

# Where the Big Game of Diplomacy Is Played

## DAILY SCENES IN THE OFFICE OF COLONEL JOHN HAY, SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON, March 7.—(Special Correspondence of the Sunday Oregonian.)—Uncle Sam's diplomacy mill is working overtime these beligerent days. The war in the East has caused no end of extra toil for the officials and employees of our smallest yet most conspicuous executive department, over which John Hay, the two-time private secretary of Lincoln, presides.

Thursday is the day when the diplomatic chessboard rattles with greatest din, for since the time Hamilton Fish came to take up the portfolio of state the fifth day of each week has been set aside as "diplomatic day." Then all ambassadors, ministers and charges d'affaires accredited to this republican court are assured an audience with the premier of the Cabinet between the hours of 10 A. M. and 1 P. M. Other days they may come, if they wish, but must take their chances at finding the Secretary of State at the White House or absent on other official errands of import. On other days they do come. Every day, in fact, during these stirring times, they troop in. But if on diplomatic day you post yourself outside with your kodak loaded for big game you can generally bag a good flock.

### Diplomats Arrive.

His Excellency, the Ambassador, Mr. Minister and Mr. Charge d'Affaires are boosted one floor in the State Department elevator and step one by one into the diplomatic anteroom, near Secretary Hay's office. Here Eddie Savoy, the diplomatic messenger, takes their coats and hats while another attendant carries their cards to the head of the Cabinet. If the diplomats waiting their turn in the anteroom be of all equal rank—if they all be Ministers, for example—they are received in the order of their arrival. But if there be ten Ministers seated in the little waiting chamber when an Ambassador arrives, the latter is admitted by the Secretary ahead of them, because an Ambassador is the personal representative of his sovereign—is, technically, that sovereign himself.

### Cassini's Advantage.

It is here that his excellency, Comte Cassini, dean of the diplomatic corps, master of the Imperial court of Russia, and more especially Ambassador of the Czar, may score an advantage over Mr. Takahira, Minister of Japan. Mr. Takahira, after cooling his heels on the anteroom floor for an hour, may just reach his turn when the big, white-haired, be-mocked Comte comes sauntering in and may see the Czar's personal representative whisk by him into the Secretary's presence in time to upset some scheme which he has tucked up his sleeve. Or, if the Czar may wish something of import communicated to the ear of Theodore Roosevelt, the Comte may carry his errand to the utmost sanctum of the White House—a prerogative denied Mr. Takahira, simply because he is a mere Minister. But to the pro-Japanese enthusiast who may cry that this seems unfair, let it be said that it is the fault of the island empire itself that such a condition exists. If the Mikado's government elects to elevate its mission here to the dignity of an embassy, why then, as between the Russian and Japanese envoys, the rule of "first come first served" will obtain.

But on diplomatic days Ministers are not so embarrassed. If they recover sufficiently from the good times of the night before to hop out of their pajamas early, urge their valets to dress them with dispatch and appear in the diplomatic anteroom at 10 o'clock sharp. Such a cry arose from Ministers some few years ago over this very question that General Lord Pauncefote, the then dean of the diplomatic corps, saw fit to gather all of the Ambassadors together and got them to agree not to call at the State Department before noon on diplomatic days, that the small fry among the corps might have a chance.

### How Received.

Secretary Hay does not receive these diplomatic callers in his office. He must guarantee to each a confidential tete-a-tete without danger of interruption or annoyance or the possibility of eavesdropping. Hence the room directly to the left of the Secretary's office is reserved for these receptions. Across its threshold none but the duly accredited envoys or charges



DEPLIOMATIC RECEPTION ROOM STATE DEPARTMENT WHERE THE GAME OF DIPLOMACY IS PLAYED

d'affaires of foreign powers may pass on diplomatic days. This apartment—long, narrow and well lighted—is appointed to a king's taste, and only the state parlors of the White House can be compared with it. Its ceiling and walls are beautifully frescoed, and its inlaid floor is covered with costly rugs from the Orient. It abounds with sofas and chairs upholstered in tapestry, and at either end rests a massive table, on one of which treaties are customarily signed. From the three sides look down all portraits of our ex-Secretaries of State, and through the rich draperies of the windows may be seen the Virginia hills across the Potomac. Near the center of the room stands a large globe handsomely mounted, a globe whose boundaries are being altered these days by some of the very hands which touch it.

