

BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY

IN PERSIA

1906-1921

As Related To The General Policy

In Persian Gulf

Being the Thesis Presented

by

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for the Master's Degree in  
Political Science

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preface

This paper is neither intended to be a denunciation of a policy, nor the defence of another. It is simply a presentation of some events in the world history, that have once been of great importance to the parties concerned, and <sup>perhaps</sup> ~~may I dare say~~ of much significance to the world at large. It is but a page in the annals of European Imperialism in the Orient, and particularly of British Foreign Policy in the Persian Gulf. I trust that this account which is designed to be only a historical review of a situation, now exist<sup>ent</sup> no more, or to be exact, much modified in form, will not be taken as prejudicial to any person or occasion mentioned in these pages, since the writer has been obliged to touch upon events in which his father has been involved. Hoping that this discussion will throw some light upon a few facts that are as yet obscure, I have ventured to start on this hazardous task.

My grateful thanks are due to my teacher and guide in this task, Prof. Roger H. Soltan who has patiently and carefully read and corrected the manuscript, enabling me with his valuable suggestions to present this paper in its final form.

And finally I shall dictate these pages to the memory of my father whose papers and diary have been of much help and use to me.

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### Introduction

The Persian Gulf is an inland sea bounded by the kingdom of Persia, the Arabian peninsula composed of semi-independent principalities, and the Land of two Rivers (Mesopotamia) or The recently born Kingdom of Iraq. Along the Arabian coast, are situated the principalities or provinces of Trucial Oman, Al-Kattar, AL-Hasa, Al-Katāf, and Koweit. Scattered over the eastern section of the Gulf, are islands of various sizes, the largest of which are Bahrein, Kishm, Kais and Hangan. The last three islands are under the Persian sovereignty, though inhabited largely by Arab tribes, whereas the former, the biggest, richest, and most populated of all, has been leading an independent life, since the end of the eighteenth century, to come under British influence and what we may term a kind of protectorate, by the middle of the nineteenth century. Persia was never strong enough to forward her claims to suzerainty over Bahrein, until within the last decade. But the British have categorically refused to consider the Persian demands.

It was not until the days of Francis 8. and Charles VI in Europe that Persia got united under one dynasty, and Irak passed into the dominions of the Ottoman Caliphs. But Arabia proper, though nominally a dependency of the Turkish Empire, did not enjoy a united and coherent government, not even in modern times, and the present century. Notwithstanding the disunited aspect of the Gulf littoral, since the last quarter of the eighteenth century, an exotic influence from a far distant land appeared in the Persian Gulf, tending to maintain a steady, dominant and unfluctuating policy in those waters. I mean the British force. It is with the pressure of this force that we have to deal ~~here~~ in this paper, particularly as applied to the Kingdom of Persia, in a period of

fifteen years, from 1906 to 1921. It is the nineteenth century and not the twentieth that witnessed the establishment of that force in the Arabian littoral of the Gulf. The twentieth century is remarkable for the special significance that British force had for Persia herself. May I not be misunderstood. I do not pretend to say that in the nineteenth century, the British influence was at work only in Arabia and on the Arabian tribes and after having settled its designs there, it turned towards Persia in the next century, neglecting its accomplishments of the previous decades. What I take as my standard, is the intensity of the operation of that force. To all intents and purposes the British influence was much more exerted on the other side of the Gulf, in the nineteenth century. Its task was practically done in that region, when the new century was ushered in. It was with the aggravation of Russian aggression that England took a strong front in Persia, and later combining forces with her old enemy, wrote a new chapter in the History of Persia.

Persia stands as a united whole, and the difficulties of one part ~~will~~ would affect the other. Thus in dealing with the Gulf coasts, England had to deal also with Teheran, the seat of the Persian Government. For in dominating the Gulf, England had to have a policy towards Persia as a whole, rather than an exclusively Gulf policy.

