

JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1869.

Status of the Chief of Bahrein.

S.H. 35-36.

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No. 35.

No. 5, dated India Office, 30th April 1869.

From—HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ARGYLL, K.T., Secretary of State for India,  
To—Government of India.

WITH reference to Your Excellency's letter in the Foreign Department,  
No. 82, dated 13th March 1869, and to

From Foreign Office, 16th April 1869.  
To " " 21st "  
From " " 26th "  
To " " 27th "

previous communication on the same subject, I forward herewith, for Your Excellency's information, copy of correspondence noted on the margin, containing a statement of the views of Her Majesty's Government respecting the status of the Chief of Bahrein.

No. 36.

Dated Foreign Office, 16th April 1869.

From—RIGHT HON'BLE E. HAMMOND, Under-Secy. of State for Foreign Affairs,  
To—HERMAN MERIVALE, Esq., Under-Secretary of State, India Office.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to transmit to you, to be laid before the Duke of Argyll, a copy of a note from General Hadji Mohsin Khan, together with translations of the letters from the Sheikh of Bahrein, herein enclosed, and I am to state, for His Grace's information, that one set of these translations was furnished by the Persian representative, and the other was made by the translator employed by this Office.

Dated 13th April 1869.

To—RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF CLARENDON, K.G., Secy. of State for Foreign Affairs.

GENERAL HADJI MOHSIN KHAN presents his compliments to the Earl of Clarendon, and has the honor to transmit herewith letters and translations of the Sheikh of Bahrein to His Lordship.

General Hadji Mohsin Khan avails himself, &c.

#### TRANSLATION.

Copy of a petition of SHEIKH MAHOMED, son of KHALIFA, which he wrote to the Governor of FARS the NAWAB HISSAM-EL-SULTANAT.

THE petition to the resplendent presence of the Most Noble, Most Illustrious, Most High, Most Exalted, and goodly Nawab Husame Sultana, the days of whose puissance, greatness, and glory may God prolong!

The sacred mandate, worthy of all obedience, which was issued for the upraising of the head of (me) the servant (of Your Highness), together with a shawl cloak, which was sent as a robe of honor, have we been glorified by (receiving on) their arrival in the charge of the exalted Mirza Mahdi, a clerk for Foreign Affairs, and unto us there ensued by the multitude of the kindnesses of the great and goodly Nawab, the extreme of exultation, also the communications which were on the exalted part of the great and goodly Nawab, the said exalted personage delivered with us, and they became a cause of great hope of (your) servant.

And the arrangement, the declaration of which was necessary, did we settle with the said exalted personage and it is as clear as the dazzling sun that the island of Balnsyn are a part of the land of the dominion of the exalted (Turak) State, and also that we are the subjects and servants of the exalted State, and our petition is a petition to the resplendent presence of His Most Exalted Majesty powerfully puissant, the shadow of God upon earth, the Sultan divinely strengthened and rendered successful, the cream of the Sultans of the horizons,

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the possessor of the kingdom by inheritance and by merit, the King of Kings, may our souls be his sacrifice, and may God eternize his rule and his dominions, and we have presented it, and the said exalted personage will submit it to the sacred presence.

And on the subject of the pilgrims to Makha, and of their journeying by the route of the land of Hajd, by means of the Imam Faysal, son of Tarki (?), of the house of Su'ud, the exalted Mirza Mahdi proposed, in conformity with instructions, to send some one to him to settle the arrangement of this question. In accordance with the requirements of the sincerity and fidelity which actuate your servant, I did not deem it right that the Imam Faysal should negative his word by his deed, and he never fulfils that which he undertakes, also the Sheikhs of the Arabs, who are in these parts, do not obey him, and in the end there would only be detriment to the pilgrims.

Now, by the power of God and by His might your servant is about to set out in the days after the fast for Kumayt, and I will go to the tribes of Arals who inhabit the road from Kumayt to Makha, which may God ennoble, and I will assemble them, and I will covenant with them on the part of the Commander of the Pilgrim Caravan, and I will lay the details before the presence of the Government of the Exalted State, and whatever they see fitting that will we perform. And when the mandate shall issue to your servant that I shall undertake to enable the pilgrims, with God's assistance, to travel by the road from Kumayt to Makha, the honored, and that I shall cause them to return to the port of Alm Shah (Bushire) in health and safety, let your sacred opinion be made manifest.

