

ly, and to such good purpose, set about the work of their own reform; but the chance introduction of steam and electricity has made possible what years of bitter experience seemed unable to accomplish. Those provinces which have been hitherto separated by the barrier of distance from the heart of the Empire, are now being drawn closer and bound together by the iron bands of telegraph and railway. Those famous old viceroys, who turned themselves into miniature emperors, who formed an "*imperium sub imperio*," and defied the emperor's decrees, are now powerless in the grasp of a central power; and where formerly flourished the many-headed monster, Anarchy, a determined and long-armed government now distributes justice to the furthest boundaries of the Empire. Small wonder, then, that we hear of Chinese graduates in the great colleges of Europe and America; small wonder that far-seeing governments are hastening to proffer friendship, to obtain a place in the councils of the Empire. Great and powerful as Japan has become, China will be yet greater, for hers is a nation of thinkers and her great men can rank with the great men of the world.

The reality of the progressive movement cannot for a moment be doubted. For the first time, in the history of the Empire, the central authority has been enabled to enforce its decrees; for the first time the Provinces are actively and whole-heartedly engaged in furthering the Imperial policy, in anticipating the Imperial pleasure; China is beginning to "think imperially." She is knitting her disintegrated Provinces with iron rails and electric voices; she is extending the hand of friendship to modern education and religious freedom, and

she is building up her army and navy on the most approved European models. What a vast field, what limitless possibilities seem to open up before a nation like this; an extent of a million and a half square miles, sheltering over four hundred millions of industrious people, producing and consuming three staples of food and clothing, wheat, rice and cotton—and three staples of luxury and comfort, silk, hemp and tea. When we mentally review this picture, when we think of China's myriads of toiling people, her unequalled area of fruitfulness, her vast resources hitherto practically "untapped," we can dimly conceive the effect on the balance of the world when this great force, hitherto inert and dormant, shall thrust its bulk into the delicately adjusted mechanism of our international and commercial system. One nation, exceeding in population the whole continent of Europe, comprising one-third of the population of the entire globe, composed moreover of people who have shown themselves the industrial equals of any upon earth, united by one common bond of nationality, the servants of one common emperor, and actuated by one common impulse, to raise their country to the front rank among the nations. Were we possessed of the magic carpet, and able to fly into the future and there, from some lofty, solitary pinnacle, review the world and all the nations of the world, what should we see? On the one side the nations of the West, powerful, proud, but isolated in their jealousy, each suspicious of her neighbour, each working for her own ends. On the other China, an awakened, electrified China, strong, alert, united, her people unweakened by internecine strife and international jealousy, sum