### The "Note Verbal."

Secretary Hay is always prompt on diplomatic days. He stands ready to receive the first visitor to enter the diplomatic reception-room. Each Ambassador he formally greets as "Your Excellency"; each Minister as "Mr. Minister." He converses with most of the diplomats in French, this being the diplomatic language of the world. So long as other callers are waiting he expects his guests to be brief and to the point. He remembers each detail of the conversation and as soon as each envoy has departed he retires for a moment to his office, summons his private secretary and dictates a "note verbal"—a memorandum containing the import of the interview. This is tucked away in the confidential archives of his office and is retained there for reference until the time comes to publish a "blue book" upon the negotiation. History is made in this diplomatic room every week. It is here also that newly arriving envoys in court dress first present their credentials with pomp and great ceremony and it is here that some have received their "walking papers" with less ceremony. One of the most stirring scenes which ever took place therein was that between Secretary Gresham and Minister Thurston, of Hawaii, which ended in Mr. Gresham's requesting Mr. Thurston not to enter the State Department again and that only written communications from him would be thereafter received.

All factions of the diplomatic corps rub elbows in the diplomatic anteroom. Baron Ledislav Hengelmuller von Hennig, privy councillor of the Emperor Franz-Joseph, and that sovereign's personal representative at Washington, often comes in close contact here with his one-time rival, Senator Don Manuel de Aspizcoa, the Mexican Ambassador, whom the Austrian court has never yet forgiven for his part in the prosecution of the ill-fated Maximilian, and whom the Austrian Ambassador has proceeded to smother ever since.

The two envoys have been colleagues in Washington. Eddie Savoy, the aforementioned messenger in the anteroom, is, however, a born diplomat himself and makes every endeavor to keep warring factions apart. It has been his fear of late that the Russian and Japanese envoys might meet face to face, and perhaps personally take up the strife of their two countries. The other day while Comte Cassini was closeted with Secretary Hay in the diplomatic reception-room Minister Takahira came saunter-

ing into the ante-room, where the Russian Ambassador's great fur coat was reposing in the custody of Eddie. A meeting between the envoys of the warring nations seemed imminent, and the messenger was visibly nervous. When the tall Russian came out of the reception-room and started for the ante-room Savoy grabbed up the great fur coat and ran toward him. He helped the Ambassador to slip on his hat before the ante-room door was reached, and thus did Eddie, as he thought, pour

oil upon the troubled waters. A moment later the Japanese Minister hurried into the hall on his way to the reception-room, but the Comte's tall figure was disappearing in the distance. Secretary Hay has been busier than the head of any other foreign office in neutral territory since the war in the East began. His task in whipping the other powers into line over the matter of the "integrity" and "entity" of China was, of course, a responsible one, and he has been in electric touch with our diplomats

the world over during the past few weeks. All of his dispatches as a diplomat character must go out in cipher and all of those received in reply must be translated from cipher into English. A year ago last Spring Congress made appropriation for a cipher code to be placed with all legations, embassies and consulates of the United States. The State Department studied all systems and finally designated for use the Western Union telegraphic code and international cable directory of the world as the safest and most expeditious.

### Some Swift Moves.

The alertness demanded of our Secretary of State during such stirring times as these may be appreciated at a casual glance at the diplomatic chessboard during a few days last week. Following Russia's attack at Chosen, Japan makes a move by complaining to our Ambassador at St. Petersburg that such an attack in neutral territory was a violation of international law and one which endangered foreign shipping. Japan at once gives notice of a protectorate over Corea, which allows her military occupation. Russia makes reply that such a treaty is invalid because Corea was not under duress. Japan then makes the clever reply of announcing a treaty guaranteeing the independence and integrity of Corea after the necessity of military occupation has vanished. Russia replies that she will pay no attention to a treaty negotiated after Corea violated her neutrality with Russia. Meanwhile the Secretary of State is negotiating for the opening of Wiju, in Corea, and is keeping an eye always on our commerce with the Orient. If Russia wins the crown that she will claim Corea. Thus will the game go on until the treaty of peace between the warring nations is signed. Meanwhile dispatches from our envoys in the Orient and Russia are pouring in upon Secretary Hay every hour.