And at the present time when the exalted Mirza Mahdi is returning we send with him in extreme humility and exceeding confusion a Waha (?) horse of the most noble of the steeds of the Arabs, in the form of a very humbe offering to the sacred presence. It is begged that you will close your eyes to his worthlessness, and honor us by acceptance, glorifying us with the issue of the sacred mandates worthy of all obedience on all occasions for the performance of services, and the most noble and exalted command shall be obeyed.

Submitted the 17th Ramadan 1276 (April 9th 1869).

TRANSLATION.

Copy of translation (from Arabic into Persian) of a petition of SHEIKH MAHOMED, son of KHALIFA, which he presented to the blessed ground under the feet of his Most Exalted, Most Sacred, and August Majesty, mighty as fate, the King of Kings, for whom may our souls be a sacrifice.

HE submits to the blessed ground under the feet of His Most Exalted, powerfully puissant, mighty as fate, and most sacred Majesty the King of Kings, glorious as Jam, the Asylum of the faith, the shadow of God upon earth, for whom may our souls be a sacrifice, and whose rule and dominion may God eternize.

Since the servant of the exalted State, in the path of obedience and duty in the stage of loyalty has been firm in belief and sound in principle, and has represented his wishes to the earth under the feet of the exalted Government, and they have caused the same to be submitted to the blessed earth under the Royal feet, and the favours of His Most Exalted and Most Sacred Majesty, the shadow of God upon earth have enveloped the condition of this servant and have honored me by the issuing of a mandate, resplendent as the sun and obeyed by the universe, and further have likewise deigned to glorify me by the donation of a jewelled sword, have also sent to my brother Ali, son of Khalifa, together with the issuing of a mandate, a sword mounted in gold, in the charge of the exalted in rank Mirza Mahdi, a clerk for Foreign Affairs.

The commands that on the part of the Government of the victorious State, in accordance with the exalted Royal decree were (entrusted) to the said exalted

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personage have been communicated to me, and the matters also which this servant fully manifested to the said exalted personage to be by him submitted to the earth under the blessed feet (are!).

It is more self-evident than the sun that the island of Balnayn from the days of preceding Sovereigns until this moment have been of the land of the dominion of the excellent State, and also that the Sheikhs and inhabitants of that place were always under the protection of the exalted State, prosperously occupied in serving the exalted State. For some little while past when a failure of duty was manifested on the part of us, servants, it arose from a want of the attention of the exalted Government to these parts. But since the favor of the exalted Government has been manifested towards us, and since they have deigned to commission the exalted Mirza Mahdi to make representations and to enquire about our circumstances, I and my brother, the Sheikh Ali, son of Khalifa, and the whole of the house of Khalifa, and the inhabitants of Balnayn are of the servants, subjects of the exalted State, and are ready to perform service and to manifest loyalty towards the exalted State, and Balnayn is a part of the land of the possession of the exalted State. And also in respect of the fiscal levies of future years for Balnayn and other services. I have fixed a sum and the settlement thereof, and have delivered the bond (Sunnud) thereof to the exalted Mirza Mahdi from the commencement of the present (Tartar) year of Monkey, which is the 20th of Shaban, and we henceforth every year will transmit the sum to the public Treasury. The standard of the lion and sun too, the ensign of the exalted State, is set up over our house.

Now that the said exalted personage is returning, we have in extreme confusion and exceeding humility sent with him two two-year colts, the fathers of which are of the Shadinan and the mothers of the Kaylula breeds, the most noble races of Arabian horses. It is begged of the multitude of the Royal grace and favours that the eyes may be closed to the worthlessness thereof, and that I may be honored by their acceptance.

The exalted Mirza Mahdi knows that this servant had the wish to procure some objects worthy of the (Royal) presence, but by reason of its being the end of the season that was not possible. Please God, he will at a future time procure some things worthy of the Royal presence, and transmit them. The most sacred and most exalted command shall be obeyed.

Submitted on the 20th Ramazan 1276 (12th April 1869).

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Translation of a letter addressed by SHEIKH MAHOMED, the son of KHALIFA, to HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS HISSAM-EL-SULTANAT.

Your Highness' letter with a Cashmere shawl as a gift were duly delivered by the Honorable Mirza Mahdi. I was fully acquainted with all the messages trusted to him, and all the necessary replies were therefore satisfactorily given.