The Gulf policy of Great Britain was a unity-- keeping out foreign preponderance, policing the waters, and welcoming disinterested <sup>commercial</sup> ~~economic~~ activity. But to maintain that balance, she had ~~had to give different policies for each of the countries~~ <sup>sets of</sup> to have different policies for each of the countries bordering the Gulf. It is the Persian policy of Great Britain that we are

to study, in the following pages. Of course in describing and tracing a policy, we can not avoid the internal affairs of the region in which that policy is at work. That is why an analysis of the internal situation of Persia during the period of our study, is imperative. We are to understand the circumstances that led the British Foreign policy to work, to bring pressure here and assistance there, now slacken then increase in severity, change direction and effect transformation, between the years 1906-and 1921.

The mastery over the Persian Gulf was once essential to the Indian Empire. As a matter of fact all the Asiatic policy of Great Britain, was bound up with the safety and defence of India. In the early days when there was a commercial institution trying to found ~~an~~ the Indian Empire, it was with much difficulty that the pioneers would get the support of their government. In those days England had no Asiatic policy. But with the treaty of Paris of 1763, and a generation later because of Napoleon's dreams, Great Britain came to acquire a definite policy in the Orient. Though at the end of the eighteenth century, England was left without a rival, in the waters of the Gulf, it was the nineteenth century that saw her first real and consolidated efforts to establish her unquestionable authority over that region. It was by hard labour that she succeeded in the task she had undertaken. Though Russia had her eyes upon the Gulf from the time of Peter the Great, it was not before long that she secured a foothold in the east, and directed her steps towards central Asia. Her direct point of contact with Great Britain, was then not in the waters of the Gulf but in the plains of Turkestan and the hills of Afghanistan. Yet she had never lost the idea of acquiring power in the Persian Gulf.

After Russia, Germany began to dream of a place in the sun. She too was thinking of India as a haven of prosperity and wealth, nursing and maturing plans in regard to the "Land of Rupees." Germany's designs were quite different from those of Russia. The latter could avail herself of armed forces, while the former could not use those in her "Nach Oosten" campaign. commercial influences and in other words economic imperialism had to prepare the way for political domination, and later trudge in its wake. In other words Germany was setting to fight Great Britain with the latter's weapon. And that combat was the more frightful and terrific, since Germany's move was but a blow at the very vitals of the British Empire. Germany determined to invade British markets in the East, and decided to undermine the British preponderance in the Gulf, was an enemy more dangerous than Russia.

Russia was befriended, after she received her punitive defeat at the hands of Japan, though the official pact was only signed in 1907. But it should not be thought that Russia though giving up her fantastic dreams about India, had forsaken her desire of incorporating Persia. It was the great task of England to prevent this. In the years preceding the war, it was obvious from the conduct of the British officials and representatives in Persia, that they were perplexed by the Russian approach to the southern confines of Persia. The case of Sir Walter Townley springs to my mind. He had to leave Persia, because he could not sit and watch the Russians annexing the country.

But unfortunately both for Persia and England, the policy of Sir Edward Grey was ~~and~~ dictated by fear. He was afraid of Germany and I can not question the genuineness of his fright. Grey's submission to Russia, was based upon that weakness of his. The Foreign Secretary had been oblivious of the fact that as



much as Great Britain was in need of Russia, the latter was in need of her. And that slip caused a situation that was on the whole unbecoming to the dignity and prestige of the largest Empire of the time.

British Foreign policy in the period under our study, was the work of two persons--Viscount Grey of Falldon, and Marquis Curzon of Kedleston. The first of them was in office from 1905 to 1916, and the other occupied the post of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs from 1919 to 1922. From 1916 to 1919, the Rt. Hon. ~~Arthur James Balfour~~ (later Earl) Arthur James Balfour, was at the Downing Street. He had no special policy of his own in regard to Persia. And even in his days, it was Lord Curzon who would carry measures on Persia, through the Eastern Committee of the War Cabinet. The names of Grey and Curzon remain forever associated with British Foreign policy in Persia from the year 1906 to 1921.

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## The British in the Gulf Prior to the Twentieth Century

The main purpose of this chapter is to trace the appearance and the development of ~~the~~ British influence, in the Persian Gulf, in the years preceding the present century. Englishmen ~~were~~ <sup>were</sup> not the first to invade the Gulf. The Dutch and the Portuguese ~~were~~ were the pioneers. The closing down of the Mediterranean, and the discovery of the new route to India brought those people to the waters of the Gulf. They lived in prosperity for a while, and vanished from the scene, by the middle of the eighteenth century.

