

the Boxer outbreak, were stigmatised as alarmists, whilst those who pooh-pooed the chances of trouble were afterwards abused for their want of foresight. The same will happen again at the present time, the fact being that prophets fail to realise that there are such thousands of unforeseen circumstances that none can foresee, which will divert popular feeling and action into unexpected courses. This makes it wrong to make definite prophecies, as their fulfilment is a pure gamble, and it is only the irresponsible man, with a limited local knowledge, who ventures to do so. If he turns out to be right he can say "I told you so," whilst if he is wrong his prophecies are too unimportant to be remembered. At the present time it is universally admitted by all who know China that the country has never been in such a rotten state, and that the experiment of a republic has proved a most dismal failure. The people, especially the upper classes, are not educated up to the requirements of a liberal form of government, and it will be many years before they attain to it. Not only do all the evils under the Imperial regime still exist, but they are multiplied, owing to there being many heads instead of one. In the old days millions poured into the Court at Peking, and a good deal of the money was spent in the service of the State, whilst smaller sums, more or less regulated by precedents, and in a sense recognised as legitimate perquisites for underpaid officials, were received by officials. At the present time the millions go into the pockets of the bigger officials, such as Chang Tso-lin in Manchuria, Wang Chan-yüan, late governor of Hupei, and