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THE PREMIER AND HSU, THE CHIEF SECRETARY.

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AN AMAZING DOCUMENT.

The extraordinary confidence the Premier reposes in General Hsu Shu-cheng, the Chief Secretary of the Cabinet, is evidenced in a remarkable memorandum which the Premier submitted to the President a few days ago.

A translation of the document follows:—

"I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that on account of the importance of the documents which the Cabinet submits for the perusal of Your Excellency, I have now decided that these documents should be submitted to Your Excellency daily by Hsu Shu-cheng, the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan, with my own instructions in regard to the same. After the perusal of Your Excellency, they should be sealed and sent back through the hands of the same official instead of through any other person so as to avoid any possible misunderstanding. Having instructed the Chief Secretary tremblingly to obey my instructions, I hereby respectfully bring the matter to your notice."

The Premier added the following amazing postscript: "The Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan is a man of uprightness and has a strong sense of self-respect. He tells nothing but the truth. [In a special article on page 7, we mention some instances of his terminological inexactitudes]. Whenever he communicates to Your Excellency something which he is instructed to communicate on my behalf with the declaration that such words or statements conveyed to Your Excellency have been made by me, I shall bear the full responsibility for the consequences of the same."

Commenting upon this extraordinary declaration, the *Kung Ming Jih Pao* has the following to say: "Even according to ordinary diplomatic etiquette, when two Ministers representing two different Governments enter into negotiations, each generally brings an interpreter with him. The party which makes a statement is not fully responsible for the interpreted version of the same when it is interpreted to the other party through the interpreter. It is simply because in interpretation, the wording of the statement may be so changed to distort the original sense of the statement. Now it is not our purpose here to say anything against the confidence which the Premier reposes in the Chief Secretary of the Cabinet, but when the Premier declares in his memorandum to the President, that what is said by the Chief Secretary of the Cabinet may be taken as his own words without any qualification, we fear that in future the Premier will not be able to answer for what has been said by the former, as it involves responsibility for the latter. When we read this memorandum we cannot help thinking of the Premier's eccentricity."

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THE FU-YUAN CRISIS.

ITS HISTORY

A great deal of misunderstanding has been caused by the so-called "struggle for power" between the Kuo Wu Yuan and the President's Office. The most deplorable fact in this connexion is that a certain party for obvious reasons has seized hold of this crisis in order to provoke misunderstanding between the President and the Premier. The allegation that the President is struggling for more power is untenable in view of the special provisions of the Provisional Constitution to the effect that the President is the Chief Executive and controls all administrative affairs. The same document says that the Cabinet Ministers are to assist the President in attending to the administrative affairs. In this sense the Cabinet Ministers are really subordinates under the President. But in practice it must be confessed that it will be impossible for the President alone to attend to the numerous state affairs, and it is therefore necessary to have the Cabinet Ministers. In order to prevent a dictatorship on the part of the President, practice rules that the Cabinet Ministers should have a voice in deciding the various questions and the responsibility of countersigning mandates. If this interpretation of the Provisional Constitution be right, then the administrative affairs coming within the scope of the power or authority of the President are the administrative affairs discussed by the Cabinet. In this sense we see there cannot exist any such question as division of power between the President's Office and the Kuo Wu Yuan.

Origin of the Question.

But it will be interesting to trace the origin of the so-called "struggle for limit of power." The question started about two months ago as the result of some differences of opinion as to the proper procedure to be adopted for the transaction of business between the President and the Premier. The following may be safely taken as two main causes of the trouble:

1. Owing to his easy-going habit, the Premier seldom sees the President to consult him with regard to state affairs. It has been almost the rule that he never sees the President even once a fortnight; and consequently all business has been transacted through the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan.

2. The irregular formation of the Cabinet owing to the reluctance of many of its members to assume office; this has been the cause of a lack of decision by the Cabinet Ministers. It is perhaps this which resulted in the President being inadequately informed respecting the progress of the administration or the proceedings of the Cabinet.

President Or Keeper Of Seal?

Now as the Premier never consults the President on any administrative affairs and the decisions of the Cabinet meetings have never been fully communicated to the President for his information, the position of the President during the last few months has been that of a seal-keeper. But in spite of the fact that all the knowledge the President has had of the administrative affairs has been conveyed to him by General Hsu Shu-cheng, Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan, in the form of mandates, which the Chief Secretary carried to the President every day and laid before the President for seal, the President refrained from making any complaints. It was not long, however, before he detected suspicious things in connexion with the regular demand for sealing of the mandates. Hence the question of how to adopt a system to prevent mistakes has given rise to the rumour that the President has been thirsting for power.

The Actual Usurper of Power.

