

ENTER AMBASSADOR TAKAHIRA AND MINISTER WU - EXIT YELLOW PERIL!



BARON AND BARONESS TAKAHIRA,
The New Japanese Ambassador and His
Wife.

NEW ambassadors from two of the greatest far-Eastern powers, Japan and China, have recently been accredited to the United States.

They are Baron Kogoro Takahira, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary from the Japanese empire, and his excellency Wu Ting-fang, Chinese minister to Washington. While both are recent appointments, both have before held the same posts in the Capital of the United States, excepting that when Baron Takahira represented his country here before he was only Japanese minister, the embassy at that time not having been raised to the first diplomatic rank.

There is a significance, bearing profoundly on the world's peace and our Eastern trade, in the coming of these two new representatives of alien but great races.

THE appointment of Baron Takahira is taken in the world's diplomatic circles to mean that the recent brief and greatly exaggerated war cloud between Washington and Tokyo has cleared completely away. Takahira is really a messenger of peace and good will from the Mikado. His predecessor, Viscount Suiza Aoki, did not work altogether in harmony with the State Department in the attempt to amicably settle the differences arising between the two countries over the immigration question and the California public school dispute. The attitude assumed at times by him was not conciliatory enough, to characterize it mildly. Therefore, he was recalled.

Baron Takahira comes bearing an olive branch, and breathing words of good will to the republic. His appointment and his message have swept away the little remaining friction, if indeed any existed, between the two governments.

His Friendly Message. No utterance by a foreign minister could be more cordial and friendly than that spoken by Baron Takahira on his landing in New York. He arrived February 16, on the Etruria from Europe, and gave interviews to representatives of the New York newspapers the day after.

Here is what he said, and there is no reason to doubt his sincerity and good feeling: "I wish to say," the baron began, "that I am very well pleased to come back to this great country in my present capacity. I can say, in spite of all excitement and speculation reported from time to time through the newspapers that there has been no change in the friendship that exists between the United States and Japan, a friendship that has been historically established between them. They are both as sincere as ever in the cordiality of their relations. As for the voyage of the Atlantic fleet to the Pacific coast, an event that has been so much talked about recently, I consider that to be purely an American affair. I hear that all kinds of speculations have been advanced as to the motive of that voyage, but I have always thought that the most reasonable motive that can be attributed to it is a naval maneuver on a great scale.

"The United States is a country of pacific intentions, a fact that is proved by its history. We say in our proverb, 'Do not forget war in time of peace,' and so it must be considered among the necessities of a great country like the United States to ascertain from time to time the working capacity of its ships and the good discipline of its men. The United States will certainly learn a great deal by so long a cruise of so great a fleet. They are not only going to the Pacific coast, but they are at the same time going through the waters of South America, and if there is any demonstration it must be the demonstration to the world of the power of the United States to send out at any moment a sufficient force in support of the legi-



WU TING-FANG,
New Minister From China.

itimate causes that are always at the bottom of American diplomacy.

No Reason for Suspicion.

"Therefore, we have no reason to be suspicious about the visit of the Atlantic fleet to the Pacific. You may have noticed that the Japanese newspapers have been publishing lately their desire that the fleet should visit Japan. This shows how the Japanese people regard the cruise. All the war talk which I have heard has been published here frequently in connection with that cruise, is utterly unintelligible to me. On the other side of the Atlantic where I have been I saw many prominent men smile at such news and refer to it as a smoke without a fire, and dismiss it as commercial news—that is, news spread out to conserve some special interest of the newspapers. I am only telling you what I heard from others, and it is a pity that such impressions should have been allowed to be created, even against a small portion of the American press.

"You know that it has been said by one of America's famous generals that 'War is hell.' It is now a concurrent opinion among the best military experts of all the great powers that war is more hellish than it used to be, owing to the great scientific improvements that have been constantly applied to the manufacture of man-slaying machines. It is impossible, in my opinion, for any man of ordinary sanity to think of war between the United States and Japan, in face of the sincere friendship that actually exists between them. It is a crime against humanity, and a crime against the well being of all mankind. Such a war, if ever fought, would be the most inhuman event in the world's history. Our people at least, do not think of the possibility of such an unfortunate event."

This interview he has recently reiterated at the embassy in Washington.

In Washington Now.

Baron Takahira has presented his credentials to the President, and has taken up the duties of his new post. Needless to say, he and Baroness Takahira have received a warm welcome in Washington. The new Japanese ambassador has had an eventful life in the service of his country. His career is a record of continuous success, from the day when, in 1876, he entered the foreign office at Tokyo as a student attaché. What he has done in the past is ample

guarantee of what he will accomplish in the near future. Born in 1854 as a member of the upper, but not titled, class, his success from modest beginnings makes him what would be termed in this country a self-made man. After passing through the schools of Tokyo, at the age of twenty-two, he entered the service of the state as a student attaché. With a knowledge of English, French, German, and Chinese, he was well qualified to succeed in the career which he had adopted.

