

# THE DESERET WEEKLY.

Truth and Liberty.

No. 13.


SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, MARCH 13, 1897.

VOL. LIV.

## OUR DIPLOMATS ABROAD.

Written for this Paper

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 2nd, 1897.

ECRETARY Sherman tells me that the applications for consulships will probably number 5,000. There are more than ten applicants for every foreign mission,

and the politicians seem to look upon the diplomatic appointments as the best offices in the gift of the administration. This is a great mistake. I have at different times visited every legation in Europe and Asia, and have come into contact with more than one hundred American consuls in all parts of the world. The most of them were dissatisfied with their positions, and all complained of big expenses and small salaries. There is scarcely an office in the gift of the State Department which pays enough to allow its occupant to live up to his station and entertain as he should. One of the chief reasons for sending rich men to the courts of London, Paris, Berlin and St. Petersburg is because by means of their private fortunes they can keep up the style which the American minister should maintain in order to be of value at these courts. These ministers get the highest salaries paid to any of our diplomats. They receive \$17,500 a year each. Their expenses, however, are often twice or thrice this amount. Whitelaw Reid paid, it is said, \$27,000 a year house rent while he was minister to Paris, and his entertainments must have cost him as much more. Our present minister to France, Mr. Eustis, pays \$12,000 a year for his house, and his necessary expenses, as given in an itemized statement not long ago, were \$27,000 a year. I visited Paris when Levi P. Morton was our minister there. He paid more than twice his salary to keep up his establishment. Governor Noyes of Ohio when he was minister to France was too poor to maintain the dignity of the place out of his own pocket. He was helped by having a rich secretary of legation. This was representative Hitt of Illinois, who spent, I have been told, as much as \$30,000 a year in entertaining.

Another costly foreign place is Berlin. Our minister there ought to keep up an equal style with the ministers from other countries. He cannot do so on much less than \$40,000 a year. The British

minister at Berlin gets \$37,500 a year, and has a palace furnished by his government and a big allowance for entertaining. The British legation building at Paris is five times as big as that of the British legation at Washington, and England's German minister gets \$45,000 a year and \$100,000 additional for entertaining. Our minister to Berlin is I am told, worth \$20,000 less today than he was when Cleveland appointed him American ambassador to Germany. It is said that he failed in some of his diplomatic negotiations from a lack of money for entertaining, and that his necessities at one time were such that he seriously thought of sending in his resignation. I visited William Walter Phelps a few years ago, when he was our minister to Germany. He was, you know, a man of large fortune, and he spent money freely. When he got to Berlin he could find no house suitable for the American legation. An independent establishment costs a great deal in that city. Many of the fashionable people live in flats, and only the richest can afford houses. There were few houses for rent in the diplomatic locality. Mr. Phelps picked out the building he wanted and then sent his agents to buy out the tenants. He ousted the storekeepers from the ground floor. He bought up the leases of the fashionable people who were living above, and then having released the whole building, he turned an army of carpenters and masons into it and had it remodeled to suit himself. His home was perhaps the finest any American foreign minister has ever had. It contained among other rooms eight large parlors, which could be thrown into one, and it was so large that minister Phelps could have entertained the whole of the German court had he wished to do so. Still his services to the United States were such that our government could have well afforded to have allowed him enough money for several such houses. His entertainments brought him into the closest relations with the Germans. He was popular with both Bismarck and the young emperor, and when he tried to get anything done for America he succeeded.

Another efficient minister was Oscar Straus, who represented us at Constantinople during Cleveland's first administration. Mr. Straus spent at least \$20,000 a year more than his salary. He had the closest relations with the sultan and his court, and he was able to settle any trouble concerning America to our advantage in very short order.

Few people have any idea of the expenses of our ministers. Those who are sent to the orient require a large number of servants. The minister to Japan has coachmen who are dressed in Japanese livery and who wear hats like butter

bow's turned upside down. The minister to Peking has two men who do nothing else but watch the gates of the legation grounds to let the visitors in and out. His coachman is a swell Chinaman, who wears bright-colored silk dresses. When the minister goes out to ride on horseback a gorgeous groom follows behind. While I was in Calcutta I met the American consul general. He was a plain Oregon man, who, I venture, had never had more than two servants at home. In India he had to keep twenty. When he went out to drive there were two coachmen with turbans and gowns on the front of his carriage, and two other turbaned Hindoos standing on the footboard behind. In oriental countries our ministers usually have servants go ahead of them as they walk through the city to clear the streets. In Constantinople and Cairo the man who precedes the minister is known as the kavass. The kavass has a sword, enormous pistols and sometimes also a staff with a silver head.

He is dressed with much gold braid and wears a fez cap. During my stay in Egypt I had an interview with the khedive. At this time a kavass went with the consul general and myself to the palace. When I accompanied the American consul to call upon the patriarch of Jerusalem we had two kavasses in front of us. Each man carried a club as tall as himself upon the top of which was a ball of silver as big as your fist. As we walked through the narrow streets of Jerusalem these swells dropped their heavy sticks on the stone pavement as they walked in front, and cleared the way for us. Our minister to Corea has a company of soldiers from the king who act as his special body guard. They are dressed in plum-colored zouave pantaloons, short blouses, belted in at the waist, and hats of black horse hair, which are tied on by ribbons fastened under the chin. During my stay in Seoul I had an interview with the king. At this time the soldiers went in front and cleared the way for me. The present American minister to Corea was first presented to the king on that day, and we went together, the king sending down a number of his own servants to accompany us to the palace. Our consuls in China have each a man called the Ting-chi to go in front of them when they go out to make visits of state. Such a man went in front of me when I called upon Li Hung Chang. He was dressed in bright-colored silk and had on a pair of black cloth boots with soles an inch thick. Upon his head there was a hat which looked like an inverted spittoon, and there was a big button on its crown to show that he was a man of rank.

Style means a great deal in foreign courts, and our ministers would be much