Since the day President Li Yuan-hung assumed office, the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan has been calling on the President daily on two kinds of business. First, the presentation of "explanatory notes"; and secondly, the submission of the draft mandates for seal. It is obvious if the President is to be fully informed of the

exact nature of some of the more important affairs submitted to him for approval, he must be shown the original documents respecting the question under discussion. But during all these weeks the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan has never submitted a single document for the perusal of the President. Even this the President refrained from criticising. Now according to practice, it is the duty of the Kuo Wu Yuan to submit a document giving the reasons for certain decisions the Cabinet or the Premier has made for approval by the President. When this is done it becomes the business of the Kuo Wu Yuan to make out a mandate respecting the same and submit it for the seal of the President prior to promulgation. But what has been the practice under the direction of Hsu Shucheng, Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan? On many occasions he suddenly submitted a number of mandates for the seal of the President without previously giving the required "explanatory notes." When the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan was asked for the minutes connected with the mandates, he replied by saying either that they were decisions of the Premier or the decision of the Cabinet Ministers. As already stated, the Premier seldom saw the President, while the Ministers were often in total ignorance of the mandates actually issued. In order to avoid unnecessary friction the President

usually affixed his seal to such mandates, and with this as his authority the Chief Secretary would go to the Minister concerned and demand his signature. The idea being that as the President had already affixed his seal thereto, the Ministers should not refuse to countersign. This has, however, been the principal cause of suspicion so far as the conduct of the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan is concerned.

Some Actual Cases.

The following are particulars of actual cases that have occurred. There are no doubt others which we are unable to ascertain, but the following are sufficient to show the arrogance of the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan.

Case 1. The Resident Commissioner to Urga being a high official of the "specially appointed" class, his appointment should only have been made after consultation between the President and the Cabinet. Yet without previously giving the usual "explanatory notes" to the President or submitting the same for the discussion of the Cabinet, the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan suddenly submitted to the President a mandate, authorising the appointment of Chen Wenyun as Resident Commissioner to Urga for seal. The mandate was issued with the result that the Russian Legation lodged a protest. In this case the Premier did not even mention the fact to the President previous to the sealing of the mandate.

Case 2. Under exactly the same circumstances and without any previous consultation between the President and the Premier, the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan one

day submitted to the President a mandate ready for the seal for the appointment of Kuo Tsung-hsi as Governor of Kirin. When he was asked by the President as to the basis of the appointment, the Chief Secretary replied that it had been made on the recommendation of a certain Tu Chun. Unwilling to create trouble, the President sealed the mandate but when the same was forwarded to the Minister of Interior, he justly refused to countersign the same.

Case 3. In exactly the same manner the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan placed a completed mandate before the President for sealing the appointment of Hsu Shih-hsiung as Deputy Auditor-General.

Case 4. The dismissal of Chow Chin-piao, Taoyin of Shanghai, was decided at a Cabinet meeting, and the mandate was duly drawn up in the usual form. But when the time came for the sealing of the same, it was not among the day's mandates. The Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan had quietly withdrawn the same. It was not until the Ministers made inquiries about it that the said Chief Secretary submitted the said mandate for the seal of the President.

A Deliberate Lie.

Case 5. According to law the appointment and dismissal of officials of the "directly appointed class" should only be made after the approval of the Cabinet has been procured. Yet in the case of the appointment of Yen Chia-chih as Chief of the Finance Bureau of Kuangtung, the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan drew up a mandate for the seal of the President without consulting the President previously, or passing the Cabinet meeting. In reply to the query of the President the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan said the appointment had been drawn up as the result of the recommendation of the Governor of Kuangtung and the Minister of Finance. As the reply was somewhat suspicious the President refused to seal the mandate but kept the same for further inquiry. The next day the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan again pressed for the sealing of the said mandate. For fear that misunderstanding might arise between the Premier and himself as the result of the case, the President used his seal although with reluctance. But he was surprised to find that the Minister of Finance, who was said to be the person who recommended the appoint-

ment, refused to countersign. Thus shown that the statement of the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan that the recommendation was made by the Governor of Kuangtung and the Minister of Finance was untrue.

The Chief Secretary as a Minister.

In view of many such acts on the part of the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan, the suspicion of the President was naturally aroused. Inquiries disclosed the further fact that General Hsu Shu-cheng, the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan, had actually been taking part in the discussions of the Cabinet Ministers as if he were one of them. The Cabinet Ministers can also testify to the fact that not only have the Ministers never been shown any of the important telegrams addressed to the Cabinet but the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan has actually issued Cabinet Orders without the knowledge of the Cabinet Ministers. In the name of the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan, the said Hsu Shu-cheng once wired to Tu Chun Li Hsun of Kiangsi, giving directions respecting military affairs. Reference has already been made in these columns respecting the reply the said Chief Secretary sent to the House of Representatives, defending the notorious Hu Jui-lin of Fukien, which case was the cause of the resignation of Mr. Sun Hung-yi, Minister of Interior. Such arrogant acts are enough to rouse the suspicion of any sane person, yet the President with his usual regard for the preservation of the "face of the Premier" did not wish to disturb the calm waters but he decided to find a method by which the practice of issuing mandates under false pretence might be effectively stopped. With this end in view he submitted to the Kuo Wu Yuan a statement some days ago, of which the following are the most important points: 1. Attendance of the President at Cabinet meetings. 2. The President to be informed both before and after the Cabinet meeting as to the subjects of discussion and the results of the meeting. 3. All mandates submitted for his seal should first be countersigned. The first demand is for the purpose of enabling the President to participate in the discussion of the Cabinet; the second, enabling him to keep track of the progress of the Cabinet meeting, and the third, enabling him

