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*Foreign-Office, November 13, 1860.*

A DESPATCH, dated Tien-tsin, September 8, 1860, of which the following is an extract, has, with its enclosures, been this day received at the Foreign-Office from the Earl of Elgin, Her Majesty's High Commissioner and Plenipotentiary in China :

"In pursuance of an arrangement previously made Messrs. Wade and Parkes waited, by my desire, on the Imperial Commissioners, on the 6th inst., with a draft of the Convention which it was understood was to have been signed on the 8th. The Commissioners, who had already been unofficially apprised of its terms, made little objection to any portion of it, except the clause providing that of the total indemnity of eight million taels declared to be due by China to Great Britain, one million should be paid before Tient-sin was evacuated by the British troops. After some conversation, however, in which they betrayed manifest signs of uneasiness, they announced to my Secretaries that they could not stipulate that the Convention should take effect without previous ratification, and that so far from being ready to sign it on the 8th inst., they could not do so at all until it had been submitted to the Emperor for his approval.

This intimation led to a discussion respecting the extent of the powers held by Kweiliang and his colleagues.

It is not very easy to apprehend the precise import of the phraseology employed in Imperial Decrees on subjects of this nature. It was very obvious, however, from what passed during the course of this discussion, that Kweiliang either had not, or did not, at this particular moment wish it to be supposed, that he had powers equal to those, which he held when he made a Treaty with me here in 1858 ; although in the first communication which I received from him announcing his appointment, the title which he assumed, and the language which he employed, were calculated to convey the opposite impression.

It was impossible to attribute this departure from a precedent so recently established, and established in the person of Kweiliang himself, to anything but a deliberate design to create delay which

might throw us into the winter, and thereby extricate the Peking Government from its present embarrassments. To check this policy by an act of vigour was manifestly indispensable, unless we intended to forfeit all the advantages secured by our advance to this point; and I accordingly resolved, with Baron Gros' concurrence, to intimate to the Imperial Commissioners, that, in consequence of the want of good faith exhibited by them in assuming the title of Plenipotentiaries, when they could not exercise the authority which it implied, and of the delays which the alleged necessity of constant reference to Peking would occasion, I had determined to proceed at once to Tang-chou, and to enter into no further communications with them until I should have reached that place.

Inclosure No. 2 in this despatch is a copy of the letter in which I conveyed to them this determination, and inclosure No. 1 is a copy of the report in which Messrs. Wade and Parkes narrate what passed at the interview to which I have been referring.

My letter to the Imperial Commissioners produced a reply, of which inclosure No. 3 is a copy. But, although civilly worded and abounding in promise, their reply was, in fact, an admission of the charge that they had been hitherto negotiating under false pretences. Inclosure No. 4 is a copy of my answer, and simply states that I adhere to the resolution communicated to them in my former despatch.

With the infelicity which so often characterizes the proceedings of Chinese negotiators in such cases, the Imperial Commissioners betrayed their want of candour in this matter, on the day succeeding that on which Major-General Sir R. Napier reached this place with the 2nd division of the force under Sir Hope Grant's command. The army was therefore in the best possible condition for a movement in advance, and I officially apprized the Commander-in-Chief, who has been throughout fully cognizant of the course of the negotiations in which I have been engaged, of the cause of my desire to proceed to Tangchou, in a letter of which the copy forms inclosure No 5 of this despatch.