

December 13th -

Mr. House, of the Tokio Times, desires to inform His Excellency
Mr. Okuma that some interesting particulars concerning the
history and position of the Chinese Legation have been communi-
-cated to him. Thinking that H. E. might desire to know
some of the details concerning the members of the Legation,
before their arrival, Mr. House sends to H. E. the enclosed
"proof" of a short article which will be printed on Saturday
next in the Tokio Times -

To
His Excellency
Okuma Kigenjin.



THE CHINESE LEGATION.

The frigate *Hai An*—which name we take to signify "Sea Peace," or, for those who prefer a more euphuistic interpretation, "Maritime Tranquillity"—has arrived at Yokohama, bringing the long expected ministers from the neighboring empire and their abundant retinue. The manner in which they come shows the importance and dignity with which their mission is invested. They are passengers in a first class ship of war, doubly officered by naval and military functionaries, as was once, in ancient times, the custom of the European marine. Hereafter they may travel as private individuals, but the first step is taken in a manner which they consider most befitting their rank and station. For the present they remain at Yokohama, no satisfactory premises having yet been secured for their residence in the capital. The report that they were to occupy the vacant residence of Mr. Mori, the Japanese minister in China, is erroneous. Apart from other considerations which may be conjectured without deep research, their number is too large to be accommodated in that moderate sized mansion. Their quarters will temporarily be in the building belonging to the Foreign Office, near the railway station in Yokohama. There they will continue until all is prepared for their reception in Tokio.

Thirty persons compose the entire Chinese party. The principal delegate, who holds a title and position equivalent to those of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, is His Excellency Ho, an official of considerable prominence, with a good reputation for ability, and who has had previous experience in dealing with foreign affairs. He is a native of Canton, and is said by some to be of Hakka birth. His official life, however, is identified with Peking, and he has long been a member of the Tsung li Yamen, though not, of course, belonging to the highest grade of that department. He is a member of the Han-lin, and is a little over forty years of age.

The name of the second minister is Chang. He is from Ningpo, sixty-one years old, a man of wealth and high social as well as political influence, and a literary graduate of acknowledged attainments even in Ningpo, where the standard is exceptionally high. That he is a somewhat advanced liberal, many incidents of his past career afford evidence. A score of years ago he contemplated the study of foreign languages, and, we believe, went so far as to gain a slight knowledge of English; but his purpose was diverted to the acquisition of Western information by means of special translations into his own tongue. In the course of his early business transactions, he undertook the first application of steamships to native uses. A steamer purchased by him to act as convoy for a fleet of junks under the control of his guild came under the notice of the Imperial authorities, during the great Taiping rebellion, and was put in requisition by them to meet certain imminent emergencies. This circumstance brought Chang into relations with the central government, which have never since been interrupted. His latest services have been in connection with the national defences,—the inspection of arsenals, material of war, etc. As indications of his freedom from the stronger prejudices of his countrymen, it may be mentioned that he was an original promoter of the scheme for educating Chinese youths in America, and that he has for a long time maintained in Ningpo, at his own expense, a large dispensary for the benefit of the community, from which foreign drugs and medicines are supplied without charge. He will not reach Tokio wholly as a stranger, having long been in correspondence with some of the leaders of the new reform in this city. He wrote, two or three years ago, a preface in his own language to a work on botany, by the well known Doctor Ito, a large edition of which has been circulated. Altogether, we may suppose that while His Excellency Ho stands foremost in authority among the members of the mission, Chang will probably represent its more active spirit and purposes.

After the ministers are the two secretaries of legation;—the first, a Chinese literate, one of the Han-lin; the second, our well known former fellow-townsmen, Dr. MacCartee, who returns to Japan in precisely the capacity which we may believe most thoroughly suits his own desires and disposition, and which will certainly enable him to use his energies for the best interests, alike, of the government he now serves and that under which he labored during his recent sojourn here. Next in order come the Consul and Vice Consul, whose immediate and close association with the ministerial

party will not be long continued. The Consul will doubtless reside at Yokohama and the Vice Consul at Kobe. It is possible that another consular agent may hereafter be sent to Nagasaki, that town having a large and important Chinese element in its population. Following these officers are four interpreters, two for Japanese communication and two for intercourse with Europeans and Americans. Nine attachés appear next upon the list, some engaged for clerical and other subordinate duties, but the majority of whom are favored individuals, relations or friends of the higher dignitaries, whose functions are only nominal, and who perhaps will not long remain. There are also two young lads, joined to the party for similar personal or family reasons, who will go through an easy course of diplomatic training. The rest are servants, some of whom, obviously superfluous, may not be retained; while others, at least the controllers of the kitchen, may be looked upon as essential. There are two tailors, one barber, three cooks, and four chair-bearers. With regard to these latter, we may state that each of the envoys is entitled to eight carriers; but, being less exigent in matters of formality than is altogether customary among their caste, they have waived a good part of their privilege in this particular.

Such is the composition and classification of the Chinese legation. Before many days shall have passed they will be domiciled amongst us, and for a period will be the "lions" of popular observation. After that, they will take their natural position in official society and, we trust, find in their new surroundings the means of ensuring their own comfort and pleasure while they pursue the duties which have been assigned to them and which it is in their power so to fulfil as to render the Eastern alliance beneficial and honorable to both empires concerned therein.

ハ
ウ
ニ

東京 飯田町
壹丁目 壹番地
大隈重信様



327