to make sure that the Minister concerned has already approved of the mandates to be sealed for promulgation. The view of the President seems to be that so long as he is sure that there is no attempt at deception on the part of the "middle man" as is shown by the signatures of the Ministers concerned and so long as the mandate be sanctioned by the decision of the Cabinet, there is no reason why he should refuse to approve of the same by fixing his seal thereto. Thus the so-called struggle for power is nothing more or less than the attempt of the President to stop deception by officials such as the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan. The question is therefore not one of power but procedure.

Provocative Methods.

Such preventive methods are of course not welcomed by those who wish to usurp power and consequently they were seized on as an excuse to create even worse misunderstanding, which resulted in the temporary resignation of the Premier. Three cases were used by the "usurper" as weapons to force the Premier to resign:

1. On the document submitted by the Kuo Wu Yuan in connexion with a certain Company the President remarked "a mandate cannot be issued until the actual relations of the affair have been thoroughly investigated."
2. Tu Chun Feng, Kuo-chang recommended that either the rank of Vice-Admiral or a decoration be conferred on a certain naval officer. The President ruled that the said officer be given a decoration instead of a rank.
3. The refusal of the President to promulgate the mandate appointing Yen Chia-chih Chief of the Finance Bureau of Kuangtung for the reason that the said question had never been approved by the Cabinet or Minister of Finance.

Using the above-mentioned cases the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan is believed to have urged the Premier to tender his resignation. He is known to have said to the Premier, who, it must be confessed, is badly informed on modern methods of administration, that such acts on the part of the President in turning down the improper decisions of the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan are tantamount to the restoration of the Presidential system and

that the request of the President to attend the Cabinet meetings is a further proof. The attempt of the Chief Secretary of the Kuo Wu Yuan was temporarily successful. The Premier seemed to have entirely overlooked the fact that it is he and not the President who is in full control of the army, the most powerful weapon for a man desirous of becoming a dictator. It is not difficult to see who is the one who is reaching out for power. To lay the blame on the President as the inspired organ of the Anhui clique is doing will simply bring down derision on the clique itself. The character of the President is too

well-known and recognised to be lightly explained away by baseless rumours that he is seeking to restore the Presidential system. On the other hand it is quite possible for persons other than the President to become dictators if they be allowed to accumulate power and influence to an excessive extent.

The So-called Presidential System.

Unfortunately certain people have been misled by baseless statements issued by certain interested people and the cry of "down with the Presidential system" has been raised. To the thoughtful this is foolish, if not mischievous. To suggest that the President can restore the Presidential system by attending the Cabinet meetings is a clear proof of the unbalanced state of the brain of the author of such a suggestion. How can the President set up a Presidential system by merely attending the Cabinet meetings, shorn as he is of all substantial power of military force or financial control? Furthermore, what the President claims is the mere attendance at Cabinet meetings without participating in the making of decisions. The fact that he is entitled to give his views at the Cabinet meeting without power to decide cannot be construed as encroaching on the power of the Cabinet. Yuan Shih-kai never attended any of the Cabinet meetings during the second year of the Republic, yet no one will claim that we then had a responsible Cabinet. France is recognised to have a Responsible Cabinet and not a Presidential system, yet the French Premier attends the Cabinet meetings. No further argument is necessary when this point is once made clear.

CONFIRMATION OF THE CABINET.

TWO OBJECTIONABLE APPOINTMENTS.

Were it not for the unpardonable weakness of the House of Representatives in confirming the appointment of Mr. Hsu Shih-ying as Minister of Communications and a certain laxity of moral sense shewn in approving the nomination of Mr. Chang Yueh-tsen as Minister of Justice before the Shanghai opium scandal is searchingly investigated, general satisfaction would have been expressed regarding the ruling consideration which determined the House of Representatives in registering yesterday its approval of the Cabinet. The House was right to be influenced by the view that the interests of the state demanded the immediate establishment of a permanent government and to allow that consideration to dictate the confirmation of most of the members of the Cabinet submitted to Parliament. But we cannot agree that the House was bound to approve the entire Cabinet in the absence of over-riding reasons of national safety. Whatever urgency there was for the early formation of a government in terms of the Constitution, no reason existed which could justify Parliament in disregarding the paramount demands of public decency and morality. We say that in no civilised community would the Government and Parliament disregard—nay shock—the public conscience by appointing to a great office a man of the character and record of Mr. Hsu Shih-ying as well as challenge the criticism of the nation and of the world by suffering a Minister of Justice to remain in office whilst under the shadow of a grave scandal.

A CRIME AGAINST THE NATION.

