

ANSON BURLINGAME.

Some Pleasant Personal Recollections of his Life in Berlin—His Enthusiastic Americanism.

From the Rochester Democrat, March 22.

The following interesting details of the life and character of the late ANSON BURLINGAME, we are kindly permitted to copy from a singularly discriminating private letter, written to a gentleman in this city, by one who knew quite well the Minister and his family, while recently at the Court of Prussia:

BERLIN, Thursday, Feb. 24, 1870.

While I write this letter, you will be reading the sad announcement of Mr. BURLINGAME'S death. The tidings have sent a thrill of awe and grief through every circle in Berlin. I went to Sans Souci yesterday, and upon my return found a telegram from EDWARD I. BURLINGAME, saying simply: "My father died this morning. WALTER has not arrived." It was only last Monday that WALTER, the younger son, set out for St. Petersburg upon receiving a dispatch announcing that his father was ill and desired to see him. The journey requires forty-eight hours, and he arrived too late. At the time WALTER started no one seemed to feel any particular alarm for Mr. BURLINGAME, as he was a man of great power and vigor of body. I remember now a certain remark of his at the Hotel de Rome, just before he left Berlin. It was this: "I have arranged treaties with the United States, with England, France and Prussia, and if I were to die now it would matter but little." To him, indeed, but little, but to his beautiful wife, and his two sons and an only daughter, who never knew of her father's illness until he was dead, who shall say how much. It would be presumptuous for me to attempt to estimate his character, since I knew him but three months, and yet I should like you to know some of the impressions I received. One of the most striking traits of his character, I think, was his positive, enthusiastic Americanism. The first day I met him he talked of America and of the grand prospects and possibilities before her, and the last evening of his stay in Berlin he spoke longingly of the time when his wanderings in Europe and dealings with crowned heads should be ended, and he might return to the unassuming quiet of an American home. Upon men whom European life had denationalized and converted into prigs and snobs, he looked with pity rather than contempt; and to all such he constituted himself a kind of missionary and tried to bring them back to sense and decency. Any worthy invention, or manly deed, or brilliant thought in science or philosophy, which in any sort added credit to America, he seized upon with eagerness, and remembered with patriotic pride. The attentions and flattery which he received would have turned the heads of most men, but the splendor of courts and the pompous ceremonies of the old world seemed only to deepen and intensify his republicanism. The statement that he accepted the high office to which he was called by the Chinese Government, in order that he might do the more honor to his own country was evidently no idle assertion. If the opinion ever obtained in America—and perhaps it never has—that Mr. BURLINGAME was willing to sacrifice the interests of the United States to those of China, it was a sad mistake and cruelly unjust. He labored for the highest welfare of both—a welfare in accordance with the broadest benevolence and humanity. His official position never interfered with his duties as a citizen of the United States.

In a social point of view, I think Mr. BURLINGAME was one of the most fascinating of men. His politeness was not Frenchy nor diffusive, but always simple, manly and sincere. I doubt whether he had a personal enemy in the world, and numbered among his personal friends were—all who knew him. In that little group of young Americans who met last night at the room of one of their number, who was to go to St. Petersburg and carry expressions of sympathy from the rest, there was not one who did not feel that he had met with a personal loss. The German Professors and others to whom he had endeared himself seemed deeply affected. The Queen of Prussia immediately telegraphed her condolences to Mrs. BURLINGAME. He had also in a pre-eminent degree that rare courtesy which sets people at their ease and enables them to show their real colors. Of affectation and presumption there was not a trace in his character. Like all men who accomplish anything noble, he had the power of excluding care from his hours of recreation. To see him in private it often seemed as if he had nothing to do but to be merry. I well remember how assiduously Mr. HILL and myself tried to teach him to blow smoke rings, an accomplishment which he had neglected to acquire.

Yet, in spite of his enjoyment of these hours of leisure, he was sadly overtaxed. From 12 o'clock at night till 9 o'clock in the morning was the only time when he was really secure from interruption, and it was during these hours that he did the enormous amount of writing which his responsible position made necessary. For day-break to surprise him at his desk was by no means an unusual occurrence. And it was with strength thus impaired, that he encountered the bitter cold of a Russian Winter. Mr. BURLINGAME'S religious creed was seemingly more simple than that of the orthodox denominations. Yet it was a subject of which he often spoke and always with feeling and respect. His parents, if I remember rightly, were Methodist Episcopalians, and the impressions he received in boyhood at camp-meetings from the wild eloquence of the preachers and the solemn forest silence, were peculiarly vivid and lasting. I am persuaded that Mr. BURLINGAME, though not a religionist, was—if deeds mean anything—a deeply religious man. Of that sweet and tender charity which is the glory and crown of Christianity, no man had more. Harshness of judgment and bitterness of expression were utterly foreign to his nature. To speak unkindly of any one was to enlist his prompt sympathy and defense. Even toward men by whom he had been personally injured—and I have a notable example in mind—he seemed to feel no resentment whatever. His generosity was such that, as I was assured by an attaché of the embassy, from his large salary he saved but little or nothing. It is the more fortunate for his family that this was not his only source of income.