



CHINA.

Of all rebellions the most blood-thirsty and destructive have ever been those occasioned by religious fanaticism. The most horrible atrocities and barbarities have been committed by those who consider it their highest religious duty to avenge the insults offered to their respective deities. Lashed to madness by their estimate of the enormity of the offence, they forget for the time that it argues very ill for the almighty power of their particular gods to imagine that they are not able to avenge themselves sufficiently; and they perform this imagined religious duty with infinitely greater zeal than they exercise over others. The hatred to the missionaries in particular, and foreigners in general, appears to have been the origin of the disastrous state of affairs in China at present. Here we have a nation whose industrial resources are enormous, allowing herself to be utterly disorganised and worked up to such a pitch of suicidal fury as to practically fit herself in the battlefield against the rest of the world, by bands of rebels, whose boast is that they are sworn to "protect the Heavenly Dynasty and drive the devils into the sea." That the result, as far as the nation herself is concerned, can only be her partition between the Powers if she persists in this course, is generally conceded, but the destruction of life and property, and the complications which must accrue before peace and order can be again restored are not pleasant to contemplate. The comparatively easy defeat of China by Japan in the recent war caused the Powers to set a very low estimate on the military resources of

these teeming millions, and drew attention completely off them. They, however, with the imitative faculty which is strong within them, have not been slow to take advantage in the meantime of the costly lessons they learnt, and have busied themselves unremittingly in acquiring greater proficiency in military matters, and the latest improvements in arms and ammunition.

THE NATIONAL ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION.

THE selection recently made of Lieutenant R. F. Scott as commander of the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition appears to be a wise one. It is a position for which very few men have all the requisite qualities. The dangers that have to be encountered require consummate courage and coolness. The man who knows exactly how to do the right thing at the right time and place when in exceptional circumstances and surroundings, is by no means easy to obtain. Lieutenant Scott entered the navy as a boy of fifteen, and has seen considerable service during the fifteen years he has been at sea. He is reported to be a perfect seaman, equally at home at steaming or sailing, an enthusiastic explorer, an excellent organiser and leader of men, and to have a good practical knowledge of all matters likely to be of use to him in his present responsible position. Dr. J. W. Gregory, Professor of Geology in the Melbourne University, accompanies him as head of the scientific staff. His explorations in Spitzbergen, Africa and North America have stamped him as an able and enthusias-