As regards the appointment of Mr. Hsu Shih-ying, it is impossible on any view of political expediency to absolve the House of Representatives of responsibility for what is not only a blunder but a crime against the nation. Here is a man of known and admitted bad character who is allowed to continue in charge of one of the two great departments of state dealing with the revenues of the country. His personal unfitness for the office is the more glaring when his notorious record as Governor of Fukien is recalled. Among the many serious charges against him is the well-known accusation that he trafficked in the sale of posts and offices in Fukien at his home in Anhui. When cash was paid in Anhui, a letter would go to Foochow, stating that cash had been received and the new official would go at once to his post. And it is impossible to ignore the persistent and circumstantial reports relating to his dealings with certain corrupt members of Parliament—the same presumably who sold their votes for the election of Yuan Shih-kai as President—and the necessity he has been under to levy tribute on the new appointees under his “re-organisation” of the Ministry and the Railway service in order to meet his alleged commitments to the parliamentary hucksters. Even assuming that Mr. Hsu Shih-ying was not a Mandarin and entirely lacking in the training and experience necessary

to deal efficiently with the work of his Ministry, his loose methods of supplementing his official stipend ought to disqualify him from holding any office where the revenues of the state must pass through his hands. And when to this personal disqualification is added the national danger involved in what is reported to be his ultimate scheme of marrying Railway finance to the Military power in the grasp of the Premier, it will be seen that the confirmation of Mr. Hsu Shih-ying as Minister of Communications cannot be viewed as other than a grave peril to the state. According to a responsible view, the danger attaching to his continuance in the Ministry is also of another character. His want of a foreign education and experience, combined with his inevitable mismanagement of the Railway finance of the country, is considered likely to lead to the Government railways getting into a Receivership. This is a statement made to us yesterday by a responsible Chinese who is conversant with the work of the Ministry and is fully informed regarding Mr. Hsu Shih-ying's "re-organisation" of the same. And we direct the attention of the Government and Parliament to it in order to fix responsibility when and if such a calamity happens.

THE CASE OF THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE.

With reference to Mr. Chang Yueh-tsen, who has been confirmed as Minister of Justice, we have to point out that the objection to his immediate inclusion in the Cabinet is based solely and entirely on his *prima facie* connexion with the greatest public scandal in China of recent years. We know nothing of him beyond the fact that he is a Japanese-trained young man who has studied western jurisprudence through Japanese interpretation—which is not very hopeful—and that, when he was first named for his Ministry, it was explained that his presence in the Cabinet was desirable as he might prove troublesome in Parliament. Since the opium scandal at Shanghai, anxious efforts have been made to impress us with the impossibility of his connexion with the scandal on the ground that he is of unimpeachable character and is much too cautious to have mixed himself with such a disgraceful transaction. We remain altogether unimpressed with this *a priori* defence of Mr. Chang Yueh-tsen; and no one with a mind trained and accustomed to analyse and appraise evidence will hesitate similarly to be unimpressed by the suggestion that the Minister of Justice cannot be guilty because he has hitherto borne a good character. In the interests of the nation we hope the young Minister has nothing whatever to do with the case. It is difficult to imagine any single incident that could inflict a greater measure of moral injury on China than the connexion of the Minister of Justice of the Chinese Republic with the opium smuggling at Shanghai. Our struggle with the opium evil has always been a matter of national pride, because it denotes that the race continues virile in spite of official corruption and inefficiency. And our foreign friends are never tired of pointing to our work in extirpating the curse as proof of Chinese sincerity and the right to live. It would be a massive blow at our moral prestige among the nations if it were true that the Minister of Justice of the country was no more than a smuggler of the detestable drug. But the blow would

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have fatal effects if the Government and the Parliament of China conspired to shield the Minister of Justice, whilst the world already sees him lying under the shadow of the great scandal. Any attempt to suppress or Burke the most rigid inquiry into the case will brand Parliament and the Government with moral treachery and the fate of wrong-doers. It is, however, impossible to secure such an inquiry if the Minister of Justice is finally confirmed in his office by the Senate. Just as a man cannot be judge in his own case, so—with greater reason—an accused cannot be his own judge.

THE DUTY OF THE SENATE.

Although in confirming the appointment of Mr. Hsu Shih-ying and Mr. Chang Yueh-tsen, the House of Representatives—or, to be just, the majority that voted for them—have proved false to principles whose assertion conditions the moral fabric of modern society, we look now to the Senate to revise the decision of the lower House and justify its right to exist as a separate body, charged with the duty of correcting the blunders and miscarriages of judgment on the part of the House of Representatives. And in this connexion we have specifically to couple the name of Mr. C. T. Wang, the Vice-President of the Senate and call on him to see that the national mandate for the

total exclusion of Mr. Hsu Shih-ying from the Cabinet is obeyed by Parliament, although General Tuan Chi-ju, as Premier, is determined deliberately to flout public opinion by insisting upon his protegee's inclusion in the Government. This duty rests on Mr. Wang by virtue of his position as a political leader and as a Chinese Christian who insists upon righteousness in public life. If he fails on this testing occasion to translate into practice what he has hitherto been preaching, we fear he will forfeit the right to be considered seriously in the future. It would be hard to formulate a stronger case against the final confirmation of Mr. Hsu Shih-ying as Minister of Communications than is to be found in the following statement made by Mr. Wang in the course of an interview, reported in our issue of the 4th ult:

