

Private.

No. 6.

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Washington, D. C. December 8th, 1880.

Your Excellency:

My last preceding letter, (No. 5) was dated New York, November 24th. In its first line I made the slight mistake of referring to another letter as "No. 5." I should have written "No. 4."

In the real "No. 5" I had the honor to inform Your Excellency, that President Hayes and Secretary Everts had promised that the return of the Simanoteki money to Japan should again be recommended in the Message to Congress. I am now happy to say that this was faithfully done. In the section of the President's Address bearing upon "Foreign Relations" he said:—

"In my last Annual Message I invited the attention of Congress to the subject of Indemnity Funds received some years ago from Japan and China. I renew the recommendation then made, that whatever portion of these funds are due to American citizens should be promptly paid, and the residue returned to the nations, respectively, to which they justly and equitably belong."

In the letter which I wrote Your Excellency from New York, on the 19th of November, I endeavored to explain the general argument I have used with members of government here, respecting the future advantages of close commercial relations with Japan and the East at large. A considerable part of the Message bears upon this topic, and, though the language is guarded and cautious, I think Your Excellency will find traces of the new ideas which I have striven to support and advocate. I enclose a copy of the passage to which I refer.

I have been in Washington only two days, and have had little opportunity to make observations that would interest Your Excellency. Mr. Yoshida has given me a cordial welcome and has kindly offered to supply me with information and general assistance on all occasions. I am pleased to find, in the person of the Assistant Secretary of State, (Mr. Hay), one of my oldest and best friends; - a gentleman of broad views and honorable feelings, who I am sure will cooperate in any just project that may be laid before him.

General Grant was to have come from New York at the same time as myself, but he was detained by new and pressing invitations. He told me, three days ago, that he would certainly be here on the 13<sup>th</sup> instant. After his arrival here, I am sure to have some matters of serious value to communicate to Your Excellency.

Meanwhile, it is gratifying to notice that the conditions of all matters connected with Japanese interests are as favorable as could be reasonably expected by any person.

I am

Your Excellency's Obt. Servant,  
E. M. House

To

His Excellency Okuma Shigenobu -  
Sangi,  
etc. etc.

前畧此也 如例之通り 毎月縁在屋敷  
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 トニ解ニ於テノ事務等(第二取目)

## The Development of American Commerce.

The prosperous energies of our domestic industries, and their immense production of the subjects of foreign commerce, invite, and even require, an active development of the wishes and interests of our people in that direction. Especially important is it that our commercial relations with the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of South America with the West Indies and the Gulf of Mexico should be direct, and not through the circuit of European systems, and should be carried on in our own bottoms. The full appreciation of the opportunities which our front on the Pacific Ocean gives to commerce with Japan, China and the East Indies, with Australia and the island groups which lie along these routes of navigation, should inspire equal efforts to appropriate to our own shipping, and to administer by our own capital, a due proportion of this trade. Whatever modifications of our regulations of trade and navigation may be necessary or useful to meet and direct these impulses to the enlargement of our exchanges and of our carrying trade, I am sure the wisdom of Congress will be ready to supply. One initial measure, however, seems to me so clearly useful and efficient that I venture to press it upon your earnest attention. It seems to be very evident that the provision of regular steam-postal communication, by aid from Government, has been the forerunner of the commercial predominance of Great Britain on all these coasts and seas, a greater share in whose trade is now the desire and the intent of our people. It is also manifest that the efforts of other European nations to contend with Great Britain for a share of this commerce have been successful in proportion with their adoption of regular steam-postal communication with the markets whose trade they sought. Mexico and the States of South America are anxious to receive such postal communications with this country, and to aid in their development. Similar co-operation may be looked for in due time from the Eastern nations and from Australia. It is difficult to see how the lead in this movement can be expected from private interests. In respect of foreign commerce, quite as much as internal trade, postal communication seems necessarily a matter of common and public administration, and thus pertaining to Government. I respectfully recommend to your prompt attention such just and efficient measures as may conduce to the development of our foreign commercial exchanges and the building up of our carrying trade.

In this connection I desire also to suggest the very great service which might be expected in enlarging and facilitating our commerce on the Pacific Ocean, were a transmarine cable laid from San Francisco to the Sandwich Islands, and thence to Japan at the north and Australia at the south. The great influence of such means of communication on these routes of navigation, in developing and securing the due share of our Pacific coast in the commerce of the world, needs no illustration or enforcement. It may be that such an enterprise, useful and in the end profitable as it would prove to private investment, may need to be accelerated by prudent legislation by Congress in its aid, and I submit the matter to your careful consideration.

