

Turkish Expedition to Nejd.

21. Finally, and in reference to my telegrams, I beg most respectfully to submit that, at the present time, the crucial Chiefs are loyal to their engagements, and are, I believe, trusting to our preventing the peace at sea being broken by any and all parties.

22. At the same time both these Chiefs and the Imaum Saood are anxiously awaiting the views of Government on the points submitted by them, and may be essentially injured in their interests and prospects should these views arrive when it had become too late to prepare and arm for the impending crisis.

23. The pearl fisheries and trade will not be lost sight of by Government in connection with a possible Turkish occupation of the Arab littoral and islands. The fisheries have, I believe, from time immemorial, been held to be the common property of the Arabs of those islands and that littoral. The trade in pearls, whether as respects their export or providing the means for prosecuting the fisheries, is largely in the hands of our subjects and *protegés*.

24. In brief, and without in any degree wishing to lend any undue importance to matters relating to the remote regions temporarily entrusted to my political charge, I would still respectfully and earnestly submit that this Turkish expedition may, if carried out, injure the civilizing work of a generation in a few months, and that the fact of the expedition might have indirect results, by no means limited, to the basin of the Gulf itself. For if it be true, as Sir Lytton Bulwer writes—"that there is hardly a spot in the world which can improve without the influence of that improvement extending itself to regions apparently remote," it may, I think, be equally true that the remotest spot cannot be suddenly revolutionized, or thrown back in its commercial and political career without the influence of that convulsion or injury extending itself to regions apparently wide apart from, independent of, and superior to, it.

No. 199

Telegram dated the 24th April 1871.

From—COLONEL PELLY.

To—Political Secretary, Bombay.

POLITICAL Agent, Baghdad, telegrams: Second detachment left Baghdad for Bussorah yesterday evening; cavalry and artillery march down.

No. 200

Telegram dated the 25th April 1871.

From—COLONEL PELLY.

To—Political Secretary, Bombay.

Depêche Recommandée.—Political Agent, Baghdad, telegrams: It is said that if expedition to Nejd be successful, it will eventually be directed to acquisition of Bahrein, Muscat, and Arabian coast.—Telegram ends.

Mail steamer reports Turkish frigate at Busreh awaits sailing orders. No news of *Forle*.

3834

Turkish Expedition to Nejd.

No 201

Telegram dated the 28th April 1871.

From—COLONEL PELLY.

To—Political Secretary, Bombay.

MASTER of a bughla arrived deposes that Turkish authorities Busreh wished him to carry mules for expedition. He declined saying I might object. They rejoined Colonel Pelly will not object as he knows Muscat and Bahrein belong to Turkey. Turks then engaged other two bughlas.

No 202

Telegram dated the 2nd May 1871.

From—COLONEL PELLY.

To—Political Secretary, Bombay.

IMAUM SAOOD and Bahrein Chief write that Turkish Arab Chief of Kowait is preparing to aid expedition. Imaum requests Kowait may be restrained or Imaum be permitted to act by sea. Bahrein Chief relies on trucional engagements, and requests advice and protection. My respectful opinion is, that Turkish expedition is on every account inexpedient, and should, if possible, be averted. But Indian Government are not committed to interfere under trucional engagement as between Wahabees, Kowait, and Turks. I think we could not assent to a naval attack by Turks or Kowait on trucional Chiefs loyal to their engagements with us.

I respectfully solicit early instructions on this telegram and that of 22nd April, as I am dependent on Native sailing craft for communication with Arba coast.

English merchant writes from Lingah : traders much excited and deprecate Turkish more.

No 203

Translated purport of a letter from SAOOD BIN FAYSAL AL SAOOD, to COLONEL PELLY, Resident in the Persian Gulf,—dated, the 23rd "Mohurram" 1288 (corresponding with the 14th April 1871).

AFTER COMPLIMENTS,—I received your valued letter and was much pleased therewith.