"Discussing the question of selecting men for official posts, Mr. Wang held that it should be the aim of the Government to place only men of recognised ability and training in responsible posts. He was emphatic that the old corrupt officials must go—and for ever. He did not believe that they were capable of doing anything honest or substantial, owing to the peculiarities of their past, which were often erroneously described as experience. Whatever experience they possessed, continued Mr. Wang, consisted in the art of reading the wishes of the superior or powerful leaders and the art of 'dragging.' Men of special training must be employed; but an honest novice is better than a dishonest expert. The old officials were, however, no experts. Mr. Wang further expressed the view that as soon as the Government was manned by men of modern mind and training instead of our worn-out drudges of the mandarin type, the country would progress."

We tell Mr. Wang and his fellow senators that, not even under the degenerate days of the Manchu, would a man like Mr. Hsu Shih-ying have been suffered to hold high office. And unless Chinese under the Republic have sunk low—very low, the man must be hounded out of public life.

A successor can be easily and quickly chosen from a number of able and competent men. The ablest of them all is, perhaps, Dr. Jeme Tien-yu, the builder of the Peking-Kalgan road and a Chinese engineer with an international reputation. With this great engineer in the Ministry of Communications, we would have an admitted expert for work that demands the services of an expert; and not the least of his other qualifications is that—like Dr. Chen Chün-tao, another expert for work that demands the expert—he is temperamentally not a party-man. In the hands of these two Chinese, the revenues of the country will be safe, and there will be no danger that the same will be used and applied to other than national ends.

The House Of

CONFIRMATION OF CABINET.

OCCASION ATTRACTS LARGE CROWD.

The Cabinet was approved by the House of Representatives yesterday afternoon, as submitted to Parliament by the President. Three of the nominees, however, do not seem to enjoy the entire confidence of the House, namely Mr. Hsu Shih-ying, Minister of Communications, Mr. Ku Chung-hsiu, Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, and Admiral Cheng Pi-kuang, Minister of Navy. They received 284, 277 and 246 votes respectively—the total number of votes cast for each individual Minister was 455. As it only required a small majority of 228 votes to be successful, these gentlemen were smuggled along with the other members who were heartily received by the larger portion of the House. It is interesting to note the fact that Mr. Hsu Shih-ying is disliked for his dubious life and character; Mr. Ku Chung-hsiu is censured for his eagerness to accept a post in the Cabinet to the detriment of party interest; and the case against Admiral Cheng Pi-kuang is his old age and lack of energy. It will thus be seen that, while Mr. Hsu Shih-ying seems to be the best off among the three gentlemen named, the case against him is really the worst. The very fact that he merely secured 284 votes out of a possible total of 455, after having done so much for the various parties and the M. P.s. shows how infirm his position is. It is probable that he would not have secured approval had he left his election to the natural course of events. The following list of votes cast in favour of the various Ministers was announced at the session yesterday:

Mr. Fan Yuan-lien, M. of Education.	439
Gen. Tuan Chi-jui, M. of War.	432
Dr. Chen Chin-tao, M. of Finance.	391
Mr. Tang Shao-yi, M. of For. Affairs.	376
Mr. Chang Yueh-tsen, M. of Justice.	357
Mr. Sun Hung-yi, M. of Interior.	345

Mr. Hsu Shih-ying, M. of Communications	284
Mr. Ku Chung-hsiu, M. of Ag. and Commerce	277
Adm. Cheng Pi-kuang, M. of Navy.	276

Notable Facts About Votes.

There were some very striking cases of "independent" voting yesterday. One of the members voted against all members of the Cabinet except the Minister of War, who is of course the Premier himself. Two or three voted for all the other members except the Minister of War. There was some laughter when all the *pu-tung-yi* (I object) votes on a single balloting paper were read aloud in succession and suddenly followed by the only one *tung-yi* (approve) vote in favour of the Premier as Minister of War. A certain portion of the members seemed to take great pride in voting against the Premier as Minister of War as they clapped hands loudly every time a vote against the Premier was announced. In one or two cases the voter seemed to have changed his mind after he had recorded his opinion of Admiral Cheng Pi-kuang or Mr. Sun Hung-yi; for it was discovered when the ballots were scrutinised, that the word *pu* (not) of the "not approve" had been covered

by a small dot, which cancelled the validity of the votes. The Speaker, however, decided to be generous; and he announced that these votes were valid. One of the members did not seem to know the person he was voting for as he wrote his name as Hung Yuan-lien instead of Fan Yuan-lien as it should be. This vote was considered to be "bad" by an almost unanimous vote of the House.

Intense Interest in Gallery.

