

Department said on the reception of the letter; and if he has a receipt for it; but he would keep it secret.

So, though I have seen your messenger returning, I can not get any information about the matter and I am in uneasiness owing to this circumstance. I take this opportunity to express my salutation to your Excellencies.

P. S. Today, when I was sealing this letter Yin has come and handed your letter to me, dated 27th 4th moon, with your expression of friendship and affection, I confess my gratitude for these kind regards.

To their Excellencies
the commissioners
of Young li yamen.

Yanaghiwara Sakimitsu.

大久保辦理大臣清國總理衙門ニ於テ應接書

Translation.

Draft of conference held on the subject of the Formosan savages, 14th of the 9th month. Seventh year of Meiji, at the Young-li-yamen, between the Ambassador Okubo, the Minister Yanaghiwara, Mr. Ota, the Vice-director of the railway section, Mr. Iii, the first secretary, on the one side and the Prince Kung, Wan-sang, Pan-King, Ton-Young, Shing-Kwei-King, Tsong-ling, Tsong-Kan, Jing-ling, Gah-Kiu-Kan, on the other side.

(Committed to writing by Yin-Kia-Mui and four others on the part of the Chinese and by Mr. Ota on the part of the Japanese, Mr. Iii interpreting.)

The high officials on the both
sides

sides after saluting each other and congratulating the health of the two Emperors, the conference proceeded as follows:

Okubo. The intention of our government in despatching us as the special ambassador is as follows: as the original Formosa lies contiguous to your territory and thus there was the fear, that the measures taken towards it by our government might rouse some suspicion on the part of your government, the Minister Yanaghiwara was specially despatched to confer on this matter. But unexpectedly, we have heard that some new points of dispute arose on this matter. This is wholly regrettable to the intention of our government in despatching the Minister not to impair in any wise the

good relation between the two nations. Our government, feeling a great concern for the various reports about the matter, specially despatched us, to hold the friendly conference with the high officials of your government.

Prince Kung and others. This, we presume, arose out of the good feeling of your government.

Okubo. Yes; although I have been despatched specially for this matter, the power of the Minister Yanaghiwara still exists as hitherto; I beg you consequently, that your Excellencies will hold it in your mind.

Prince Kung and others. We shall hold it in our mind. But we ask you whether your words might be construed as the true intention of your government.

Okubo. Your Excellencies will believe that

that all my words are those of our government.

Prince Kung and others. Yes, we will.

Okubo. I have seen, after my arrival here, all the drafts of conferences and correspondences between your Excellencies and the Minister Yamaghiwara, on the subject of the Formosan savages and comprehended all the details concerning it. But, en resume, they amount only to the government on the part of your Excellencies holding the aboriginal territory as belonged to China and that on the part of Yamaghiwara holding the aboriginal territory as perfectly independent and having no master.

Wan. Yes, it is so.

Okubo. Now, it appears from the above, that your government continue to maintain the argument that

the aboriginal territory belongs to China. Concerning this, I have some points to inquire.

Prince Kung. We desire to know these points. We have expected, that you should have some points to discuss, as you have come here, charged with a special mission.

Okubo. As for the matters of the conferences and correspondences between your Excellencies and the Minister Yamaghiwara, they need no further discussion. What I should demand now, is only to know the determined will of your government.

Prince Kung. Let us hear your will at first.

Okubo. Then, my question is, how much has been done practically by your government towards the aboriginals.

Wan-seang. The practical treatment of the aboriginals by our government, can not be particularly explained at once, but in a word, there is the land of Formosa and then there live the aboriginals as in the case of Hainan lying in Nanton, in which island there is a harbour open to foreigners but many tribes like the Formosan aborigines live around it.

Okubo. If the land were a territory of your empire, your government must have established office there, posted the troops and made other needful treatments. Therefore I require that the particulars of things practically done by your government hitherto, should be told me.

Wan-seang. The extension of our

empire is very great, and such things can not be particularly told in this meeting, and thus the answer can not be given to your requirement. Okubo. I can not understand how you can not give answer to me; the question of the Formosan aborigines is not a new affair but has continued from the fifth month to this day; Thus I think that some clear and decisive answer could be given, at this meeting, where I, as the Japanese ambassador, confer with you on this subject; But when it is told that the answer can not be given, the present meeting shall be useless, and then my confidence can not be given to your word, affirmed by you at the meeting with our minister Yamaghiwara, that the land of the Formosan aboriginals belongs

longs to the territory of your empire. Wen-seang. The affairs in our Imperial government are very numerous, and each officers divide their tasks between them; Therefore even I can not explain all the particulars in this present meeting; But the only proof is to be found in Taiwan-fu-si, which has been mentioned clearly in the despatches sent before, and there is no need of enquiry concerning the particulars.

Okubo. I have seen your writing in which the Taiwan-fu-si is quoted, but for what evidence it serves practically? International Law says, that a state shall not be considered to have the right of possession or jurisdiction over the waste lands which are said to belong to it, unless the state practically has taken pos-

session of it and established there the its government office and thence obtained some profits.