In 1600, the English East India Company was established by a Royal Charter. Queen Elizabeth authorized the loyal and faithful merchants of <sup>the</sup> London City, to go and carry British prestige far and wide in the Middle East. In 1622 the Shirley Brothers who had previously gone over to Persia, could attract the Shah to the British, so that he consented to drive the Portuguese out of his territory, with the aid of the East India Company.

The French East India Company was formed in ~~2XXX~~ 1664, and had a factory set up in Bandar Abbas. The struggle between the British and the French Companies provides the material for the history of European colonization in India and the Gulf, during the next century. But the French never thought seriously of the Persian Gulf. England herself was not worrying about the work of her pioneers in the far-off East, and would only take pleasure in watching vessels bearing her flag, bringing home cargoes and all sorts of the delicacies of the Orient. It was not until 1763, that the British government assumed a definite policy regarding her possessions in the East. And it was from ~~that~~ time on that England realized the significance of the Gulf to the Indian Empire.

As early as 1622, the East India Company had signed a treaty with Shah Abbas the Great, getting permission to keep at all times two men-of-war in the Gulf, for the sake of keeping watch over the security of trade. After that a British factory was set up in Isfahan, then the Capital, and was carrying on a prosperous business. In the eighteenth century, the Gulf littoral was on the whole very disturbed. Piracy was frequent, and the decline of the Safavide rule in Persia, which resulted in the invasion of the country by the Afghans, Russians, and the Turks, caused anarchy and disorder, to the detriment of British Trade. Even in 1758, there was a talk of abandoning the Gulf for good. In 1750, the Isfahan factory had been closed down, because of the uncompromising nature of Nader Shah, the conqueror of the Great Mogul, who had dreams about building a navy in the Gulf.

The very year that witnessed the signing of the Treaty of Paris, saw the East India Company enter into new relationships with the Persian King. Karim Khan, the benevolent despot of Persia had a keen mind and valued highly the impetus that British Trade would give to Persian exportation. A factory was established in Bushire, and a treaty was signed between the Shah and The India Company. Six years later, the British attacked the Island of Kharg, in conjunction with the Persians, and destroyed one of the most ferocious of the pirate-chiefs.

It is unnecessary to go here into the details of the struggle with Napoleon. At times it ~~was~~ seemed ~~that~~ Bonaparte was successful with the weak King of Persia, Fath-Ali Shah. Missions came and went under Sir John Malcom (for three times in 1800, 1808, 1810), Sir Harford Janes (1808-1809), and Sir Gore Ouseley (1811). Finally a treaty of friendship was signed with Persia in 1814. By the terms of that agreement, the two countries pledged not to help each ~~other~~

other's enemies, and Persia was promised support in case of a defensive war. Later on when war broke out between Russia and Persia, the latter was calling upon the British to help her. And at last in the same year 1828, that Persia was decidedly defeated, and the treaty of Turkomanchai was signed by the terms of which capitulations were instituted in Persia, and Caucasus, and Georgia were handed over to Russia, England succeeded by diplomatic means, which meant in Persia's case, giving presents, gifts and money to the King and his courtiers, to cancel out the clause relating to support in case of defensive war, from the Treaty of 1814.

Now that Russia imposed her power over the Caspian Sea, she thought of pushing down towards the Gulf and India. All throughout the century, Great Britain and Russia fought a passive war in Central Asia. Persia was on the whole pro-Russian. Twice she precipitated war with England in 1837 and 1856, over the question of Herat in Afghanistan. Persia claimed sovereignty over Herat, and Russia was instigating her to vindicate her rights. Herat has been called, "The key to India", and England knew that if Persia would own Herat, Russia would get strong there, and have her way open to India. The Afghan question of the nineteenth century was based on those very fears. Russia used to help puppet Amirs in Afghanistan, and England would uphold anti-Russian chieftains. The story of Afghanistan in the nineteenth century, is long and interesting.