It was plain from the very start that the general public was immensely interested in the proceedings of the afternoon. As early as half past 12 o'clock, the side galleries were already well filled with spectators. Every seat in all the galleries was occupied some time before the meeting was actually begun. The number of spectators was so large that rows and rows of men had to stand behind regular seats provided for the visitors. Nor were

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the ladies in any way behind in enthusiasm. They took complete possession of their gallery to the extent of squeezing out the two House Guards—the only men in that part of the galleries. Two of them were particularly brave. They sat right through the whole session until the final results were announced. As the result of the presence of the large crowd, which formed a solid wall round the galleries and thus effectively prevented any air which might have entered the House, as well as the interruption of the electric current which rendered the fan useless, the atmosphere in the House was intensely close. The honourable gentlemen in the main hall were even worse off as all the doors on three windy sides were closed, leaving only the western side open, thus admitting the unwelcome sun into the already overheated hall.

Meeting Opened.

The meeting opened at 1.15, when the Speaker announced that there was a quorum. After the usual reports and the reading of documents received from the State Department, the Speaker informed the House that there was a large number of cases of absence without leave and requests for extension of leave of absence to be dealt with. Efforts were made to settle these questions one by one but debates were constantly provoked and too much time, needed for the Cabinet question, wasted. A proposal was made and carried to postpone the discussion of such matters.

Beginning of the Fight.

The gauntlet was immediately thrown down by the Opposition when the Speaker announced that, according to the programme, the request of the President for the confirmation of the Cabinet was ready for voting. This was at 1.35 p.m. When the announcement was made that the Government had added the name of Premier Tuan Chi-jui to be confirmed as Minister of War, one of the members at once moved that votes be cast for all the members without delay. This brought one of the Opposition members to his feet and he demanded to know

if the M.P. Ministers were to be dealt with as M.P.s. or nominees for the Cabinet. He objected to the voting for or against these M.P. Ministers as the question whether an M.P. could accept office as a Cabinet Minister had not been settled. He proposed that the names of Sun Hung-yi, Chang Yueh-tsen and Ku Chung-hsiu be excluded from the list of Cabinet Ministers and not to be voted for until they had formally resigned from the House.

In reply to this a member delivered an eloquent speech, urging the House to take action without further delay as the nation had been too long without a proper Government. He asked if the House was to let the country remain without a properly organised Cabinet in view of the many pressing questions, especially that in connexion with diplomatic affairs. He urged the House to take a broader view of the situation and cast aside personal prejudices. The question of the Committee report referred to by the previous speaker, he said, was not to be compared with the urgent necessity of having a proper Cabinet. The speech was punctuated by applause.

The Speaker's Duty.

A member then proposed that the agenda of the day should first be altered if discussion was to take place. The Speaker then attempted to explain some technical points as to why the question of Sun Hung-yi, etc., Here he was interrupted by a member of the Opposition, who demanded to know if it was the duty of the Speaker to express any views on a contested point. If he wished to speak as an ordinary member, he cried, let him come down from his platform. (applause). The Speaker then announced that it was necessary to alter the programme of the day as the question of the Premier as Minister of War had not been included in the original agenda. This suggestion was accepted by the House without opposition.

The Opposition's View.

It was now the Opposition's turn to speak. Mr. Chang Po-lieh delivered an effective

reply to the speech of the leader of the other party, which supported the proposal to vote immediately. He asked if the House was going to vote for its own members, whose right to become members of the Cabinet was under debate. He recognised the necessity of

immediately having a Cabinet but repudiated the idea of voting for any body. If Messrs. Sun Hung-yi, Ku Chung-hsiu and Chang Yueh-tsen, he said, were still members of Parliament, the House could not allow the Government to nominate any of its member for government service until such members had been released by Parliament; but as a matter of fact Messrs. Sun, Ku and Chang had not been released as their resignation had not been accepted. The House might vote for other Ministers but certainly not for the honourable gentlemen he had named. It was their duty to resign from the House first. He emphasised the fact that, as members of Parliament, they were responsible to the people direct, while as members of the Cabinet they were merely responsible to Parliament. He asked pertinently to whom were the M.P. Ministers responsible. His speech was also received with frequent applause.

The discussion then became confused—several members trying to speak at the same time. The leaders were apparently quite sure of their ground for they were seen to wave their hands to their colleagues to stop the wordy war and call for a decision. Finally the Speaker ruled that further discussion should cease. The question was then put whether or not the agenda was to be altered to discuss the question instead of immediately casting votes for the Cabinet. The Noes had the decision.

Premier Tuan's Inaudible Speech.

Meanwhile Premier Tuan Chi-jui had entered the Hall in military uniform. He was immediately ushered to the rostrum by the Chief Secretary of the House amidst loud applause and delivered a speech, giving a rough explanation why the members had been chosen to form his Cabinet. He spoke in such a low voice that it was impossible to hear him from any part of the house except the front benches. Many members moved forward to catch what he was reading from a paper but their efforts at listening were useless. Although the Premier's

voice was inaudible, the speech was applauded at the end, and the Premier immediately left the Hall.

