

It is with regret that the Undersigned finds at the very outset of a Mission sent by Her Britannic Majesty as evidence of her desire for peaceful relations, that he is met, not as he had a right to expect, with a cordial and frank invitation to the capital, but with delays and hesitations, ill-calculated to cement a good understanding. The Undersigned will not, however, swerve in the least from the course he has laid down in his letter of the 18th ultimo. He is resolved to proceed forthwith to Peking, there to exchange the ratifications of the Treaty, and to deliver in person the letter intrusted to his charge by his gracious Sovereign to His Imperial Majesty, to whom it is addressed, nor will he quit the capital until satisfied that effect will be given, without reserve, to every provision of the Treaty of Tien-tsin.

The Undersigned intends no discourtesy to the Imperial Commissioners, but he must, under these circumstances, positively decline any interview with them at this place.

His resolution to proceed to Peking without delay is inflexible.

It is at the same time his duty to warn his Excellency Kweiliang, that he is prepared to insist on a reception befitting the dignity of the Nation he represents, and that any failure in this respect will be attended with the most serious consequences to the Imperial Government.

The Undersigned, &c.,

(Signed) FREDERICK W. A. BRUCE.

Shanghai, June 8, 1859.

Inclosure 5 in No. 8.

Mr Bruce to Commissioner Kweiliang.

The Undersigned, &c., had the honour to address a letter to the Chief Secretary of State, Kweiliang, upon the 8th instant. He has received no reply to this, and he observes that neither his Excellency nor his colleagues, the Imperial Commissioners, who have informed him that it is through their hands alone that the ratifications of the Treaty can pass, are, to all appearance, making any effort to reach Peking by the day on which it is by Treaty agreed the ratifications shall be exchanged. He begs therefore to point out to them that there are lying in this harbour several steamers, one or two of them flying the Chinese flag, by the employment of which it is perfectly within their power to accomplish their journey before the appointed time.

Admiral Hope, the Naval Commander-in-Chief, has started for the mouth of the Peiho with his squadron, charged to advise the local authorities of the immediate approach of the Undersigned and his colleague M. de Bourboulon, the Minister of France.

The Undersigned, before leaving Shanghai, begs again to impress upon his Excellency Kweiliang, that his proceeding is in strict accordance with the Treaty provision, and he throws upon the Chinese Government the entire responsibility of any consequences that may arise from its violation.

The Undersigned, &c.,

(Signed) FREDERICK W. A. BRUCE.

Shanghai, June 11, 1859.

Inclosure 6 in No. 8.

Mr Bruce to Rear-Admiral Hope.

SIR,

Shanghai, June 11, 1859.

THE Communications I have received from the Imperial Commissioners do not, I regret to say, justify me in assuming that the Chinese Government has resolved to receive my visit to Peking in a conciliatory spirit. There is manifestly a desire to treat this visit not as the exercise of our undoubted privilege under Treaty, but as an exceptional case, the various steps of which are to be minutely arranged at this place before we are to be permitted to proceed to the North; and not satisfied with the interminable discussions to which such a course would necessarily lead, the Commissioners propose further to enter upon the details necessary for carrying into effect the provisions of the Treaty. Their letters breathe throughout the old spirit of jealousy and isolation.

It is not consistent with my instructions, nor with the express stipulations of the Treaty, that I should agree to such proposals, nor do I see how it would be possible, within any reasonable time, to settle, at this distance from Peking, questions of ceremonial which affect the Emperor personally, and on which his pleasure will have to be taken.

I am satisfied, on looking over the correspondence, and particularly by a reference to the Earl of Elgin's last letter to the Commissioners on leaving China, that they cannot allege, with any show of reason, that they have prolonged their stay here at his request; and however much I regret the difficulties that may arise out of their absence from the capital at this conjuncture, I do not think that I could depart from the programme contained in my first letter to them, without involving myself later in more serious complications, and without reviving hopes in the mind of the Chinese Government, that by procrastination and discussions they may succeed ultimately in giving to this visit to Peking a character, in the eyes of the Chinese people, at variance with those principles of equality and unrestricted intercourse, which it was one of the main objects of the Treaty to insure.

I have therefore informed them that I cannot accede to their request to remain here, and that I shall take my departure for the North, without delay, in order to effect the exchange of the ratifications, and the presentation of my letter and credentials to the Emperor.

At the same time I am anxious to give to the Imperial Government the opportunity, if it be so disposed, of repairing the neglect of the Commissioners, and of receiving me in a friendly manner. You will precede my arrival at the Peiho, and I beg that you will have the goodness to inform the officer in charge of the forts, of the approach of the Ministers of England and France on a friendly mission, and inquire whether orders have been given to facilitate their progress to Tien-tsin. Should the reply be in the negative, I would suggest that they should be called upon to transmit the intelligence to Peking, warning them, at the same time, that if a reply is not received within a certain fixed period, the Imperial Government will be held responsible for the consequences.

By the time your message reaches Peking the Government will be in possession of the intelligence between his Excellency Kweiliang and the Foreign Plenipotentiaries, and will be informed accurately of the objects and scope of my visit to the capital. M. de Bourboulon agrees with me as to the course to be adopted, and I am authorized