Both in 1837 and 1856 that Persia besieged Herat, England occupied the Kharg Island and Bushire. In the latter year, Persia was defeated and Shiraz was in danger. In his dismay, Naser-Uddin Shah signed his claims away over Herat, by the Treaty of Paris.

While events were going on in Afghanistan, England was busy fighting piracy and slavery in the Gulf. She subdued one by one

the Arab chieftains of Oman, Bahrein, Al-Hasa and the rest. Her policy was to force these sheykhs and rulers to submission, conclude treaties with them, and uphold them against the Turks and the Persians. Bahrein was thus lost to Persia. The Wahhabis and the Jawasamis were for a while teasing the British, but they followed the rest of the suit, and the latter were practically reduced to impotence. Another care that Great Britain was taking, was to prevent fights and feuds among the chieftains. Any time that one of them would challenge the other, English boats were there to help that who was more submissive. Great Britain reserved to herself the right of fighting and booying the Gulf, and that was never effectively questioned by either Persia or Turkey that were fastly losing their suzeranity over those waters.

Thus we see that by the end of the nineteenth century, Great Britain had acquired the preponderant position in the Persia Gulf.

In the last year of the last century England gained a real victory in the Persian Gulf. I refer to the treaty with the Sheykh of Koweit. This patch of territory is situated at the point where Mesopotamia meets the Arabian peninsula. Germany had hoped to make Koweit the Terminus of the B.B.B. railway. But England was too quick for her. Sheykh Mobarak of Koweit was promised a subsidy, and support of his position against the Turks, since the Arab chieftain had assumed an air of independence, and would not listen to the orders of the Porte. Mobarak promised in turn not to alienate any portion of his territory, without the previous knowledge and consent of Great Britain

Here I translate a part of the despatch of the Persian Consul-general(1) in Bombay, to the Foreign Office at Teheran. It is dated August 1901.

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(1) Muwakkar-Uddowleh, the father of the writer.

.....Your Excellency should know to what means Great Britain clings for the furtherance of her political designs. Sheykh Mobarak and other Arabs of his type, are ignorant and unaware of the world conditions. Indian Rupees and the kindness of England that can be more sympathetic than a mother, whenever the need is, will make them more and more of dupes..... There is no doubt, that the war between Mobarak <sup>and</sup> Ibn Rashid(1), is a work of the British. They do it firstly because they want to make Mobarak feel in need of them, and secondly, they wish to make troubles for the Ottoman Government, thus other Arabs will be tempted to disavow their allegiance to the Turks. If in this war, Mobarak would win, he would receive the victory, as a result of British financial aid and protection. The prime desire of England is to lay hands on Koweit, so that this railway(2) would start from Constantinople, come back to Baghdad, and end at Koweit, they would be in possession of the Key-station to the Gulf, which is ultimately the gate to India. By the same tricks that they got Bahrein out of the hands of the Persian government, now they approach the Koweit question .....

This despatch gives a good evidence to the methods of British supremacy in the Gulf. Setting some chieftains at variance, either act as mediators at the end, or letting one annihilate the other, thus weakening the authority of the Porte, England established her preponderance and power.

Russia watching closely the development of British influence in the Gulf, started on a plan of rival action in 1900. At this

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(1) One of the Arab chieftains living inland.

(2) The B.B.B. Railway.

time Great Britain was engaged by the war in South Africa, and could not concentrate much on the Gulf.

In the previous year (1899) Lord CURZON who was in the first year of his viceroyalty of India had sent a communiqué on the Persian Gulf, to the cabinet, which reads as such:

" The interests of Great Britain are mainly, but no longer exclusively Indian. Ever since the first visit(1) of the late Shah to Europe, Persia has been drawn increasingly into the vortex of European politics. She is one of those countries which must inevitably have attracted the attention of Europe, partly from an increasing infirmity, but still more from the opportunities suggested by their latent though neglected forces of strength closely pressing upon Persia and Afghanistan in the ever-increasing momentum of a power whose interests in Asia are not always in accord with our own, while the Gulf is beginning to attract the interest of other and sometimes rival nations. For the present our ambitions, are limited to prevent the interest we have built from being undermined. We have no desire to disturb the status Quo as long as it can be maintained; but we press for an early decision and for early action, since unless we bestir ourselves, there is good reason for fearing that the already trembling balance may be disturbed to our disadvantage. The advance of Russia across the deserts that form the natural barrier between East and West Persia could not be regarded without uneasiness by the government of India, for Russian pledges to respect the interests and independence of Persia are quite insufficient to save Persian or British interests from

