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Peking  
10. at: 1886.

My dear Dr. Scherzer,  
I have rec<sup>d</sup> your  
letter of the 18<sup>th</sup> January,  
respecting your nephew, Mr.  
J. Scherzer, &c.

We Residents in China are  
surprised to learn from the  
European papers that the Chinese  
Govt. is on the very eve of  
commencing the construction of  
Railways &c, and we are  
equally amused at the sudden  
formidable appearance of  
various Syndicates ready for  
Govt

any demands on purse &  
power to contract for anything  
China calls for. But here  
on the spot, although we wd.  
all be glad were such rumours  
to prove true, we have no  
knowledge of any such step  
as either determined upon or  
even seriously under consideration.

Of course we must be ten years  
hence the Railway era today  
than we were ten years ago,  
and Railways are more talked  
about by Chinese officials  
now than when you were in  
Peking, but rather a

beginning will be made one,  
ten, or twenty years hence,  
no one is able to say: and  
one date is just as likely as  
another. The young Emperor  
will probably be declared of  
age in a couple of years &  
possibly His Majesty's personal  
assumption of the active duties  
of government may be marked  
by some great changes:  
that however, remains to be  
seen. At the present moment  
China is not offering employment  
to Civil Engineers and I have  
not received any special order

to procure such. Many men  
have been recommended to me, &  
many have applied to me for  
railway work &c: for the  
present I can do no more than  
acknowledge the receipt of such  
communications & applications.

Lady Hunt - thanks for your  
kind inquiries - was well when  
she last wrote; she went home  
four years ago & is now in  
Brussels.

With kind regards,

Yours very truly,

Charles Lyell