You, Sir, wrote in a friendly manner that I should respect the peace at sea. Please God, I will maintain the peace at sea.

2. I would inform you that the people of Kowait, when they understood that I had taken some of my Districts under God's power, caused some oppression to some of my subjects. I then found out that they had written to the Dowlah* that Saood had only got his own through the Resident, and that Saood certainly was there, but was placed there by the Government. †

* Turkish understood.

† British.

These complaints to the Dowlah were heavy : the intention of these complaints was to put the Dowlah at enmity with me and introduce Abdullah.

You, Sir, know that they are sea-faring people, and my desire is to meet them and fight them* at sea in case of their fleeing to their ships. Should you see fit, give me leave against them, otherwise please order them to keep from all molesting what you deem correct is what I desire to do.

* Kowait people.

(True translated purport.)

(Signed) S. SMITH, Major,

Asstt. Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

3835

Turkish Expedition to Nejd.

No 204.
Translated purport of a letter from EYSA BIN ALI AL, Khaleefa, to COLONEL PELLY, Resident in the Persian Gulf,—dated the 19th "Mohurrum" 1288 (corresponding with the 10th April 1871).

AFTER COMPLIMENTS,—I have received news from Kowait through a Bahrein man who had met Sheikh Abdullah bin Subah, Chief of Kowait, that he was to inform me that the Sultan's ships were expected for the attack of Kuteef and Bahrein.

Should this be true news, it must, of course, be known to you. Should the news be false, it is still needful that I should acquaint you with it.

I am awaiting your advice.

(True translated purport.)

(Signed) S. SMITH, Major,
Asstt. Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

No 205.
Translated purport of a letter from EYSA BIN ALI AL, Khaleefa, to COLONEL PELLY, Resident in the Persian Gulf,—dated the 1st "Suffur" 1288 (corresponding with the 22nd April 1871).

AFTER COMPLIMENTS,—I have to inform you regarding what formerly passed between the Kowait people and Mahomed bin Khaleefa when he was among them.

First, they wanted my late father, Sheikh Ali bin, Khaleefa, to let Mahomed return to Bahrein. The deceased did not agree to this on account of the Government.

They then took Mahomed to Kuteef, and it is known what disturbances followed.

Mahomed bin Khaleefa has received his punishment from the Government, together with those that were concerned with him.

* Kowait people. Now it is proved to me that they* retain their old enmity.

A few days ago I learnt from many sources that they have collected forces and craft, and intend war. They are in with the Osmanli Government, and intend disturbances by land and sea. I cannot suppose that such can occur. Formerly the Government opposed all Arabs breaking the peace at sea.

2ndly, Bahrein and all the Persian Gulf, it is well known to all, is under the protection of Government, and all are prohibited from breaking the peace at sea.

It is necessary for me to bring this to your notice. Whatever you order I will carry out.

I await your reply.

(True translated purport.)

(Signed) S. SMITH, Major,
Asstt. Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

No 206.
Extract from a private letter dated on board steamer "Arabia," off Bushire, the 29th April 1871, from MR. ROBERT PAUL, to COLONEL PELLY.

THE Lingah traders seem much excited at the idea of the Turks taking possession of Bahrein, and deprecate their attempting to do so.

वर्षाधिकार, सुरक्षित राष्ट्रीय अभिलेखागार।
भारत सरकार के माधीन
Copy Right reserved in the National Archives
of India.

Turkish Expedition to Nejd.

If such takes place, it will be ruinous to English influence on the Arab coast, under which the commerce of the Gulf has progressed so satisfactorily.

The Lingah people say they would as soon see the Persians in Bahrein as the Turks.

(True extract.)

(Signed) S. SMITH, Major,
Asst. Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

No. 207

Statement of NAKHODA HYDER, of the Bugla "Moobarekkee," under British colors, made before MR. EDWARDS, Uncovenanted Assistant Resident, Persian Gulf, on the 27th day of April 1871.