After serving three years in the home foreign office, he was in 1879 sent to Washington as an attaché of the Japanese legation. Within two years he was promoted to the post of secretary, a most important one for a young man twenty-seven years of age. In 1882 he was called home to become secretary to the foreign office. Three years later he was sent to Korea as charge d'affaires and acting consul general. He held this important diplomatic post for four years, after which he was recalled to Japan and placed in charge of the political bureau of the foreign office.

Having gained several years' further experience at home, he was sent in 1883 to this country as Japanese Consul General at New York. The following year he was appointed minister resident to Holland and Denmark. The next recognition of his diplomatic abilities came in the form of an appointment as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Italy, and later to Austria and Sweden. Called home once again, he was appointed vice minister of foreign affairs at Tokyo. In 1890 he returned to this country as Japanese minister at Washington.

The past year he has been Ambassador to Italy.

Takahira's Great Opportunity.

It was as minister to the United States, during the trying period of the Russo-Japanese war, that Baron Takahira found his opportunity to demonstrate to his home office and to the world at large that as a diplomat he was outclassed by none. As plain Mr. Takahira, his title of baron being later conferred upon him, the Japanese minister was pitted against Count Cassini, Russian ambassador, dean of the Diplomatic Corps at Washington, and universally recognized as one of the foremost diplomats of the world. The inevitable diplomatic struggle between the two rivals took place in a country the good will of which was of paramount importance to each of the combatants, and which, under the direction of President Roosevelt, ultimately resulted in bringing the great conflict to a peaceful close.

Personally, Baron Takahira is a man whom any one would like to meet. He is five feet seven inches tall, with broad slightly stooped shoulders, black hair, moustache streaked with gray, and keen, penetrating eyes. He impresses one upon first meeting as rather nervous and over on the alert, but this characteristic melts so well with his affable manner and ready speech that it is not offensive. He might be described as American in some of his ways, being democratic in the extreme and easily accessible to visitors. He is extremely punctilious about his business and social obligations, never failing to keep an appointment or answer a letter, no matter how trivial

the matter may seem. Although essentially a worker he finds time to attend social entertainments and banquets, having made many trips to New York and other parts of the country during his previous stay in Washington.

A Celebrated Chinaman.

The other newcomer, soon to be among the foreign representatives in Washington, is an old friend—His Excellency Wu Ting-fang, Chinese minister. Like Baron Takahira, Wu Ting-fang once before represented his country in Washington. He was recalled in November, 1902, rumor says, through the jealousy of high Chinese officials, and on his return to China was relegated to a back seat by the Peking government.

But a man of Wu Ting-fang's metal could not long be kept in the background, but he might have remained in comparative obscurity had not the Russo-Japanese war and its attendant circumstances forced the Wai-Wu-Pu, or highest Chinese governing cabinet, into more intimate relations with foreign powers. It was compelled to resort to Wu for information and advice, and he was made vice president of the board.

At that time China was undergoing a mild kind of governmental reformation and reforms were being tried. Wu was in favor of reforms and among those which he advocated was a revision of the civil and criminal codes. He pointed out, with evident truth, that so long as China retained her present semi-barbarous codes she could never hope to secure the abolition of extra-territoriality, which is at present and has always been an irritating limitation upon the nation's autonomy.

"Excellent," said the board presidents, "and who is better qualified to conduct such a revision than the author of the suggestion?" So a board of revision for the civil and criminal codes was appointed, and Wu placed at the head of it. Now, in the abstract to reform the codes is a useful and, in the case of China, a very necessary work; but, unfortunately this was one of the numerous 'reform' commissions which were not expected to do anything but investigate and memorialize. So Wu, as president of this commission, found himself virtually sidetracked for a time.

Wu's Herculean Task.

Reform in China is easy to talk about, but a stupendous task in reality, so Wu could not accomplish very much in beating against the centuries-old customs of his country. A Chinese residing for a long time abroad, and especially in the atmosphere of the United States, is apt to imbibe something of our spirit and institutions, and to feel that the task of reforming China is less difficult than it is. Returning to take up the task in China, coming again in touch with the stifling influence of the old official environment, such men are more apt to become discouraged than others who have remained in closer contact with the problem. Wu had this experience.

Thomas F. Millard, a New York journalist, recently interviewed Wu in his home in China. In telling of the boycott, which cost American exporters millions in trade, Wu, with a smile, said: "I see that some newspapers in America, in commenting upon my appointment, intimate that I was instrumental in investigating the boycott against American goods. Do you think people in America believe that?" Millard told him that he did not think that well-informed persons credited such accusations, and recalled that at the inception of the boycott, nearly three years ago, he had called upon him at his home in Peking and discussed the matter with him. "Yes, yes, I remember," Wu said. "Then you know that I was in the

north all during the trouble. At the time a newspaper in America printed a story that I was helping the anti-American agitation, and the late John Goodnow, then your consul general here, wrote to me, suggesting that I send him a letter for publication denying the charge. I wrote Mr. Goodnow that if I formally replied to all the foolish rumors which were put in circulation I would have time for nothing else, and that I preferred to ignore them. I felt sure that my friends in America would not believe such reports."