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(1) In 1872.

erosive agencies." ~~(1)~~

The Boer war did not give an opportunity for the cabinet to resort to preventive methods against Russia. On the other hand, the Russian activity began to increase. Russian boats came on voyages to the Gulf. Though there was no profit in the business, since most of the merchandise were carried by British boats, the company formed in Odessa for the purpose of navigation on the Persian Gulf, continued its service. It was subsidized by the Russian government. Consulates were established in Bandar Abbas, Bushire, and Basrah. Even in the far-off Sistan, a Russian consulate was established which was seconded by Lord Curzon. A British post office was also instituted in that region.

The South African war over, the British government found time to warn Russia. At first Lord Lansdowne, the Foreign secretary exposed the British attitude in the House of Lords, on May 15, 1903. Starting the commercial interests of Great Britain, and admitting the same rights of others, he went on to say that, "We should regard the establishment of a naval base or a fortified port in the Gulf by any other Power as a very grave menace to the British interests, and we should certainly resist it by all means at our disposal."

Next, Lord Curzon, took a tour in the Gulf, accompanied by a naval squadron. After touching <sup>at</sup> Mascat, the boats entered the Persian Gulf, and at Shargah, in Oman, a Darbar was held on board the "Argonaut." All the Sheykhs of the vicinity, allies of Great Britain, flocked to listen to the representative of the British King. Thus he addressed the loyal chieftains.

"..... Why should Great Britain continue to exercise those powers? The history of your states and of your families,

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~~(1)~~



and the present condition of the Gulf are the answer. We found strife, and we have created order. It was our commerce as well as your security that was threatened and called for protection..... We saved you from extinction at the hands of your neighbours.(1) We opened these <sup>seas</sup> ~~ships~~ to the ships of all nations and enabled their flags to fly in peace. We have not seized ~~or~~ nor held your territory. We have not destroyed your independence, but preserved it..... the Peace of these waters must still be maintained; your independence will continue to be upheld; and the influence of the British government must remain supreme(2)....."

The viceroy had explicitly outlined the past and the pending situation of Great Britain in the Gulf. Moreover he had voiced the firm determination of the British government to keep at all ~~the~~ costs, the preponderant position of England in the waters of the Gulf. Lord Curzon touched also upon ~~the waters of the Persian Gulf~~ Bushire but because of the haughtiness of the governor-general of Fars, who had come to greet him in the name of the Teheran government, he did not land on the Persian soil.

Shortly after the Russo-Japanese war broke out, the conservative government of Great Britain was defeated in ~~1905~~ 1905, Curzon resigned his post in the first year of his second ~~year~~ term of viceroyalty, Sir Edward Grey went to the Foreign office, and Russia was befriended at the end.

I do not intend to go into the details of the Baghdad railway. All that I want to bring out is to show the importance of the line, the consequences that it would entail for Great Britain and finally the nature of the arrangements made in the years di-

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(1) Referring to the Turks and the Persians .

(2) "The Camb. Hist. of Brit. Forgn. Policy." Vol. III. 321.

rectly preceding the great war. It was in the year 1899, that as a result of the German Emperor's visit to Turkey, the German Anatolian Railway Company got in principle the concession for the construction of the famous line. Though at first the British wished to cooperate in the business, as it was expressed by Joseph Chamberlain, in his talk with Kaiser, in the same year, at the end they refused to enter the affair. The French had agreed to take a share in the enterprize. Great Britain desired to break down the supremacy of the Germans in the business and when unsuccessful in that she said that she would have nothing to do with it. Finally in 1903 the concession was formally signed away. This line would have brought damage to Great Britain in various ways.

In the first place, British navigation would incur much loss, since the overland route would gradually absorb the bulk of the transit trade, that was in the hands of the British firms. Secondly it would take Germany to the portals of India. As I have already said before, Germany intended to wreck the British trade. It was by taking ruin and discredit to the foundation stones of British supremacy that she had designed to secure a place in the sun. And the British opposition to the scheme, that gained strength, as time went on, can not be condemned in any way, since it was just a measure of defence.

