it is thought, in order to save the new-planted civilization from the tempests of rebellion, the mikado rightly judging that if he were successful he would so endear himself to the masses of the people that internal disturbances would be impossible for a long time to come. The last Napoleon made the same calculation when he staked all he had left on a war with Germany. He failed miserably. The Japanese Napoleon may win.

It is but natural, as the world goes, that a contest between the two Asiatic powers should follow in the wake of the progress of civilization. Japan has done everything a power could do to lift the nation to a position of intellectual supremacy in her part of the world. And her success has been phenomenal. But among kingdoms, as between individuals, intellectual superiority alone is useful only so far as it can place its possessor in a position to command respect by its neighbors and all the world. The progress of western civilization in Japan, therefore, carried with it the necessity of testing at some time whether China or Japan should be the first power in Asia. If this war, then, is looked upon as a "kultur-kampf," a wrestling match between modern western civilization and a civilization of ages past and gone, it will be interesting to follow its progress and watch its termination. The result will be of world-wide importance.

It has turned out that Russia—as the News surmised when the first war rumors began to fly—is particularly intent on the struggle. She has suddenly

discovered that she has some interests in Korea, of which no one was aware formerly, and it is a clear case that whether China or Japan carries the final victory, Russia's purpose has been served. She will obtain an ice-free port as a terminus to the Siberian railroad, unless indeed Great Britain should discover that she, too, has vital interests in Korea and prevent the Bear from preparing a lair on those coasts. Considering Russia's latest official declarations, it is evident that Japan has from the first been secretly encouraged by diplomats from St. Petersburg.

As to the probable outcome of the war, nothing can as yet be said with certainty. At first sight it looks as if the Chinese with their vast numbers could surely force their enemies to defeat. But there are many things to consider. The Chinese are not united. Millions of them consider the reigning dynasty usurpers and would not hesitate to seize an opportunity of rising in rebellion. The viceroy is also hated in the country. He is by many considered a fraud who has enriched himself by oppression. In Chinese imagination Li Hung Chang, once a poor man, now possesses two small mountains, one of gold and one of silver, and all this fabulous wealth the result of robbery. He is therefore by many regarded as a tyrant and his downfall would be hailed with joy. Then it is well known that the Chinese ships, although first class in many respects, are armored with English compound armor, considered inferior to common steel. The naval officers are as a rule appointed without regard to ability, many of the incumbents being wholly ignorant of naval duties. They are known in the country for their insolence to the tradesmen and other people on shore, and it is asserted that their defeat is looked upon with satisfaction by the lower classes of the people. Besides, the soldiers themselves, with all their superstition, are not always reliable. So that, all things considered, the odds would seem to be in favor of the Japanese. These have taken advantage of China's rather unprepared condition and thrown their force against her with great success so far. However, unless China offers to conclude peace on Japan's terms, the war is likely to be a long one, and to be filled with incidents of carnage on land and sea, such as are heard of only in the wars of savages.

#### VITALITY IN VARIETY.

With the elevation of Sir Charles Russell to the exalted place lately left vacant by the death of Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, England has an Irishman as lord chief justice, a Jew as lord chancellor, a Scotchman as prime minister, and is likely to have another as leader of the House of Commons should Sir Wm. Harcourt retire, a step that is quite probable. Noting and commenting upon this monopoly of all the high posts of the British empire by Scotchmen or Irishmen, the *Review of Reviews* ironically suggests that the English will soon be of as little account in their own country as Americans are in their city government.

The sarcasm may, not in truth, be quite so biting as its literal terms would indicate, but it cannot be deemed as altogether without a sting. Nevertheless, it opens up a wide field for thought and reflection. True it is that if the United States today had to depend upon native Americans for the brain and the brawn, the intellect and the industry, the sturdy foundation and the more ornamental superstructure of the body politic and the nation, many of the evidences of present greatness would be wanting. Demagogues, and only such, mouth about the dreadful effects of the incursion of "foreign hordes," and the dire effects certain to follow this invasion of the New World by the overplus of the Old. But sensible men—observers, students, philosophers and statesmen—recognize the inestimable and the inextinguishable debt that this country owes to the infusion of foreign blood. Where would the Republic be without the thrifty Northmen from the Scandinavian countries, the stout peasantry from Germany, the keen-witted and cheerful sons of Erin, the honest, industrious Briton and Scot? Puritan blood in the North and cavalier blood in the South would hardly have sufficed for the many and various calls that have been made upon our patriotism and in the building up of the nation. While some classes of immigration have been objectionable, and while the time has perhaps come when restrictions should take the place of the freedom with which our gates have been thrown open to the migratory world, it will not be denied that so far as the balance sheet of the past is concerned, the advantage has been decidedly ours. What is true of continued in-and-in breeding in the more useful branches of the brute creation is equally true of the human animal; the race deteriorates in strength and ambition, in courage and energy, in force and beauty. New blood, even if not always as blue and as pure as the strain with which it is mixed, is not by any means to be classified as an evil; if it only be healthy and sound, it is certain to prove a profound benefit. Recurring, in conclusion, to the high honors held by Scotchmen and Irishmen in the British government, the English are to be congratulated that the requisite talents are still to be found among their fellow-citizens of the same empire. The fact would seem to postpone for a time at least, the necessity of another Danish invasion or a second Norman conquest.

#### MISS FIELD'S PREDICTIONS.

Twenty months ago Kate Field was asked a number of questions as to certain American conditions, celebrities and problems as they would exist a hundred years hence. Among other queries propounded were: "What American now living will be most honored in 1993?" "Where will be our greatest city?" "What about temperance legislation?" etc., etc. Miss Field answered them, at the time, according as whim or ability suggested, and now in the latest issue of her paper she resurrects her forecast of nearly two years ago, observing that in the light of today several of the