

VII. ASIA AND AFRICA

CHINA—On the publication on May 1 of the terms of the **new constitution** (see last RECORD, p. 384) it was seen to confer upon the president even greater powers than had been anticipated. He was specifically authorized to declare war and conclude peace, while his power over the budget and finance were limited only by the concurrence of a legislature, of which the upper house, or Council of State, was to be nominated by the president, and the lower house, or Chamber, was to be chosen partly by a system of indirect election and nomination which virtually precluded all popular influence, and partly by appointment by the president and the provincial governors; the convocation and dissolution of this legislature was, moreover, placed entirely in the hands of the president; the office of premier was abolished.—On June 20, the **Council of State** was inaugurated with great pomp—It was reported that in May a systematic restoration of the officials of the **Manchu regime** to their former places was being carried out; and this was in part admitted by the administration, which declared, however, that no return to the practices of the old régime was contemplated.—The depredations of large **bandit armies** continued, that of "White Wolf" (see last RECORD, p. 384) devastating, in May and June, large areas in the provinces of Shensi and Kansu and looting several cities. Several times, the capture of "White Wolf" was reported, but apparently incorrectly.—**Mutiny** in the army accompanied by looting and outrage manifested itself in Chili and Shansi and was only partially suppressed by the government.—The state of confusion ensuing from the impotence of the government was taken advantage of by many exiled **revolutionists** to return to their former centers of activity, and in August the government appealed to the foreign legations to prevent enemies of the government from taking refuge in foreign settlements.—In October it was rumored, moreover, that the government was again in financial straits, the proceeds of the five-power loan being nearly exhausted.—The continuance of **normal economic life** over large areas of the country in spite of political disorders was evidenced by the apparent eagerness of foreign capitalists to finance new railway construction (see *supra*, p. 727) and by the rapid prosecution by the government of domestic railway projects.

JAPAN—Following court proceedings against the naval officers and others accused of **corruption** in the purchase of naval supplies (see last RECORD, p. 383), Admirals Yamamoto and Saito were placed on the reserve list, because of alleged negligence, while Vice Admiral Matsumoto and Captain Swasaki, the officers directly implicated, were sentenced to prison terms.—An unexpected strike of **oil** in the Nippon Oil Company's fields in the Akita district, gave promise of so enormous a yield as to make probable the change of the country from an oil-importing to an oil-exporting basis, and the complete independence of the military and naval organization of foreign sources of supply.—The decision of the government in favor

of participation in the European War, was reported to have been received with great popular enthusiasm; on September 7 a war credit of \$26,500,000 was voted by the Diet.

PERSIA—The complete financial collapse of the government in June was avoided only by the advance, by Great Britain, of \$250,000, to be secured by the customs and to be applied in part to the full payment of the gendarmerie.—In a number of districts no steps were taken to carry out the instructions of the government for the holding of elections to the Mejliss, and in many other districts there were irregularities. Shortly before the coronation of the new Shah, however, on July 21, a quorum for the Mejliss was obtained.

[For colonies and dependencies in Africa and Asia, see the United States, the British Empire and the Continental European states, *supra*.]

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