### "Good Offices."

The entire diplomatic colony in Washington is all agog over the war. It is the sole topic among the men accredited here by the powers. They, of course, keep Secretary Hay informed as to the attitude of their governments, and he is thus keeping in touch with the entire civilized world. Moreover, he has considerable routine business with the Japanese Minister, for we have extended our good offices to Japan during the conflict, and our Ambassador at St. Petersburg technically represents Japan for the time being as England acted for us in Spain during our war with that kingdom.

To deal with such an active factor in diplomacy as John Hay has grown to be, Russia has had to send a man of considerable experience here by diplomats counted among their shrewdest. Comte Cassini was called the cleverest diplomat of Europe by the press here. He is coming here. He is supposed to have been selected for this post because of Russian uneasiness over the possibility of an Anglo-American alliance, and that he might use his influence to antagonize such a move. In recent weeks there have been persistent rumors of his recall because of his government's displeasure at his failure to prevent the "telegraphic ratification" of our new treaty with China and to convert Americans to more of a pro-Russian view of the Eastern question. He knows the Eastern situation like a book, having been Russian Minister in China just before being sent here. Mr. Takahira has the advantage of being a younger man than the Comte by about 15 years—and has an advantage in diplomacy. He was no stranger in this country when he arrived here as Minister, having been Charge d'Affaires of the Japanese Legation here when still in his teens, and a sub-General in New York 12 years ago. He has also held the post of Charge d'Affaires of his country in Corea, and consequently understands conditions in that kingdom.

It is with these two functionaries that Secretary Hay has most to deal during these stirring times. Meanwhile, he has closed the Panama deal, putting some finishing touches on a treaty with France providing for the settlement of all future disputes between that republic and ours by arbitration, and is negotiating for similar treaties with Greece, Britain, Italy and Holland. And 'tis said that after thus actively engaging all day in the making of world history he still finds time in the evening to put on a pair of slippers and relax.

JOHN ELFRITH WATKINS.  
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ever you go. The man who sells you tickets for the theater; He is eating sandwiches when you knock at his window. He turns to his companion: "Good Lord!" you can see him say, "Here's another of 'em. If there has been one man worrying

me this morning there have been a hundred. Always the same story of 'em want to come to see the play. You listen now; bet you anything he's going to bother me for tickets. Really, it gets on my nerves sometimes." At the railway station it is just the same. "Another man who wants to go to Antwerp! Don't seem to care for rest, these people; flying here, flying there; what's the sense of it?" It is the absurd craze on the part of the public for letterwriting; it is spoiling the temper of the Continental post-office official. He does his best to discourage it; "Look at them," he says to his assistant. The thoughtful jurism continental government is careful to provide every official with another official to talk to, just by sheer force of numeral he might be reduced to taking interest in his work. "Twenty of 'em, all in a row; some of 'em been there for the last quarter of an hour." "Let 'em wait another quarter of an hour," advises the assistant; "perhaps they'll go away." "My dear fellow," he answers, "do you think I haven't tried that? There's simply no getting rid of 'em; and it's always the same cry, 'Stamp! stamp! stamp!' For my word, I think they live on stamps, some of 'em." "Well, let 'em have their stamps," suggests the assistant with a shrug. "What's the use, we're getting rid of 'em." "What's the use, we're getting rid of 'em," replies the older man; "there'll only come a fresh crowd when those are gone." "Oh, we'll argue the other way; that will be a change, anyhow. I'm tired of looking at this lot." I put it to a German postoffice clerk once, a man I had been boring for months. I said: "You think I write these letters?"

"What the use—there'll only be a fresh crowd."

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short stories, these three-act plays, on purpose to annoy you. Do let me try and get the idea out of your head. Personally, I hate work—hate it as much as you do. This is a pleasant little town of yours; given a free choice, I could spend the whole day mooning around it, never putting pen to paper. But what am I to do? I have a wife and children. You know what it is yourself; they clamor for food, boots all sorts of things. I have to prepare these little packets for sale and bring them to you to send off. You see, you are here. If you were not here, given a free choice, I could spend the whole day mooning around it, never putting pen to paper. But what am I to do? I have a wife and children. You know what it is yourself; they clamor for food, boots all sorts of things. I have to prepare these little packets for sale and bring them to you to send off. You see, you are here. 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