My dear Henry:—

We are in Korea at last, Morgan and Dixey and myself, and after a strenuous week as befits the servants of Theodore Roosevelt we are beginning the second round a little better equipped for things in general than we were a seven days ago.

We had our first audience with His Imperial Majesty last Monday, and it was wonderful to behold. There have been few like it I'll warrant. Much ado beforehand the preparation of speeches and the like, and all the correspondence with the Foreign Office and the Chamberlains and all the rest.
The Emperor sent a guard of honor consisting of about twenty underfed and weatherbeaten men, whose uniforms had seen better days but a long time before and about whom the plumes were the only respectable items of wearing apparel. They were officered by a couple of Captains of Police, moth eaten beard effects in faded blue, hollow chested and sallow.

There was a special chair for Mr. Morgan and we, Paddock the Secretary of Legation, Dixey and myself all had green covered conveyances of our own and the military attache or rather the Commander of the Legation Guard in another creation the like of which the Chinese officials disport in the Land of my adoption.

I had been unpacking things and typewriting so that I left for the Hotel to dress about half an hour before we were due at the Palace. My Boy had been ill, and was not about and as is usual in the effete East he had packed all my things when I left Tokyo. In consequence I knew where nothing was and had to call in all the Korean servants and start them on a still hunt through my trunks to find white neckties and gloves and all the rest of the necessary paraphernalia. The result was that I was clothed but not dressed and arrived at the Legation
just as the procession was getting under way. That of course was very bad form. There was a Korean Palace Official in his gold clothes walking along beside the Minister's chair, the Buglers were tootling and all was serene and most impressive, while I my tall hat over one eye, my necktie around my ears and my coat on any old way rushed by in a rickshaw. That upset things a little for you see the Palace is just next door and the sentries at the gate were already saluting as I hurried in to find my chair. Luckily I got in and by making the coolies run, a most undignified thing for the Rising Young Diplomat on his first sight of Royalty, I was inside and past the startled entry folk before the rest had been able to get well inside the door and brought up a very bad last with my face dripping and bowed my way past the Lord High Chamberlain and all the Generals in the Korean Army and as it is mostly Generals there was a good many. That was done and then we waited. Dixey was the greatest thing you ever saw? He was clad in the white coat and heaven blue breeks of the Boston Cadets. I don't wonder that those people could have produced I492 when they have such lovely clothes. You might think that Dixey was a Lieutenant Colonel or something of the sort but he's not. He was only a high private and was clad as such. Of course though he had a sword. That was borrowed from the British Legation. There had been a Major of a Scotch Regiment there who had gone on to Manchuria and luckily he had left one of his weapons otherwise Dixey would have been obliged to get a Korean sword from the Prison Keeper who had bought the thing as a curiosity. He had found a belt that the Captain of the Marine Guard had beer wise enough to have on hand and thus arrayed he went into the Palace. Morgan was also clad in gold clothes a heritage from Petersburg where the secretaries are obliged to wear a uniform. Paddock and I were in evening dress. The Koreans were much impressed by the fine turn out and the Baby Prince, The Omelette as he is called being a son of Lady On the Number One Concubine could not take his eyes off the brilliant costume. The Marine Officer was jealous. The Young Prince had
been brought in, shook hands all around. He was by far the best of the Outfit and had truly regal manners. He is a bright youngsters of about ten years and seems to promise much better things than the real heir, who is a man of thirty and quite dotty.

After much to do we were ushered into the Imperial Presence. The Emperor and the Crown Prince and the Chief Bureaucrats had draped themselves tastefully around a table at one side of the room and behind them stood the Chamberlains and Ministers of the Household. The Emperor had on the mourning dress of grass cloth and was capped by one of the little winged things that you see in the old Chinese pictures giving Court Scenes in the time of the Kings. He seemed very much interested in everything particularly in Dixey's uniform. Mr. Morgan gave him an autograph letter from the President which contained a lot of hot air and which I had been holding with both hands—all swaddled in Imperial Yellow silk, and tied with a fine silk cord.

Then the Minister went on with the speech, the Interpreter in blue and gold and pigeon's egg trimmings standing by with head lowered. This was great. The Emperor dawdled with the letter and sniggered at Mr. Morgan. The Crown Prince drooled and smiled foolishly. Then the Emperor got hold of the President's letter and looked at it over, Morgan talking on in the meantime and the rest of us standing at attention. Out in the Hall the Bureaucrats were holding the Baby Prince on their shoulders so that he could see what Pa and the Foreigners were doing. We could hear him asking questions every now and then in a heavy stage whisper. When the speech was over the Interpreter translated it and at all the nice parts about the ties that bound the two Nations and our great interest in His Majesty's health, the Emperor smiled all around and seemed much pleased. Then he replied in a few hackneyed words and asked us each a question in turn. How was Paddock and whether Dixey and myself had had a pleasant journey. We of course told him that anything else in
travelling toward his dominions would have been impossible.

Then we bowed ourselves out as we had come in. Once before the
throne and once after, in the middle of the Hall and once again
at the doorway. That was all except the sweet champagne after
we went into the antechamber again. Never was placed better
named than that room for it is there that all the
Japanese demands are presented and the poor monarch has to fork
out a good deal of his hard squeezed wealth.

We toasted the Ministers and all to the Generals and then
the Young Prince came in again and we talked to him and asked
him about the man of war he used to run up and down the ver-
anda. With this we bid them all farewell and went home with
the guard tootling as before.

You see the Place is right next door and so when we
reached our own yard we could look back and see the Emperor
on his side porch rubbering over to see how we got out of
our chairs. Of course we paid no attention. Later the little
Prince was held up again by the Bunouchas and he too had
a look at how we paid off the guard of honor, ten dollars
per and finally went into the office. That finished the
audience but I had a lot of work to do and so could not
change and later in the day we capped the climax by receiving
the German Minister on the front lawn, Morgan and Dixey, and
myself in evening clothes and watching that very lively man
tear up our sod as he carreered wildly about on a China
pony.

Can you think of any country in the world where
such things could happen? I can’t. Don’t say anything about
the high private’s uniform for there might be some criticism
and it was really an admirable scheme for it impressed the
Koreans as nothing else could have done.

Well, Henry I wonder what you are doing these days.
You have not told me what your plans are for the summer or
thereafter, so you see that you are not the only who can
kick at not being completely informed on the doings of the
other fellow. Hope that everything went off splendidly and
that the future looks bright. Yours ever,