It was impossible for England to hold out for long, especially after the Potsdam agreement in 1910, between Russia and Germany. The latter consented to acknowledge the former's political interests in Persia, while the former admitted the latter's commercial cares and concerns in the Middle East. England was naturally upset by the news. Moreover a branch line of the B.B.B. would get joined with the proposed Russian line from Teheran to Khanekain. Germany would furthermore build the Teheran-Khanekain line if Russia failed to

construct it, two years after the completion of the German line to Khanekain. Grey was perturbed. He complained that Russia had denied her ally's interests. And at the same time he felt that the matter of the Baghdad railway had to be settled in the most favorable way possible, since Russia had withdrawn her objections, in other words, the best had to be made out of a bad business.

Negotiations between Turkey and England started in 1912. An agreement was reached in Autumn. England gave up her opposition to the B.B.B. line, upon certain conditions. Turkey recognized the right of the British to light, bouy, and police the Gulf. The railway was not to be extended beyond Basrah, without British consent. In other words, Koweit was not to be made a terminus. Turkey admitted the status Quo in the Gulf. Her suzerainty over Koweit was confirmed, but the Sheykh's foreign affairs were confided to Great Britain. The British "Lynch Company" navigating the Euphrates and the Tigris, was left intact in its position. Special arrangements were made for a Turko-British Riverian commission which would place Great Britain in the command of the navigation of the rivers. A company would take up the construction of the Basrah and Baghdad Ports, in which the British would have forty percent of the capital. Finally England consented that Turkey raise her custom's duties.

The text of the agreement, was communicated to Berlin, in 1913. After some pourparlers, Germany and England, too, came to terms. The irrigation schemes of Great Britain in Mesopotamia, the British control of the navigation on the rivers, the previous consent of Great Britain to the construction of termini, ports, and stations on the Gulf, and nondiscriminations on the rivers and railways of Anatolia, were all admitted. For the exploitation of the oilfields of the region under question a corporation comprising fifty percent British, twenty five percent German, and twenty five percent Dutch

capital, should be instituted. England promised not to support any line competing with B.B.E., including the proposed line from Egypt to the Gulf, and lines intended as feeders for river navigation.

The new plan never worked out, since the Great war came soon and put an end to the whole business. German boats disappeared from the Gulf. And force, mechanic and physical force came to settle the disputes. Potsdam and the ensuing agreements all went into the waste-basket of the diplomats and the politicians.

### III. Persia's Loans and Concessions.

The first real concession granted to the Europeans, in the nineteenth century, was that of ~~or~~ the establishment of telegraphic communications. The British government were insistent to join India with London by a telegraph line, that need being especially felt during the mutiny of ~~QIXM~~ 1857. The attempt to lay cables along the Red Sea, had been a failure, and the line thru Asia Minor to Baghdad and Basrah, had not proved successful, because the Turkish government had little control over the tribes living to the South of Baghdad, and thus the telegraph line was in constant danger of interruption. The safest way was to extend the line from Baghdad to the Western frontier of Persia, thence to Teheran, then down to Bushire on the Persian Gulf, and along the coast of India. In 1864 after a long negotiation the obstacle to which, was the court party and the reactionary grandees, Naser-Uddin Shah gave at least his consent, on the condition that the line would become the property of the Persian government.

In 1870 a corporation by the name of "Indo-European Telegraph Company" took up the business, and, renting wires between London and the Russian boundary at Alexandrovsk, from the British and German governments, established connections from that point to Teheran, via Odessa, Tiflis and Tabriz. The line was continued from Bushire to Jask (on the Persian Gulf) by sea-cables, and from Jask to Karachi both by sea and land. From this time the port of Jask came virtually under the British control. The Persian government was more than unable to claim their sovereign rights over the gloomy port in Beluchistan. In 1864, the British government had secured a document from Sultan Thuwaini of Mascat(1)

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(1) Wilson "The Persian Gulf" 235-6.

stating that the British were allowed to construct telegraph lines in his territory.

