

PORTLAND, OREGON, SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 17, 1906

Awake At Last After A 2000 Year Sleep. What China is Doing to Recoup Its Lost Position.

"Now, however," says Kang Yu Wan, president of the Chinese Reform Association, who is making a tour of the world in search of suggestions of enlightenment, "China is no longer in the dark ages. Our country has already reached the point where Japan was only twenty years ago, after years and years of endeavor.

"We have now, for example, more than 20,000 Chinese students pursuing modern courses of study. As to common schools, some 6000 have been started in one province of Canton. There are now 4,000,000 Chinese who can speak English.

"Our courts are being remodeled after the English and American systems. We have appropriated to our use more than 10,000 American and European text books, technical works and treatises."

Three influences have combined to arouse China to new life and activity—the personal influence of the Empress Dowager, the example of Japan, coupled with the results of the Russo-Japanese War, and the imperative demands of commerce. The most potent of all, perhaps, is the work of this Empress, since it has given official sanction to movements that otherwise might have resulted in failure.

Elizabeth of England and Catherine of Russia rolled into one would scarcely have furnished a counterpart to this most marvelous woman of modern times. Doubtless later generations only can determine accurately her services to the world and her country.

And yet, only a short time ago, she formed the chief obstruction to the march of progress in China. In 1898 the young Emperor, impressed by the need of reform and advancement in Chinese affairs, formulated steps that promised to inaugurate a new era in Chinese history.

The Emperor's Plan

Merit was to be the one requisite of official appointment and promotion; sinecures—that curse of the empire—were abolished; schools of Western learning were to be established everywhere, often supplanting temples of the old religion; national colleges of agriculture, commerce and industry were to be instituted; railroad and telegraph lines established, and a reorganization, with modern systems of training, adopted for army and navy.

At that time the old reactionary and traditional influences proved too strong to be overcome. The improvements savored too much of the Occident, of hated foreign devils. So the young Emperor was virtually dethroned and the old Dowager Empress assumed control of affairs.

Then followed the famous Boxer uprising and the aggressive display made by the enlightened nations of the world. While China was yet thinking over this demonstration the war between Japan and Russia began, with an almost uninterrupted series of successes for the Japanese.

It began to filter into the Chinese brain that Japan was her superior in warfare as well as in commerce and the industries, and that superiority had been gained by the amputation of aged traditions and customs and a determined effort to keep abreast of modern civilization.

In other words, China awoke to the realization that she had been asleep while her neighbors were awake and doing. One of the first to appreciate this was the aged Empress.

Whereupon she changed front with the swiftness that can only be attributed to a woman. As earnestly as she had opposed progress before she began laying the foundations of China's future greatness.

She welcomed an infusion of foreign talent and outside ideas. Now there is scarcely a department of government without a staff of foreign advisers, particularly departments whose officials have not received foreign education.

Foreigners at a Premium

Foreigners are now at a premium as instructors in the colleges and universities. Native Christians who have received modern educations in the mission institutions are not sufficient in number to supply the demand.

Under imperial edict great numbers of Buddhist temples are being converted into modern schoolhouses. Compulsory education has been recommended. Schools for the education of girls—unheard of before—are being opened in many of the large cities.

Some months ago it was asserted that the Empress had become a convert to Christian Science. Whether this is true or not, she has evinced a deep interest in the Occidental mission schools and hospitals, and has bestowed upon several such institutions the patronage of her favor.

One of the greatest drawbacks to Chinese development is the multiplicity of dialects employed in that country. The general Chinese language is primitive; it is unsuited to a modern nation and inadequate to the demands of many of the arts, sciences, professions and general activities of modern civilization.

Chinese is an ideograph language, the written characters standing for ideas, rather than letters, and syllables based upon sounds of a written language.

People of one province cannot understand those of another. Between Foochow and Amoy, for example, a distance of about eighty-five miles in an air line, there is a different language for every twenty-five miles of the distance.

Obstacles in the way of national progress imposed by such diversity of dialects are being recognized now. All over these portions of China affected by Western civilization and progress.

(CONTINUED ON INSIDE PAGE)

LIKE a giant Rip Van Winkle, China, the traditional sleeper among nations, is arousing from a nap of several thousands of years.

As yet this giant, having only begun to yawn, does not realize the strength and potential possibilities in his long-bound limbs; the soporific influence of centuries of inaction has spun cobwebs over his brain. Still, the awakening and the unexpected grasping of opportunities promise the international sensation of the twentieth century.

For instance, he already appreciates the importance of modern political methods, and is arranging to grant a liberal constitution to the people. No longer will slow-moving canal and river boats and camel caravans suf-

fice to transport the natives' commerce; railroads are being built. Banks, planned after American and English models, are being established to encourage the spirit of thrift, investment and business enterprise.

Education is reaching out to new fields. The young men of China are seeking enlightenment in the universities of the world. Mining properties are being developed, commercial enterprises are taking on new life. The army and navy are being revolutionized to meet modern conditions.

For the first time in its long career—and it covers a greater expanse of years than that of any other country of today—China is responding to the teachings of enlightenment, civilization and progress.

WHERE China a comparatively insignificant nation, her destiny depending entirely upon the good will of her neighbors, the international problem that is now developing would not be of such vast importance.

Here, however, is a country comprising between 300,000,000 and 400,000,000 people, with natural wealth and advantages undeveloped, with possibilities that are so great as to be problematic.

It is known that coal and iron abound in

China; that gold, copper, silver, platinum and natural gas are important national assets. Labor is so cheap that development of these industries may revolutionize the industrial markets of the world.

Heretofore the great need has been for foreign capital and enterprise to develop these resources. Under former conditions this was next to impossible. Outside money refused to seek extensive and permanent investment in places where it had little or no protection.