

Private.

No. 20.

339

Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A., October 10th, 1881

Your Excellency:

My last previous letter was dated Boston, Sept. 3d, 1881, and was devoted to a record of my experiences in England.

Since then, the only important event has been the death of President Garfield. It may seem strange that any country should derive even an indirect benefit from so terrible a catastrophe; but there is really much reason to believe that General Grant's restored influence over the Government will work to the advantage of East-Asian nations, particularly Japan. Since the accession of President Arthur, General Grant has been with him almost uninterruptedly. He (Grant) has been offered any position in the Cabinet he might choose, but again he has determined to take no active share in the administration. But he will advise, constantly and closely, and Your Excellency is aware of the true interest and sympathy he has for Japan. Once more, Mr. T. R. Young is to be offered the position of Minister to Japan. Mr. Young seems rather less inclined to take it than he was six months ago. This is because Mr. T. Q. Bennett, the proprietor of the N.Y. Herald newspaper, has made Young some very brilliant offers, recently, in order to keep him in his own service. Bennett knows Young's value as a writer, and does not wish to lose him. But General Grant wants Young to go, and as I have always said, it will be infinitely better and safer for us to have a man of good feeling, real ability, and proper surroundings, like Young, than to run the risk of any chance appointment. Mr. Young writes me that, whatever happens, he believes Mr. Bingham will be recalled. He does not tell me he knows this, positively, but gives it as his opinion. He writes me from Washington, Oct 4th, "I had a long talk with Arthur the other evening. - I have very little idea that Bingham will be retained." Of one thing Your Excellency may be sure; - viz. Mr. Young can have the post at any moment, if he desires it. He talks again to me of his earnest wish that I should go into Government service at the same time. I have already explained to Your Excellency my objections to taking the office of Consul General at Yokohama, and I do not think I shall allow myself to be persuaded. Something has been said about my going out as Secretary of Legation - but I could not think of making such a sacrifice as that. The position of Secretary of Legation is not one that presents any kind of attraction to me. Undoubtedly it would be agreeable to me to be in any situation where I could hope to serve the interests of both countries; but the Secretary is too insignificant to be able to do

much — not so much, I am convinced, as many a private individual could do. As far as I myself am concerned, I cannot doubt that I could effect more in a private station than in either of the offices which appear to be within my reach. So I shall continue to declare myself not a candidate for either. I believe it is the wisest course; — I am sure it is the most agreeable.

During the short session of Congress which meets today, a few of the highest appointments may be made public; but the mass of the nominations — for legations, consulates, &c. — will probably be kept back until the regular session in December. Then we shall know positively how the Eastern offices will be distributed. It is a most unusual thing to see them all kept in reserve until this late day; but the circumstances have been very unusual — The quarrel between Blaine & Cushing; the assassination &c. &c. So startling a year has not been seen since the War.

I send your Excellency a copy of an illustrated paper, which I have asked Mr. Hiram to explain to you. It is a small matter, but it may amuse you for a moment.

I am, Your Excellency, &c. &c. L. Rowland

E. H. House.

To His Excellency

Okuma Shigenobu.

&c. &c. &c.

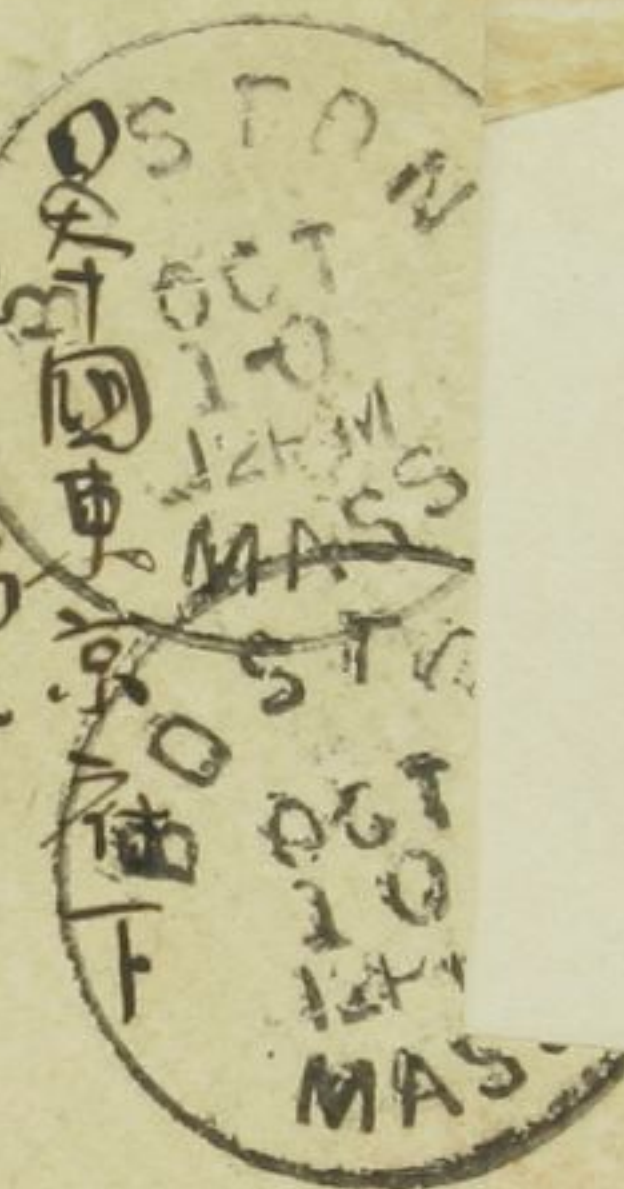
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334



His Excellency,
Okuma Shigenobu.
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