

CHINA'S PARTITION.

The question, Will China be divided? is the issue which the war with that country brings to the front, says the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. In a large degree the answer to this lies with our nation. The report that the United States has been asked to join with the European powers in the partition, and to signify what part of China it would ask as its own portion, is probably not correct. There is not the slightest doubt, however, that the only thing which stands in the way of China's partition at the present moment is the consent of the United States. It is easy to see that the Chinese Government is dexterously playing into the hands of the enemies of its country. Its resistance to the American and European sailors in China, who are there for the purpose of protecting their own citizens, will put the world against it, and hasten the day when, unless the reform influences begin soon to assert themselves, the division of that country has to come as a measure of protection to civilization. The only barrier which stands between China and division at the present moment is the consent of the United States.

China's own acts are making the position of the American Government as her defender against spoliation more and more difficult. Her troops are fighting against the Americans, and some American lives have been lost in the warfare which is under way. Much American property has been destroyed. At the present moment half a dozen of the foremost nations of the world are arrayed against China. It is not the Boxers whom the United States, England, Russia, Germany and France are fighting at the present time, but the Chinese Government itself. China's authorities have taken the side of the recent rebels, against her government. This is the circumstance which makes the situation in China serious. The Boxers could easily be put down even by a small force of the international army and navy which are on the ground, but the interference of the Chinese Government in behalf of the reactionary elements gives the situation an aspect for which none of the nations, with the exception of Russia seems to have been prepared, or expected.

This is the aspect of the Chinese situation which has the greatest concern for the Americans. The United States has a decided interest in the rescue of her citizens who are imperiled. The lives of some of them probably have been lost already. But Chinese resistance will quickly be overcome in any case. The Chinese officers who are responsible for the attacks on the foreign armies will be degraded, and some of them may be executed. The leaders of the United States and of the other nations which are taking part in the trouble will float over Peking. Then the divergence of sentiment between the United States and the other countries will come. This country simply wants the reform elements to be restored, and as in the case when the recent Emperor was in power, England will undoubtedly stand with the United States on this point. But England at the present moment has her hands tied, to some degree, in the South African trouble, and she will be unable to act with the same decision as on ordinary occasions. Most of the continental European nations will probably suggest division of the empire, and will be more than willing to allow the United States a share of the territory as the price of her consent to the partition. On this point the position of this country may be stated with the utmost confidence. The United States will neither enter into any alliances with the rest of the nations, nor will she accept any territory in China or any other part of Asia. The military aspect of the Chinese problem, notwithstanding the dark outlook which it has today, will be soon settled. Then will come its purely political phases, and these will be much more delicate and difficult than the features which are at this moment at the front.

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