Casting of Votes.

Balloting papers were distributed at 2 p.m. when all the doors of the Hall giving exit were closed. It was the usual tedious affair,

during which many of the spectators in the galleries left the premises, unable to bear the suffocating heat inside. The casting of votes itself was quickly done but the counting or rather reading of the votes took a considerable time. This process ended at 6 o'clock, and ten minutes later the Speaker announced the final result. The news that all members of the Cabinet had been approved was received with loud applause, in which, however, the Opposition refrained from joining.

1. The Ministers (all) shall meet in the office of the President every Friday to report on and discuss administrative questions. They shall dine with the President.
2. The agenda of Cabinet meetings shall be submitted to the President before the meeting; and one of the Ministers shall afterwards report to him the results of the meeting.
3. That all mandates submitted to the President for seal must first be signed and countersigned by the ministers concerned.

OPIMUM COMBINE'S ULTIMATUM. *Rep. 8/7/16 - 19 6.* **DEMANDS EXTENSION OF TIME TO SELL OPIMUM.**

We have received the following letter from Mr. E. W. Thwing regarding the discreditable attempt of the Opium Combine in Shanghai to secure an extension of the time-limit for the sale of their opium stocks, which have accumulated as a result of their greed to extract every cent that can be wrung out of the victims of the drug. We understand that the Chinese Government has sent Mr. Wu Chao-chu, Councillor of the Foreign Office, to investigate the claim of the Combine. We have to express the hope that the Government will resolutely decline to yield to the demand of the opium-traffickers:

The Editor, "Peking Gazette".

Sir.—From information at hand from Shanghai, it seems that the Opium Combine have sent *an ultimatum* to the Chinese Government at Peking saying that unless the time for the sale of their stocks of Opium in Shanghai is extended 9 months beyond March 31st, 1917, they will no longer pay the extra \$3,600 per chest. This was the money given by the Combine, for the opening of Kuangtung, Kiangsu and Kiangsi, as arranged by President Yuan Shih-kai, Liang Shih-yi, and his men.

This may all be bluff on the part of the Combine, but if they do refuse to pay this *ex ra* duty, it will be breaking their agreement and will give China an opportunity to undo a great wrong, and at once close the three provinces above named. For money, and the hope of a crown, Yuan Shih-kai sold a part of China into the power of the Opium Combine. Let new—a new—China free these provinces! We hope *no extension*, under any circumstances, will be given to Opium!

Yours for China,
E. W. Thwing.

September 2nd 1916.

British Opinion.

In this connexion it is interesting to quote the following passage from a leading article which has appeared in a recent issue of the *North-China Daily News* on the subject. So

far as real British interests are concerned, we take it that this expression of opinion is decisive and final. After referring to the agreement made between Yuan Shih-kai's administration and the Combine by which the latter was permitted to trade in the drug in the provinces of Kiangsu, Kiangsi and Kuangtung up to the end of March 1917, our senior morning contemporary at Shanghai says:

"But when that agreement comes to an end, the public will wish to make sure that it does come to an end. As regards the Settlement itself, of course, there is no question as to what will happen. At two successive Ratepayers' Meetings, the community has given a mandate to the Council to see that all opium shops are closed by March, 1917; and from this decision there will be no going back. But the rumour, we admit that it is no more than a rumour, that the Opium Combine is endeavouring to get an extension of its agreement with the Chinese Government up to the close of 1917 is very persistent, and the slowness with which sales of Indian opium have latterly been taking place, certainly lends colour to it. AT ANY RATE WE TRUST THAT THE BRITISH MINISTER WILL MAKE SUCH REPRESENTATIONS TO THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT AS WILL EFFECTUALLY PREVENT ANY CHANCE OF THE RUMOUR BEING JUSTIFIED BY RESULT. It may be objected that the British Government has nothing to do with any agreement between the Chinese Government and the Opium Combine. That is correct in the sense that last year's agreement was concluded entirely without the Minister's knowledge. But it would be difficult to persuade the Chinese at large of that if the agreement were to be extended. We have hitherto stood out for the just observance by China of her agreements respecting opium as Great Britain has most justly observed her side of all such bargains. But to these agreements there is a limit, by which not only Great Britain is, but all her subjects should be bound. Long before that limit was reached Great Britain had definitely finished for ever with the opium trade. It is not desirable that any of her subjects should continue in it for one hour beyond the earliest possible date at which the trade can be ended."

THE NEW MINISTER OF JUSTICE.

Sept 7, 1916 — 12. 6

SHANTUNG TU CHUN ON THE OPIUM SCANDAL.

Some of the Tu Chuns in the provinces seem to have a great objection to the nomination of Mr. Chang Yueh-tsen as Minister of Justice. Following the telegram from General Chang Hsun, in which the Tu Chun of Anhui, severely criticised the new Minister of Justice, General Chang Wei-chi, the Tu Chun of Shantung, has also despatched a telegram to the Government vigorously attacking Mr. Chang Yueh-tsen. He pointed out that the scandal involves an infraction of the law of the land, has affected the country's prestige and brought about an infringement of sovereignty by foreigners. For these reasons, the Tu Chun declares the new Minister of Justice, Mr. Chang Yueh-tsen, cannot exonerate himself from blame.