I ARRIVED at Bushire yesterday evening, having left Busreh on Friday, the 21st. While at Busreh, Khuleel Effendi and Salim bin Bedr, on the part of the Turkish Government, wished to charter the bugla Moobarekkee for purpose of sending mules to Kuteef. I objected to take them on the plea that there were Arabs at Kuteef who might object to the mules being landed, unless some Turkish officials and troops were on the spot. They then suggested that I should go to Bahrein and there wait the arrival of Turkish steamers. I said I could not do this, for Colonel Pelly might object; they said no, that Colonel Pelly would not object; that he knew Bahrein and Muscat, where they intended going, also belonged to the Turkish Government. I would not, however, be persuaded to come to any terms with them, although they promised to be liberal. They then made arrangements with two buglas,—one a Kishm, one belonging to Khaled, and another belonging to Hajee Moobarekkee of Deelim. The mules had not arrived yet at Busreh, but 500 were expected daily.

There were two Turkish steamers at Busreh. But there were no troops on board. One steamer was expected with troops and munitions of war from Baghdad.

Abdullah bin Faysul was reported to be at a place called Zalfee above Kowait with 3 or 4,000 Bedouin Arabs, and it was reported at Busreh that the Mentifile tribe had been ordered to march and join him.

(Signed) J. C. EDWARDS,
Uncovenanted Assist. Political Resident
in the Persian Gulf.

No. 208

No. 505—130, dated Bushire, the 20th May 1871.

From—LIEUT.-COLONEL LEWIS PELLY, C. S. I., Her Britannic Majesty's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

To—The Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Political Department.

IN continuation of my letter* as per margin, and previous correspondence, concerning the Turkish expedition from Baghdad to Nejd, I have now the honor to enclose copies of

* No. 481—118 of 6th May 1871.

† Under date 6th, 8th, 11th, 13th and 15th May 1871.

further telegrams† which I have submitted to the Right Hon'ble the Governor in Council on this subject.

Turkish Expedition to Nejd.

2. On receiving your two telegrams* informing me that the intelligence received by His Excellency the Viceroy from Home and from Colonel Herbert was "irreconcilable," and give no instructions until he receive "precise intelligence," I considered that I could no longer detain the Bahrein messenger, and I therefore permitted† him to return carrying with him acknowledgments of the letters‡ of His Highness Saood and of the Bahrein Chief framed in terms conformable with your telegram of 13th ultimo, copies of my replies are now appended.

* Dated 8th and 10th May 1871.

† Vide paras. 2 and 6 of my letter above-noted, No. 481—118.

‡ Vide appendices to my letter above-noted.

3. I understand that the "entire forces"* of the Turkish expedition left Fao for Kowait in transports on the 18th instant,† and it may be assumed that the fleet is now in that harbour.

* Some three or four thousand.

† Vide Colonel Herbert's telegram appended.

4. In the absence of any Government vessel, I am unable as yet to observe the movements of the expedition; but as I learn from your telegram of the 10th instant that Her Majesty's gun-boats *Maggie* and *Hugh Rose* have been ordered to the Gulf, I shall hope soon to see these vessels, and arrange for watching the proceedings of the Turks, particularly in respect to Bahrein or any other crucial chiefdom.

* Vide telegram of Superintendent Fao, dated 18th May 1871, also Colonel Herbert's telegram of 18th idem.

5. It appears* that cholera had already broken out on board the fleet, and had in some instances proved fatal.

6. It is to be hoped rather than expected that this expedition may not spread cholera along the Arab littoral—at present the only portion of the Gulf regions that has escaped this curse.

7. I gather from your telegram of the 16th instant that the Ottoman Porte have assured Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople that no attack on Bahrein or the other independent crucial chieftains is contemplated; 2ndly, that no maritime operations in the Gulf are contemplated; and 3rdly, that the vessels of the expedition are "only intended as transports."