We have confessed that the Isles of the Bahrein are the part of the Persian territory, and we the inhabitants, with the Sheikhs and Chiefs, are the Royal subjects of His Imperial Majesty, to whom I have already had the honor of addressing a petitionary letter, which will be presented by the Honorable Mirza Mahdi.

A proposal was also made by the Honorable Mirza Mahdi concerning the pilgrimage of the Hudjaz through the desert of Kedj, that an arrangement should be made with the Imam Faisul Iban Ali Saood for the managing of the journey, being a faithful and sincere servant of the Government, I take the liberty of stating that it would not be advisable to make any arrangement with the said Imam, as he is not a man of faith, and there is no honesty in his doing if he ever happen to promise anything, and, moreover, the Arabs of these countries are not in friendly terms with the said Imam, as I intended to make a journey myself towards Koweit, and the tribes of the Arabs of your Royal Highness thinks that the Government of His Imperial Majesty would deem it expedient.

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to appoint me the head of the ruler of the Hudjaz during the pilgrimage I shall take on myself to protect and conduct them safely as far as to Mecca and back to Bundur Bushire, provided that the Government of His Imperial Majesty would honor me with a firman of authorization on the subject.

I send with Mirza Mahdi one of the noblest of the Arabian horses, and hope that His Highness will be pleased to accept this invaluable present from me, and excuse me for the liberty I take.

Translation of a petition addressed to His Imperial Majesty the Shah of Persia by SHEIKH MAHOMED, the son of KHAIFA.

BEING an obedient and faithful servant of the Government of His Imperial Majesty, to whom I always used to apply for assistance and help in any matter of my affairs, and as His Imperial Majesty was graciously pleased to bestow upon me as well as my brother a firman of distinction and a sword studded with precious stones which were sent by the Hon'ble Mirza Mahdi, the Chief writer of the Foreign Office, I most humbly beg leave to say that all the messages trusted to Mirza Mahdi by the Government of Your Imperial Majesty were delivered to me, and to which I immediately answered as it will also be known to Your Imperial Majesty.

It is quite evident that the isles of the Persian Gulf were from the time of the ancient Kings up to the present moment in the possession of the Persian Government, and their inhabitants and the Sheikhs were ruled and governed according to the administration of their Governors, however, the slight neglect which was lately shown on our part towards Your Imperial Majesty Government was because that they had not for a while superintended and protected us, but as now the Government of Your Imperial Majesty has intended by sending over Mirza Mahdi to enquire into and manage the affairs here, I with my brother and all the inhabitants feel quite ready to declare at once that we are most willing to render any services required from us towards Your Majesty's Government, being already aware that the Bahrein (Persian Gulf) is the part of Persia.

I have also arranged the taxes and the rates to be annually paid to Your Majesty's Treasury for the future, and all the necessary instructions and the agreements thereupon are sent to Your Majesty's presence by that hon'ble dignitary. I will therefore hasten to hoist the flag on my residence bearing the "Lion and the Sun" which are the signs of the Persian standard.

I humbly take the liberty of sending to Your Imperial Majesty two colts of pure Arab origin by the mothers named Shadinan and Kaylula (they are two years old and very promising), which I earnestly hope that Your Imperial Majesty will be graciously pleased to honor me by accepting these worthless presents. I intended to send some more valuable presents, but unfortunately being the end of the season Mirza Mahdi knows that I could not acquire anything worthy of Your Majesty's presence, and I trust I shall be excused for this liberty.

Dated India Office, 21st April 1869.

From—M. E. GRANT DUFF, Esq., Under-Secretary of State for India,

To—RIGHT HON'BLE E. HAMMOND, Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office.

WITH reference to previous correspondence, ending with your letter of the 16th instant (with enclosures), on the subject of the political status of the Chief of Bahrein and his relations with the Shah of Persia, I am directed by the Duke of Argyll to acquaint you that he has taken the subject into his deliberate consideration, and I am to state to you, for the information of Lord Clarendon, His Grace's views as follow :—

The British Government have hitherto carefully abstained from recognizing either directly or indirectly, the validity of the claim, on several occasions, advanced

Exd.—J. T. F.

