

and acts under the direct sanction and name of the Emperor in his dealings with the Governments of the Treaty Powers. He comes first to this country, where he will arrive in a few weeks, and from whence, on the conclusion of his negotiations, he will depart for Europe. There is no doubt that he will be recognized and well received by all the European Governments, from the fact that the Ministers of the several Powers represented in China at once accepted his appointment in the most cordial and favorable manner. His appointment is for life, his salary large, his suite imposing, and his work has a bearing on the future of the great Oriental Empire that may soon revolutionize its history and change its entire relations to the rest of mankind.

The Extraordinary Step of the Chinese Emperor—Mr. Burlingame's Mission.

Our two active correspondents at Peking, (China,) furnish the readers of the TIMES with the first full account of the recent extraordinary action of the Imperial Government of China in appointing an American citizen and functionary (Mr. ANSON BURLINGAME) to the high and newly-created position of Ambassador to all the Great Powers of the West.

We do not think our correspondents overrate the immense importance of the step which has been taken by the Emperor of China.

In its relation to the growth of modern civilization in the greatest and oldest Empire of all history—in its relation to the extension of commerce, the development of liberal ideas, the spread of Christianity among the four or five hundred millions of souls who constitute the Chinese Empire—we are inclined to accept all that is said by those who have studied the matter on the spot, and who clearly comprehend at once the nature of the influence that will be exerted, and the character of the people upon whom it will act.

Within the last ten years China has begun to make strides of which few in America have any conception. Though harassed by two rebellions, both of them of huge proportions, the Government has been constantly engaged in pushing forward the preliminary measures for the introduction and establishment of those great ideas in modern science and law which, within the present century, have revolutionized Europe. The knowledge, and the discoveries, and the inventions, and the arts, and the learning, and the religion, and the methods of the "outside barbarians," have been made subjects of study by the great scholarly and official classes of the Empire; and though, according to our fast notions of things, comparatively little may have been effected, yet the commencement which has been made must, from the nature of Chinese institutions, have been a matter of far greater difficulty than all that remains of accomplishment. In many respects, the Chinese Government is really exceedingly liberal and progressive. The very fact that the official and governing class is the learned and scholarly class of the Empire, is a circumstance that must of itself insure a certain amount of enlightenment in the administration of public affairs. If there appear to us to be a vast and impenetrable *solidity* about everything Chinese, we must make some allowance for it by the vastness, and weight, and age of the whole machinery, while at the same time we are quite willing to concede that things there do not move as friskily as in the high-pressure countries that may be blown to pieces a thousand times while China continues her stately existence!

But, in appointing Mr. BURLINGAME to the great duty of establishing her diplomatic relationship with the other nations of the world, and in making preparations for opening up her dominions to the science and light of the Nineteenth Century, China has taken a startling advance as sudden as it is decisive.

The new Ambassador has already left the Chinese Capital for the purpose of assuming the duties of his mission. As an Ambassador, he is clothed with plenipotentiary authority.