Shing. Our government have indeed hence collected the taxes every year; This is clear proof that the land belongs to our great Empire. At this moment a Chinese secretary presented a writing the purport of which is as follows:

"The aboriginals have been left to hold their customs and to live in their manners, and when they have rebelled against us, the punishment has been inflicted and when they have submitted, the pardon has been given, and it has been already said in the despatch formerly sent, that the government office and army are not placed there. But taxes have been hence collected."

Wan-sang. Our answer must not be an evasive one and therefore this clause is cited for the testimony of our word.

Okubo. As for the collection of the taxes of the same, have there been some officers to manage it until the present time?

Shing. The headmen have collected the taxes and paid in the aggregate of them.

Okubo. Where they are paid in?

Shing. To Fuo and Kien a kind of political division.

Okubo. For example, to what Kien does the community of the Buntans pay in the taxes?

Young-Kan. To Fuo-san-Kien.

Okubo. I have heard, from the persons who have been at the land of the savages, the statement given

ded upon personal observation and experience the statement says that from the reports of the natives, it is evident that no tax has been paid in at all; In support of this statement there is a paper which you may inspect [At this moment, Fooku-shima one staff officer, has produced a copy of communications by writing in which the subject of lease of land has been discussed.]

I have read this. In our Empire, we have many instances of this description at the interior parts as well as in the lands of the savages generally, the land taxes due from the peasants are not collected by the local authorities from these peasants directly; but the aggregate of these taxes is paid in to the government through the headmen of the villages who are responsible.

responsible for the payment of the taxes. So there may be some peasants who do not know that the taxes are paid in to the government. If the Chinese officers and ask to peasants some questions concerning his subject they are sure to answer that their land is exempt from taxes. The same is the case with the savages of Formosa. There are also many large farms on the road from Peking to Yien-Tsin, which are of the same description as above.

Okubo. Though it be mentioned on books, that thing which is not actually practised proves nothing.

Wan. Such a thing must not be said without exception or limitation for the inhabitants of villages might say that their land is exempt

from taxes; but the truth is that they do not know that taxes have already been paid in through the headmen of the villages, and such a statement of the inhabitants of villages not proves that the land is beyond the jurisdiction of our Empire.

Okubo. It is not the statement of the inhabitants of villages but that of the headmen of the villages as it appears from a copy of the statement. Wan. Between Peking and Yien-Tsin there are large farms which are exempt from taxes and permitted to be cultivated by people, the reason of this concession being that those lands have, from of old, been exposed to the calamity of inundation. If the government want the land, they shall buy it at some

some price. [at this moment a secretary has produced a paper which says: the taxes due from aboriginal savages, for the payment of which the chieftans are responsible and the aggregate of which they have sent to the authorities have been treated in a liberal manner so that there are some savages who will not know for life the fact of taxes being paid in. Their taxes have been paid in furs of deers and land production.]

Wan. A piece of land where the minister Ganaghinara resides has been within a large farm, the government, therefore, does not impose any land tax on it, though it be within the metropolis. But if foreigners wish to buy land belonging to some large farm, our government

has the right to prohibit the purchase of it, it being part of our Empire. If it be leased, the proprietor will charge rent on it, but the government will not. We think in your honoured country it will also be the case.

Okubo. I have again to ask, when we inquired, that, if the land is in the Chinese possession, there must be the rules for official organizations, the tax and impost regulations etc.; the first reply was, there are; but subsequently we were told that, the system being used of the "private farms," there is no direct taxation. These replies, it seems to me, are in contradiction, and how are we to reconcile them.

Wan. It might be, that there was some apparent contradiction from the complication of words; but both countries

countries using the same language, you may clearly see the meaning, if you minutely analyze the words. Okubo. But I still can not understand you. Here is the general sketch of what I intend to ask to-day. you will favour me with a written reply to it at a subsequent time.

And here he presented the sketch. The Prince and the other commissioners saw it, and consented to his request.

And Wan added the following words: "here it was that, when Mr. Wade the English minister in Peking remarked, that the system of the Chinese taxation is very irregular, compared with that of England, where it is exceedingly minute and accurate; we replied

that the customs of every nation are not necessarily the same and you will try to examine our taxation. Okubo. Here is another question which I beg you will reply together with the first.

Then he submitted the same to the Prince and commissioners.

Prince and other officials read and accepted them, and said "these questions are very right, but are there another questions still?"

Okubo. "These two subjects alone are the today's questions, of which your reply will be given without delay."

Prince and other officials. "When any subject is committed to such a writing, it is very convenient, because its meaning can be understood distinctly, which is a benefit particular

ticular to the nations that adopt a same written language, and therefore such two nations must be regarded mutually as having a relation between lips and teeth, but if they would have lost their harmony, no eating nor drinking could be made; such a result shall be useless to each other.

Okubo. I believe so too; if the eating and drinking could not be made, the whole body never can be supported well.

Wan. I hope that, all the public conversations between the officials of the two nations must be unbiased and keep up a harmony by the frank words.

Okubo. Yes indeed; I hope, your reply to the above two questions shall be given tomorrow, but, if

impossible, the day after tomorrow at least."

Prince and others. After the interval of such a time, this demand may be easily satisfied.

After this conversation, the Japanese officials to their lodging, bidding farewell.