

of civilization, and ignorant of the rules of reason, and by all means to be confined to the outskirts of the country.

According to the maxims of the Government, they are entitled to no rights beyond those accorded by the favour of the Emperor, and though circumstances and the weakness of the Government have led it to acquiesce in the concession of considerable privileges to foreigners in distant seaports, it is remarkable, as proving how tenaciously it holds to its traditions, that it always classifies as acts of rebellion the measures of coercion adopted by foreign Governments to obtain redress for wrongs done to their subjects.

Now the British Treaty of Tien-tsin (which is much more complete in this respect than the Treaties signed at that place by the other Powers,) asserts principles which are diametrically opposed to these traditional pretensions of the Chinese Government. According to it the British Minister is to be accredited as a Representative of an independent equal Power, and the Chinese Government, in its treatment of him, is called upon finally to abandon the assumption of superiority which it asserted uncompromisingly during Lord Amherst's Embassy, and so lately as three years ago, when Count Poutiatine first proposed to visit Peking. He is to be allowed free and unrestricted communication with the capital, not only as specified in the French and American Treaties when he has business to transact, but whenever he wishes to visit it. His diplomatic intercourse is to be conducted according to the usages of Western Nations, and he is not to be called on to perform any ceremony of a nature derogatory to his character as representing an equal and independent Nation. In future, access to the capital is to be recognized as a right the Minister can insist on, instead of its being begged for as a favour, and either refused or conceded, on such terms as the Chinese might choose to impose, for the sake of saving their own dignity at the expense of that of the foreign Envoy in the eyes of the Chinese population.

The clauses which permit British subjects to travel in the interior, and open the Yang-tze river to British shipping, are equally subversive of the established maxims of Chinese statesmen. To push us back on the sea-board, and confine us to as few sea-ports as possible, to keep us outside the walls of important cities, and vilify us to the people, in order to preserve a wall of separation between the races, is the policy which the Chinese Government, from its adherence to usage, and from its indifference, if not dread of all progress, which can only be attained through novelty, would gladly follow if it dared to do so.

It is not surprising therefore, when the allied squadrons left the Peiho river last year, and the panic produced by their presence began to subside, that ancient maxims and prejudices should have gradually resumed the ascendant at Peking, and that the Imperial Cabinet should have entertained hopes of recovering part of the ground it had lost. There is proof of its language and feeling with regard to foreigners having undergone no change, in a Decree published in the "Pekin Gazette" on the 25th July, one month after the signature of the Treaty, in which allusion is made to the "barbarians suddenly rushing up the river to Tien-tsin, and retiring moved by the commands of Kweiliang and his colleague, signified with affectionate earnestness." Sungko-lin-sin, a Mongol Prince, reputed to be their best General, was made Commander-in-Chief of the Pechelee Province, with a large force at his disposal; the forts at Takoo re-built and strengthened, and stakes and obstacles of different kinds placed across the

river to efface the impression produced by the proceedings of last year, and, by preventing foreign ships from arriving at Tien-tsin, to render Peking more inaccessible than ever.

While these preparations were going on, the departure of the High Officer of the Board of Revenue, who was to settle the tariff at Shanghai, was delayed, in order that he might not reach Shanghai until the season for operations in the Gulf of Pechelee had passed, and when he started he was accompanied by the Imperial Commissioners Kweiliang and Hwashana. Subsequent events leave no doubt in my mind that the statement contained in the letter of which Mr Parkes obtained possession, is substantially correct, and that they were instructed to obtain modifications in the principal articles of the Treaty—the residence at Peking, the opening of the Yang-tze river, and circulation in the interior,—to all of which the Emperor strongly objects.

In their first letter the Commissioners advanced the principle that the Treaty having been signed under pressure, its provisions had not been fully discussed. But the determination evinced by Lord Elgin not to allow the Treaty to be called in question, seems to have convinced the Commissioners that it was advisable to rest satisfied with the concession made as to permanent residence at the capital. It is clear, however, that their remonstrances against the policy, enjoined on them from Peking, were most unpalatable to the Emperor and his Counsellors, who urged them to make further efforts; and the dissatisfaction with the conduct of Ho, who seems to have pointed out most strongly the inexpediency of the course proposed, is reported to have been expressed in the autograph receipt, that "his obstinacy would be the cause of calamity to him."

In the beginning of March, Lord Elgin, who had left Shanghai on account of the unsatisfactory state of Canton, wrote to the Commissioners, stating that Her Majesty's Government had agreed not to establish the Mission permanently at Peking, on condition of a proper reception being given to Her Majesty's Minister. He further informed them of his approaching departure from China, and of my appointment, charged with important documents to be delivered at the capital; and warned them solemnly that peaceful relations could only be maintained by a faithful observance of the Treaty. The Imperial Commissioners, in spite of this information, continued at Soochow instead of returning to the capital to prepare for the reception of myself and the French Minister, and their motive in so doing was made sufficiently manifest by their attempts, through a Chinese formerly in Mr Wade's, but now in the Chinese service, to ascertain whether we would consent to exchange ratifications at Shanghai, or at least to be conducted from that point by land to Peking. This journey occupies two months, and I leave your Lordship to judge whether, had we adopted this route, we should not have abandoned, for all practical purposes, one great object of the Treaty, viz—free access to the Central Government.

It was only after my arrival at Hong-Kong that I heard of the Commissioners having remained in the south, and received Mr Hart's memorandum (inclosed in my despatch of the 30th of May,) describing the hostile feeling of the Court, and throwing considerable light on the motives of this inconvenient delay of the Commissioners. I felt at once that it became necessary either to throw overboard my instructions entirely, to abandon the visit to Peking, and the attempt to establish on a proper footing, once for all, our diplomatic relations with the Court of Peking, or to declare that I would