

clash in every direction. One solution, to give one country, which can only be Japan, a mandate to act, would probably not be agreed to, and probably, after their experience in Siberia, the Japanese themselves would not be willing. Even supposing the Powers were unanimous, they could not act without a force to carry out their reforms. The question is, Where is this force to come from? The tendency is to scrap ships, reduce the number of soldiers as far as possible, and economise in every way. Intervention therefore would mean a big increase of expenditure, which might and probably would be opposed to public opinion. It is easy enough to call for foreign intervention, but will the taxpayer at home submit to paying the bill? Under the Manchus there was a definite Central Government, and after the Boxer troubles an allied force of between 50,000 and 70,000 soldiers was able to coerce the Manchus by occupying Peking, Pao-ting Fu and Tientsin, but this state of affairs no longer exists in China. If effective intervention is impossible under present conditions both at home and in China, the only thing is to try and reform very gradually and to move very slowly.

Some people advocate the disbandment of soldiers, but they do not suggest what provision is to be made for the men when disbanded. Previous efforts have shown that men so disbanded have gone off with their arms to swell the number of brigands. It is an undoubted fact that there are far more soldiers in China than are necessary, and that they have an unlimited supply of rifles of all sorts, Mauser pistols, etc., whilst the brigands are