

year, (Kung Hsin Chao arrived at Ottawa in June, 1909), was expected to facilitate its operation. The agreement, however, was not finally concluded. The recognition and ~~interview~~ reception of the Chinese Consul-General must have been one of the first tasks of Joseph Pope in his new capacity of Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs and his responsibility under the new Act, for relations with foreign consular officials in Canada.

An amusing letter on the privileges of foreign consuls was "privately" written by Pope to Col. Sir John Hanbury Williams, Secretary to the Governor General, on September 4, 1909:

Have you seen Colonial Office despatch No. 515 of the 14th August, 1909, notifying us that the Imperial Government will in future grant customs facilities to foreign consuls in the United Kingdom, or in the language of the Foreign Office "will accord to consular officers the usual privileges granted to an Ambassador with regard to examination of their luggage and effects and those of their suite"? "Suite" sounds very imposing, doesn't it? I suppose this means that we must give up the fight, for if consuls are to be considered as Ambassadors in one respect, and if their clerks are accounted a "suite", it is only a matter of a short time before they will be "Your Excellency" - and another British tradition will have disappeared. (1)

These examples show the tendency of the foreign consuls to perform diplomatic functions with the result that they rose in official importance and prestige. In fact the contrast between the formal status of consuls and the functional role they actually played in the diplomatic field was very marked, and received official attention.

(1) Pope Papers. Semi-Official Correspondence. Vol. 94.