Glad to Return to Washington.

Before Wu sailed from Shanghai recently he gave out an interview in which he said:

"I am glad to go. I have many friends in the United States whom I will be glad to see again, and I recall with pleasure the years I spent there. To be returned by my own government, and to be cordially received by yours, is a compliment and an honor which I appreciate. The relations between China and America, always important owing to their being the two great continental powers bordering the Pacific, are growing closer every year, and I shall try to promote the cordial feeling which now exists. China regards America as her special friend among the Western nations, and will do her best to preserve this friendship."

Wu Ting-fang is about sixty years old. During his boyhood he learned to speak English. He studied law in England, and was admitted to the bar at Lincoln's Inn. Subsequently he was, successively, a magistrate in Hongkong, legal advisor to Li Hung Chang, and an official in the foreign office, Peking. Early in 1887, he presented his credentials as minister to

this country. While here he won much popularity and attracted great attention. He is broad and liberal in his views, is believed to be a Christian at heart, and is noted as a witty and brilliant speaker. He owns an expensive and modern residence in Shanghai, and is reputed to be very wealthy.

A Great Questioner.

When in America before, Wu was known as the human interrogation point. Once in Washington, clad in a wealth of broad silk and ermine, Minister Wu Ting-fang was the central figure in the midst of an admiring throng of ladies at an informal reception, held in the parlors of the Riggs House, incidental to the fifth annual banquet of the Washington College of Law, at which he was the guest of honor. Not only was the diplomat from the Far East the guest of honor, but the principal toast of the evening had been assigned to him, "The American Woman."

At the reception in the parlors he expressed his interrogatory powers to their fullest extent; on each and every one presented to him, but on the mind of Master Thomas Dobson, the youthful and talented soprano soloist of St. John's Protestant Episcopal Church, he left the impression of being a veritable interrogation point. When introduced to Master Dobson, and informed that he was a soprano soloist, Minister Wu began: "Do you sing? Do you sing soprano? Why do you sing soprano? Are you a woman? Is not soprano what the girls sing? How high can you sing? Where are you from? Portland? Why, you sing a long way, don't you? All the way from Portland. Ha ha, ha!"

When introduced by the toastmistress, Miss Florence E. Clark, to respond to the toast, "The American Woman," Minister Wu's face lighted up with evident pleasure and pride. "What shall I call you?" he began, "Shall I call you chairwoman," and so on through a witty and brilliant speech.

Wu, accompanied by sixteen noble and aspiring Chinese youths, who will study in this country, is on his way to Washington now. Two of the students who will accompany Wu Ting-fang to America are sons of Liang Junon, the present tactful of Shanghai. Liang was himself educated in America. Wu will arrive in Washington the first week in March.

Boneless Chicken Served Whole By Chinese at Merchant Banquet



ONE million firecrackers, set off in immense strings a few feet long and making a din which sounded like the battle of Wei Hai Wei, provided the climax of the most wonderful banquet ever served in St. Paul, given by 100 Chinese residents to the mayor and city officials and a select list of invited guests to celebrate the advent of the Chinese New Year. Moy Jim was the over-chief of the hosts and stood at the head of a receiving line of white-uniformed Chinese. The guests, numbering 200, set down to a banquet the tale of which will last while there are Irish in the coun-

ty. Whole chickens without a break in the skin, proved to have been boned so thoroughly that they were served with a spoon instead of a carving knife. Tender squabs appeared, likewise absolutely free of bones, yet with skin unbroken. Chinese bird's nest soup was one of the pieces de resistance, and King Chow fish occupied a prominent place on the menu of fifteen elaborate courses. Chicken chow suey, so delicately and wonderfully prepared that the ordinary kind is coarse and unpalatable in comparison, and "em sun," a Chinese joke made of snails, were other delicacies served.

The dessert was Chinese fruit cake and delicious Oriental confections, with red and white Chinese jelly and a tremendous variety of wines. A white wine made from rice was served with every course. Moy Jim and his assistants pouring it from curious wicker-bound bottles direct from Tien Tsin. A wonderful Chinese brandy from a bottle, which looked like a Fourth of July bomb, and of almost priceless value, was served in tiny glasses, and proved so strong that the ordinary Scotch and rye varieties were like milk in comparison. "Can get stronger if don't like lead kind," remarked Mr. Jim with a grin, and he produced a white species of strength sevenfold greater, but none of the Occidental brethren dared take a chance.

Course after course of curious dainties was served, and afterward there were toasts and the usual formalities of an American dinner. Moy Jim and several of his Chinese associates responded. Jim is a Catholic and his parish priest was one of the guests. He is also a citizen.