

Chinese forces should fall back a few miles, and thus place some distance between each other. The Prince now wanted me to write to your Lordship to this effect; and he also wished explanations from me on several points in both Treaty and Convention, particularly in respect to the Resident Minister, the payment of indemnities, and the evacuation of the places held by the Allied troops. I again pointed out how useless it was for me to continue to write notes to your Lordship, and repeated my objections to being made the medium of proposing that our troops should fall back from any position they now held before or near Peking. It was equally useless for me, I also said, to discuss the Treaty or Convention; but, in order to gratify the Prince. I gave such explanations on some points as I felt at liberty to make, while on others I merely referred him to your Lordship. I then wrote a note in Chinese to Mr. Wade, stating that I had been informed by the Chinese authorities that they intended to send back the whole of the prisoners on the 8th instant; that their troops had already been directed to fall back; and that I trusted there would no longer be occasion for ours to advance. I also gave Hangki, at his particular request, a note, stating, "If Mr. Loch, myself, and all the other prisoners, are sent back in a proper manner, the English Government will take no revenge. As far as I understand the present position of affairs, the British Government do not intend to make fresh demands upon the Chinese, if the latter agree, without any exception, to the provisions of the Treaty of 1858, and the proposed Convention."

October 7th.—At daybreak this morning, we heard the sound of a cannonade, which lasted for a few minutes and then ceased. It seemed to come from no considerable distance, and, as the information conveyed to us, both publicly and secretly, from our friends in camp, had warned us that an attack might take place at any time, we thought that this critical moment had now arrived. At a quarter to eight Hangki came in to learn from us the meaning of the firing. He could no longer conceal from us that our army was before Peking, and admitted that Yuen-Ming-Yuen—the emperor's summer palace—had been taken by the allied troops yesterday afternoon. The Prince of Kung, who had been staying there all along had managed to escape; but he, Hangki, had been nearly taken, as he was going out to the palace, yesterday afternoon. Returning to the city, in the evening, he found all the gates closed and the walls manned, and his only means of getting into the city was by being hauled up in a basket. He feared that my note, stating that we should be sent out on the 8th, and the official letter from Prince Kung covering it, could not have reached the English camp.

I told him that, during the whole time of our confinement, both in the prison and in the temple, we had never ceased to warn them against the danger of delay, and all that we had foretold seemed now to be coming to pass. Their only chance of escape lay in the immediate surrender of their prisoners.

How is that to be done, said Hangki, in the face of firing? and how can I now get the authority of Prince Kung for your surrender? Your immediate departure would also interfere with the interview he intended to give you to-day.

The interview, we replied, was of little importance, and danger to the city, in case of delay, was imminent. We advised him, therefore, to arrange for our being sent away at once, regardless of

whether we had to go out in the face of fire or not, as we were very willing to risk that danger.

He left us, promising to return shortly, and we counted the minutes, until these became hours and the day began to wear away. We did not again hear the sound of attack, but detected, now and then, some stir, as of the movement of troops, in our vicinity, and could observe looks of concern on the faces of our guards and jailors. We sent to Hangki's house, to enquire about his movements, but all we could learn from his servants was, that after leaving us he had been lowered over the city wall, and had gone as they supposed in quest of Prince Kung. It was impossible to tell when he would return.

We anxiously looked for the next morning, and felt some relief when no cannonade was heard as daylight broke. By sending to Hangki's house, we learned that he had returned home at 3 a.m., and would be with us shortly. He came at nine, and the glimpse obtained of his countenance, before he had put on the look he wished to assume, shewed considerable dejection and anxiety. He explained to us why he had not returned yesterday. I left you full of concern he said, as I knew that the city and your lives were both in danger. Had the city been assaulted, the first cry raised by the soldiers would have been "Away with the foreign prisoners." When I enquired for Prince Kung, I found that he was too far off for me to hope to reach him. I therefore despatched a note proposing that you should be given up at once, on condition that the foreign troops should retire from Yuen-Ming-Yuen, which they had begun to plunder. At the same time I received an invitation from Mr. Wade, to meet him outside the Tihshing-gate at four o'clock in the afternoon. I went, and we had a long discussion. He demanded not only the immediate surrender of the prisoners, but also one of the city gates, and he handed me this letter, in which you see he states the same in writing. It is quite impossible to comply with such a demand, and what therefore can be done under such circumstances?

I read the note which ran in the names of the Allied Commanders-in-Chief demanding the liberation of all the prisoners who had been seized, and the delivery into their hands of one of the gates of the city, as a precaution against further acts of perfidy on the part of the Chinese. I could only tell Hangki that this step was rendered necessary by their previous acts of bad faith, and that the Allies could no longer put any trust in them. It was useless to hope that the Allied Generals would alter their determination when they had once taken it, nor did I see any course open to the Chinese except compliance.

At this moment the prospect before us seemed darker than ever, but Hangki after some hesitation relieved us from our suspense by remarking that he had agreed with Mr. Wade that we should be given up to-day as already promised, and that we should be sent out at four o'clock in the afternoon. Unable to rely upon the assurance of any Mandarin, we anxiously awaited the hour named, and could see that considerable uneasiness was evinced by Hangki, who visited us several times in the course of the morning. At one time he whispered to me, "I am particularly anxious to get you away for reasons that I will tell you of at a future time, and I will not wait for the hour named to send you off." He was now willing to give us some information respecting the other prisoners. Upwards of twenty had been taken, he said, but with a view to their safe custody, they had been divided into small parties and sent away to different district cities