8. This intelligence will undoubtedly be re-assuring to all the crucial Chiefs who, while they acknowledge the obligations of their treaty-engagements, appreciate also, with equal clearness, the rights or claims with which those engagements invest them.

9. Assured on the highest authority that no attack on a crucial Chief by a Turkish force will have place, the instructions respectfully solicited in my telegrams as to what course I and a crucial Chief should pursue in the event of such attack would seem to be rendered unnecessary.

* Vide paragraph 10 of my letter No. 481—118, and my telegram of 8th May 1871.

10. But two questions* remain on which I should be glad to be honored with instructions.

1stly.—Can we assent to a Turkish warlike fleet making the harbour of a crucial Chief a basis or depôt for operations against a power on friendly relations with that Chief?

2ndly.—Can British subjects lawfully continue in employ on board Turkish vessels-of-war or transports while those vessels are prosecuting warlike operations in respect to which the United Kingdom is neutral?

11. Under the declaration that the Turkish fleet does not contemplate any maritime operation, it may appear superfluous to allude to a theoretical question on this subject. But as a grave and general impression prevails among both Arabs and Persians to the effect that the Turkish fleet purposes, if it be

Turkish Expedition to Nejd.

able, debarking its forces at Kateef or Damaum, and that such debarkation can only be effected by force, and by aid of the fleet's artillery, I trust I may not be held as insinuating any doubt as to the good faith of the assurances of the Ottoman Porte, if I venture respectfully to bring under notice the existence of this impression. For it will be obvious to the Right Honorable the Governor in Council that a debarkation of this character would constitute a maritime operation, would afford ground for misrepresentation and even misunderstanding of our own known policy of preventing all naval operations by the littoral powers of the Persian Gulf, and would necessitate my emergently soliciting instructions.

12. But as the contemplated emergency might, and probably would, find me or the British commander at a distance from the telegraph, it seems prudent to ask beforehand what attitude I should assume, or what measures or proceedings (if any) I should take in the event of the supposed emergency occurring?

P. S.—A report has prevailed here to the effect that His Highness Saood had again beaten His Highness Abdullah. This report requires confirmation. But there is, I think, little doubt that the Nejd tribes are favorable to Saood, and that the expedition of the Ottoman Porte may find a march into Central Arabia more readily planned than executed.

10209

Telegram dated the 6th May 1871.

From—COLONEL PELLY.
To—Political Secretary, Bombay.

MESSENGER from Bahrein and Nejd begs me to telegram for reply to questions in my telegrams of 22nd April and 2nd May. I have requested him to wait until Monday evening, when, if not further instructed, I purpose replying to Inaam I have no instructions, and to Bahrein that Government expects him strenuously to maintain the maritime truce.

None of my telegrams are sent direct to Foreign Secretary.

10210

Telegram dated the 8th May 1871.

From—Political Secretary, Bombay.
To—Resident, Bushire.

GOVERNOR telegraphed to Viceroy on fourth with reference to your telegram about Wahabee Ameer Saood and Esan bin Khalifa of Bahrein as follows:

“Saood requests Kowait may be restrained, or that he may be permitted to act against him by sea. Bahrein Chief relies on tracial engagement, and claims advice and protection. I conclude remonstrance will be made if not already made at Constantinople, as it is impossible to foresee to what Turkish interference at the same moment in Red Sea and Gulf may lead. It is probable Turkish Government may count on our known policy preventing all naval operations by littoral powers in Gulf. But Turkey no party to truce. To prevent Wahabee from acting by sea against Turk or Kowait, if allied with Turkey, is practically an active interference in favor of Turkey. Neither Wahabee nor Kowait parties to truce. No ship Royal Navy in Gulf, nor, I believe, any going.—Telegrams ends. To which the under-mentioned was received from Foreign Secretary:

“Governor telegram of fourth: Information from Home and from Herbert irreconcilable. Viceroy has telegraphed to Sir Henry Elliot.”