

25 Forest Street, Hartford, Connecticut, U.S. America.

October 7th, 1887.

Your Excellency: Although my unceasing illness prevents me from moving actively in public affairs, I am still able to watch with unabated interest the political progress of the country in which I lived for nearly twenty years, and whose welfare is always an object of the deepest concern to me. The final result of Inouye's efforts to secure Treaty Revision affords a singular proof of the correctness of the views which I have always held upon that subject, and which, I think, were likewise the opinions maintained by you. From the moment when Inouye and his party declared their intention to seek the attainment of their purpose by conciliation and crecession, it was evident, in my judgment, that their efforts would utterly fail. You are aware that I have at all times expressed the belief that foreigners should be extremely cautious in asserting their opinions with respect to the internal and domestic affairs of Japan; but I do not consider that they are less qualified than the Japanese themselves to form an estimate of which is necessary for the proper conduct of Japan's external relations. A foreigner like myself, who has studied Japan closely for many years, and who has a profound anxiety for the interests and prosperity of that country, is certainly justified in declaring his views upon the methods of intercourse between the Empire and the nations of Europe and America. As long ago as 1872, I commenced to demonstrate, as emphatically as I could, the impossibility of securing Japan's rights to the control of the Tariff and the Judiciary, by pursuing the deferential and yielding policy which has been exhibited by all Ministers of Foreign Affairs since the days of Soyosima. I did not hesitate to assert that if the foreign policy continued to be like that which was exhibited by Terashima, the Treaty Powers would never give way, and Japan would simply waste her time and her labor. Look at the result. For fifteen years the same course has been followed, and Japan stands today exactly where she did in 1872. No one doubts that Inouye is a man of ability - (although he may not be a man of strict honor and fidelity) - and if he has failed in attempting to carry through this plan of gentle conciliation, it is not likely that any other leader can succeed by the same method. It is my firm conviction now, as it has been from the beginning, that Japan can never attain her purpose except by taking a bold, resolute and determined position, and plainly announcing her decision to resume her rights, without regard to anything that the European Governments may do or say. The Minister who proclaims that principle of action, and proceeds in accordance with it, will achieve a triumph.

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such as no Statesman in Japan has ever yet gained, and will make his name renowned, not only in modern times, but in the future history of his country. What astonishes me, is that the truth of all that I say is not immediately apparent to every official who deals with this important question. There has never been so easy an opportunity for making a great reputation. There is not, in reality, a single difficulty in the way. A few firm words have to be spoken, and that is all. The fatal mistake of the Quwai Mu Shu has been in supposing that the Western Governments would strongly oppose Japan, if the present treaties were boldly set aside, and new ones demanded. Nothing is easier than to prove the error of this supposition. When you were good enough to send me on a special mission to Europe and America, I took pains to acquaint myself with the feelings of the principal Governments, on this point, and I feel perfectly safe in averring that not one of the Western powers would seriously resist Japan's determination to take control of the tariff and the Judiciary. I know this to be the fact. If you will please to remember the circumstances of my journey in America and England, you will, I think, readily admit that my statements are entitled to some confidence. You may recall that the chief object of my labors was to secure the ^{re-}payment of the Simodaeki dividend, which many persons had striven to obtain, without succeeding. I did not pretend to be sure that I could accomplish this result, but I worked very earnestly in Washington and elsewhere, and it is a fact that the money was restored to Japan within six months after my return. In one of the last letters which I wrote to Your Excellency, before leaving America in 1882, I distinctly announced that the Indemnity fund would be sent back before a specified time. When I reached Japan, I found to my great sorrow that you were no longer the soul of the Government, and the information which I had gathered was not of use to you personally. I may also remind you that another of my objects was to weaken or destroy the influence of Sir H. Parkes, and it was my pleasure to obtain in England the positive assurance that he would never be permitted to exercise again in Japan the arrogant power he had presumed to display. I take the liberty of mentioning these things only to show that, as my labors on that occasion were not entirely in vain, so I am warranted in claiming some degree of credence for the opinions which I hold. It would have given me much satisfaction to lay before you the fruits of my studies and investigations, during my journey in your service, but I was informed that you did not desire, in your retirement, to receive any suggestions relating to public affairs.

As long as I remained in Japan, I hoped that something might occur to change your inclinations, but it did not appear that you were likely to return to the position in which you were able to serve the empire with your well-attested ardor and devotion, and I thought it possible that you had resolved to keep yourself in reserve until 1890, when the great reform is to take place. Now, however, the news that Iwano has been compelled to retire, and that his party has lost its grasp, gives me reason to hope that you will perhaps take more, and without much delay, the place that belongs to you. It would be a cause of great joy to me, to hear that you had consented to add the strength of your intellect and your experience to a new administration; and I sincerely trust that such news may soon be sent over the world. It would not appear to me very important whether you should take your former office — that of Okura Kio — or some other equally prominent. To see you in the front rank of the Government would be sufficient. My own wishes would be most completely satisfied if you should assume command of the Foreign Department. That is the place where such qualities as you possess can manifest themselves most effectually. I do not know whether Your Excellency can remember that, in 1874, an article appeared in the old Nishin Shin Jishi, (published in the Japanese language), in which it was urgently proposed that you should undertake the duties of Guwai Min Kio, in addition to those of Okura Kio. That article was written by me, in English, and translated in the office of the Nishin Shin Jishi. What I then wrote, I have always since felt. And I feel it now more than ever. Certainly the Foreign Office now offers the finest chance for a political leader to acquire great fame, and to serve his country most advantageously. But it must be done — as I believe Your Excellency well understands, — ~~not~~ by throwing away the feeble and decayed policy which Iwano has pursued, and adopting the principle of vigor, courage and resolution. Although I am not well enough to write much for publication, I cannot resist the impulse to say a few words upon the present Japanese situation, in some of the prominent American and English periodicals. I am now preparing a long article for the Atlantic Monthly, a copy of which I shall have the pleasure of sending to you in a few weeks. I hope that you will do me the honor to read it. If it is wearisome for you to read it in English, perhaps your son will be kind enough to translate it for your perusal. I shall endeavor to state some interesting and effective truths, although I cannot say all that I could impart to you privately, if I could meet you. It is ^{my}

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desire to keep the facts of Japan's ambition before the public of America, and to convince all intelligent readers that Japan is warranted in denouncing the treaties, as they now exist, and refusing to accept any international agreements which do not entirely recognize her rights and privileges. I shall also publish, at various times, shorter articles in newspapers, with the same object in view. It is important, I think, that the American people should be made to comprehend thoroughly what Japan's necessities are; for in this country the people control the government directly, and the general opinion of the community can compel the Government to act as the people wish. My desire is to create such a state of feeling as will make it essential for the Government at Washington to take notice of the affairs of Japan, and to proffer aid and encouragement to your nation in all its just and honorable endeavors.

Hoping that I shall soon hear of Your Excellency's return to the post of highest distinction in the Cabinet, I am,
Yours truly and sincerely,
E. H. House.

P.S. - Respecting the article in the Nishin Shinjishi, of which I have spoken above, I may mention that it pretended to be written by a Japanese citizen, and related to the shortcomings of Terashima, in his dealings with Bingham, the United States surveyor, at the time of the Formosa Expedition. I do not know whether you were ever told that I wrote it. General LeGardie was aware that it was my work, but perhaps he did not inform you of it.

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His Excellency

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