Continuing, the Tu Chun points out that the Minister of Justice is a man who understands law, and the smuggling of opium is prohibited by the law of the land. How can the Government allow a man to go unpunished who is acquainted with the law and commits deeds contrary to the law of the land. Granting that the smuggling of the drug was committed by his party, the Shantung Tu Chun argues, that the new Minister of Justice must have some knowledge and must have connived at his attendants' illegal doings. Another aggravating circumstance is the fact that he, the Chief judicial officer appointed to administer justice, is implicated in such a crime.

After regretting that the country's prestige should suffer by this opium scandal, General Chang Hui-chi suggests that the Generals, Members of Parliament, the Shanghai Taoyin, the Minister of Justice and all others who appear to be involved according to the evidence should be handed over to the law courts and the procuratorate should be instructed to institute a public prosecution against them.

CONGRESS OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Will Assist Government to Resume Specie Payment.

Sept 6, 1916 — 12. 6

Among the many subjects discussed at last Saturday's meeting of the Congress of Chambers of Commerce now in session in the Capital was a proposal by the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce that specie payment should be resumed by the Government Banks at the earliest possible date, the merchants being willing to assist the Authorities in this direction, if necessary. The proposal received the support of the representatives of the different Chambers from the provinces present at the meeting; and it is understood that a petition will soon be submitted to the Government in the name of the Congress, asking a date to be fixed for redemption of notes. Meanwhile the Congress will notify the Government that if there is no reserve to cover any portion of the notes now in circulation in the market, the merchants will place the necessary funds at the disposal of the Government. It is estimated that twenty million dollars can be raised to help the Government and in this event, the funds will be treated as new capital for which new shares are to be issued.

THE CABINET MINISTERS

Sept 1916

THEIR RECORD AS GIVEN BY THE PREMIER.

The following is a rough sketch of the past careers of the Cabinet Ministers as presented by Premier Tuan Chi-jui to the Senate yesterday:

Tang Shao-yi.

Mr. Tang Shao-yi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, graduated in one of the schools in America and once held the post of Taotai of the Tientsin Customs, from which post he was promoted to the rank of Shih Lang or Vice-President of the Board of Foreign Affairs. He was later Commissioner to America. He was Premier of the Republic of China during the first year. He is the leading authority on politics and diplomacy. I am sure Mr. Tang will give perfect satisfaction if given the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs at this time of diplomatic crisis.

Chen Chin-tao.

Dr. Chen Chin-tao is profoundly learned in economics and also well acquainted with diplomatic affairs. In the late Tsing regime he held the post of Chief of the Department of Accounting in the Board of Revenue. After holding the post of Minister of Finance during the early days of the Republic, he was appointed Commissioner of Financial Affairs, during the tenure of which office he resided in foreign countries, made careful investigations into financial matters there and in every way made himself thoroughly acquainted with financial conditions in China as well as in foreign countries. He will therefore perform his duties well as Minister of Finance.

Sun Hung-yi.

Mr. Sun Hung-yi was once chairman of the District Council of Tientsin and later member of the Tse Yi Chu of Shuntienfu and Chihli. He was one of those who petitioned the then Throne for the establishment of the Parliament. He was elected a member of the House

of Representatives upon the establishment of the Min Kuo. He is also instrumental in the restoration of the Republic. As he excels both in knowledge and ability he will certainly give satisfaction as Minister of Interior.

Chang Yueh-tsen.

Mr. Chang Yueh-tsen is a graduate of the College of Law of Japan and holds the degree of Bachelor of Law. He is a member of the House of Representatives. As he is a man of sound mind and great energy as well as highly capable and well learned, he will surely be able to reform the administration as Minister of Justice.

Cheng Pi-kuang.

Admiral Cheng Pi-kuang obtained his naval training in a foreign land, where he learned the art of navigation of which he has a perfect knowledge. He has proved himself to be thoroughly well trained in his profession. He once held the post of captain, commanding the cruisers *Haiyang* and *Haichi*. He is a man of steady mind and well balanced judgment. He will certainly show what he is capable of doing if given the post of Minister of Navy to utilise what he has learned and acquired in training and practice.

Fan Yuan-lien.

Mr. Fan Yuan-lien is learned in the science of law and pedagogy and has been engaged in educational work for many years, achieving marked results. In character he is immune to corruption and exceedingly capable and learned. He will satisfy the citizens as Minister of Education.

Ku Chung-hsiu.

Mr. Ku Chung-hsiu is a graduate of the well-known Waseda University of Japan; and is a member of the House of Representatives. He is alert in mind and capable to the extent of being useful.

Hsu Shih-ying.

Mr. Hsu Shih-ying was once chairman of the International Society of Prison Reform. He is rich in experience and capability. He will certainly give satisfaction as Minister of Communications.