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by Persia, to the right of sovereignty over the island of Bahrein, as is apparent on the records of the Foreign Office, and especially in the despatches noted in the margin. Moreover, the Sheikh of Bahrein, in his capacity of an independent Chief has contracted obligations towards the British Government for the suppression of war, piracy, and the slave trade, which

Lord Aberdeen to Colonel Sheil, No. 38, dated 23rd September 1825.  
Lieutenant-Colonel Tarrant to Foreign Office, No. 15 of 17th February 1848.  
Sir H. Rawlinson to Foreign Office, No. 77, dated 10th May 1860.

are indispensable to the success of our measure of maritime Police, and which the local Governor of Bahrein, who is possessed of considerable naval resources, is alone competent to secure the fulfilment. And the Duke of Argyll is of opinion that not only our interests in the Persian Gulf, but those also of the several Maritime Chiefs on those waters, require the maintenance of this principle of action. To substitute the distant and ineffectual authority of Persia for the direct responsibility of the local Chief to the power which controls the maritime Police of the Gulf would be fatal to the policy which has so long and advantageously been maintained in that part of the world.

But although the Duke of Argyll is of opinion that this line of policy cannot now be abandoned without very serious risk of endangering the peace of the Gulf, he is not blind to the expediency of avoiding all causes of unnecessary irritation at the Court of Teheran, and he is willing, therefore, if Lord Clarendon should desire it, as a matter of courtesy to the Persian Government, to issue instructions to the Government of India to direct the Resident in the Persian Gulf (whenever he may on any future occasion, under orders from India, be about to call the Chief of Bahrein to account for any breach of his engagements to the British Government) to notify the fact to the British Minister at Teheran for the information of the Shah's Government. Instances, however, may arise in which the British Resident in the Gulf may be called upon, in the general interests of peace and order, to act promptly on his own responsibility, and the Duke of Argyll is not willing, in such cases, to waive what he considers as not only a right pertaining to, but a duty incumbent upon, the British Government.

Dated Foreign Office, 26th April 1869.

From—RIGHT HON'BLE E. HAMMOND, Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office,  
To—HERMAN MERIVALE, Esq., Under-Secretary of State for India.

WITH reference to your letter of the 21st instant, I am directed by the Earl of Clarendon to transmit to you a copy of the draft of a letter on the subject of Bahrein which His Lordship proposes to address to the Persian *Chargé d'Affaires* at this Court, and I am to request that in laying the same before the Duke of Argyll you will move His Grace to inform Lord Clarendon whether it meets with his concurrence.

The original enclosures in your letter are herewith returned.

Dated Foreign Office, April 1869.

Draft to GENERAL HADJI MOHSIN KHAN.

WITH reference to my note of the 16th instant, in which I acknowledged the receipt of your note of the 13th enclosing two letters from the Sheikh of Bahrein, I have now the honor to state to you that I have considered, in communication with Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, the whole question of the position of the Sheikh of Bahrein, and I avail myself of this opportunity to make known to you the views of Her Majesty's Government on the subject.

It is the fact, as yourself and the Governor of the Shah are undoubtedly aware, that the Sheikh of Bahrein have at different periods entered directly into engagement with the British Government, and I beg to assure you that the British Government hold the Sheikh to these engagements solely for the purposes of preventing piracy and slave trade, and by maintaining the police of the Gulf. If the Persian Government are prepared to keep a sufficient force in the

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Gulf for these purposes, this country would be relieved from a troublesome and costly duty, but if the Shah is not prepared to undertake these duties, Her Majesty's Government cannot suppose His Majesty could wish that in those waters disorder and crimes should be encouraged by impunity.

I need scarcely assure you of the friendly feelings entertained by Her Majesty's Government towards Persia, and their desire on all occasions to meet as far as possible the wishes of the Shah, and in regard to this question I have the honor to state to you that whenever it is practicable to do so, Her Majesty's Government will cause the Persian Government to be informed before hand of any measures of coercion against himself which the conduct of the Sheikh of Bahrein may have rendered necessary.

Dated India Office, 27th April 1869.

From—HERMAN MERIVALE, Esq., Under-Secretary of State for India,

To—RIGHT HON'BLE E. HAMMOND, Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office.

I AM directed by the Duke of Argyll to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, enclosing draft of a letter from Lord Clarendon to the Persian *Chargé d'Affaires*, relating to the position of the Sheikh of Bahrein, and I am to inform you, in reply, for His Lordship's information, that His Grace concurs in the views which this communication expresses.

Exd.—J. T. F.

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