Our Minister in Japan has negotiated a convention for the reciprocal relief of shipwrecked seamen. I take occasion to urge once more upon Congress the propriety of making provision for the erection of suitable fire-proof buildings at the Japanese capital for the use of the American legation, and the court-house and jail connected with it. The Japanese government, with great generosity and courtesy, has offered for this purpose an eligible piece of land.

In my last annual message I invited the attention of Congress to the subject of the indemnity funds received some years ago from China and Japan. I renew the recommendation then made, that whatever portions of these funds are due to American citizens should be promptly paid, and the residue returned to the Nations, respectively, to which they justly and equitably belong.

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His Excellency  
Okuma Shigenobu.

Tokio.

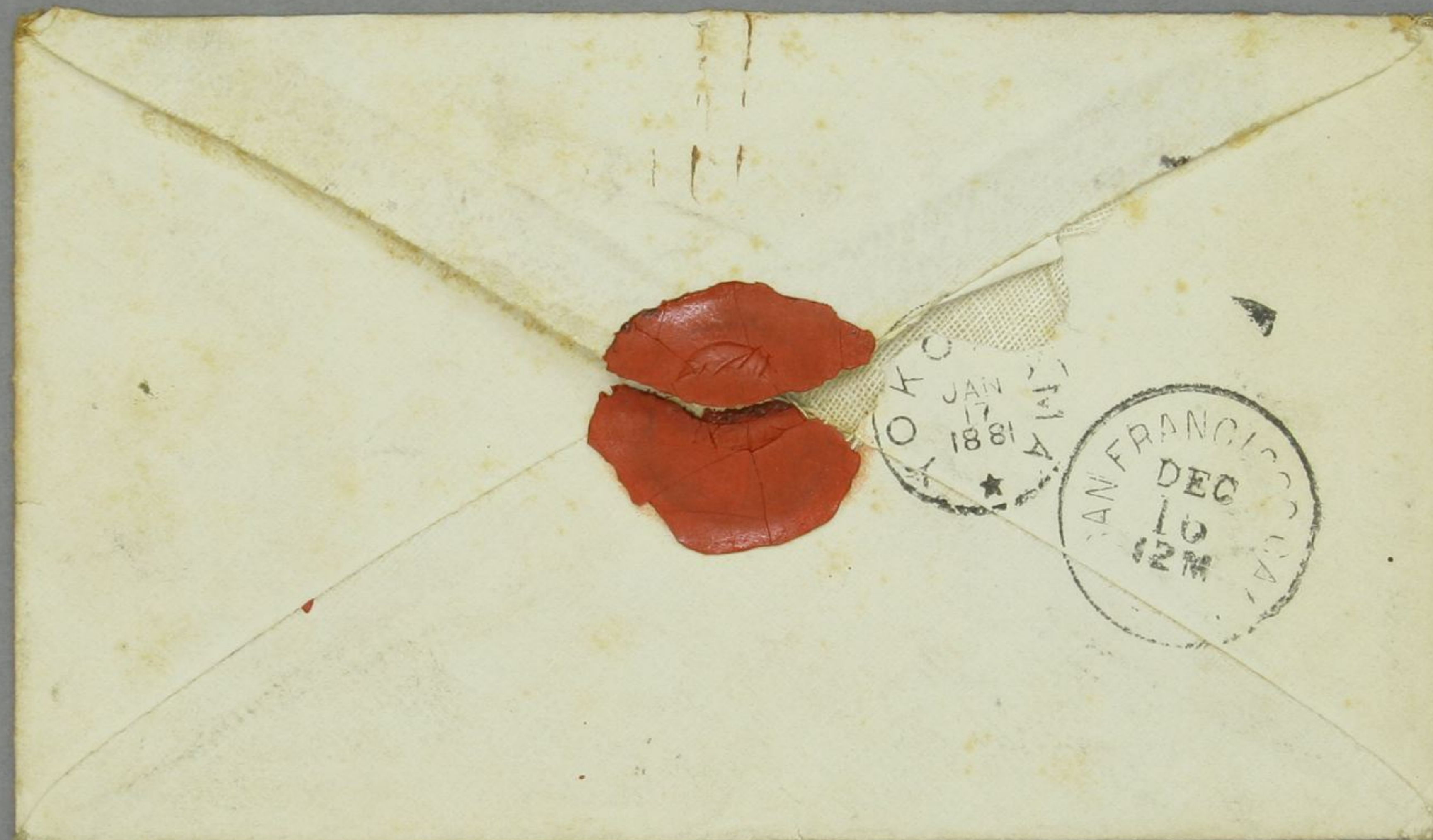
Japan.

*Private.*



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