From 1864 to 1905, the British laid a network of telegraphic lines in the Gulf. The center was the island of Jask, and was connected with Karachi, Gwadar, Chahbahar, Hanjam, Rishenra, Bushire, Bandar Abbas, and Fao (on the mouth of Shatt-Ularab).

Before dealing with the Karun navigation, I have to mention that fanciful and abortive concession of 1872. Naser-Uddin Shah athirst for money, granted in that year to Baron Julius de Reuter, a naturalized British citizen, the right of mining all the underground wealth of the country, constructing all the Persian railways, and founding a state Bank. This concession was hated by the Russians and Persians alike, and the British did not show any enthusiasm over it. Meantime Baron Reuter had not been successful in attracting the European enterprizers to his designs. Thereupon Naser-Uddin abrogated the concession. But Baron de Reuter would not remain passive. He had still ~~maintaining~~ the idea that he could do something in Persia. In 1889 he obtained once more a concession to start a Bank.

The Bank of Julius de Reuter, is none but the Imperial Bank of Persia. This institution as we shall see later on, proved of much service and value to the British. It would provide them with money and credit in those regions of Persia, where they could not get hold of any by other means. Under the cloak of commercial enterprise, the Imperial Bank would put at the disposal of the British agents, secrets and news essential to their tasks.(1) The Imperial Bank was accorded the right to issue paper money, and thus it could command a great power over the Foreign exchange. As a matter

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(1) Stated by General Dunsterville in his mamoirs.

of fact this Bank could set up arbitrary values, because it had the stock of the paper money. On the other hand the Imperial Bank brought a great benefit to the country. Modern banking was unknown to the Persians till 1889. The establishment of the <sup>Bank</sup> would facilitate commerce and stimulate the trade of Persia.

The other bank that came to operate in Persia, was the "Banque d'Escompte de Perse", or the Russian State Bank. This institution was a branch of the Russian Ministry of Finance. (1) It got established in 1891, to rival the British bank and foil the latter's activities. To quote Sir Percy Sykes, "Its operations are not conducted on business lines. Consequently the annual deficits must be great, not only from losses due to its operations, but also from the extravagant scale of its buildings and the huge salaries paid to its managers. However by lending large sums on real estate and by other methods the financial grip of Russia has been riveted in Persia; and the results are held to justify the expenditure of a few million roubles." (2)

However the Russian Bank achieved stupendous success for Russian diplomacy in Persia. By loaning on estates, it came to possess large tracts of land which were exempted from taxation. To guard these lands, was a pretext for interference on the part of the Russian army in later years. Moreover people favouring Russia, were protected by the embassy on the pretext that their properties were mortgaged to the Banque d'Escompte. The case of Shaa'Ussaltaneh and Mr. Morgan Shuster is the best evidence. That incident will be treated fully later on.

The opening of the Karun River in 1888 was a triumph for

(1) Sykes, "A History of Persia" vol. II. 375.

(2) Ibid.

Great Britain. In previous years, Messrs. Lynch Bros. had founded a corporation for the navigation of the rivers Euphrates and Tigris. The Karun follows into Shatt-Ularab, (1) and therefore it was of material interest to start a navigating line on that river in order to carry merchandize and passengers from the upland. The story of this concession is rather a long one, full of incidents showing the malicious and deterring influence of the Russians and the vacillating mind of the Shah. At last Messrs. Lynch presented a boat to the Shah, and began running it at their own expence, with an annual loss according to Sykes. That ended the matter. Construction of roads was also a part of the concession. And the Isfahan-Ahwaz road was opened up by the company.

It was during the Great war, that Great Britain benefited by this navigation line. And the motor route to Isfahan proved to be of much use for military purposes. The Russians though successful in checking the Karun concession, could obstruct other equally-beneficial enterprizes. In 1887, the Russian ambassador had obtained a promise from the Shah, that no railways would be built in Persia, without the previous knowledge of, and consultation with the Tsar government. Again in 1889, he had got the assurance that if within the next five years the Persian government would decide to construct any railway, no other company would be employed, but a Russian. That was why count Kapnist was in Constantinople in 1898, asking for a concession to construct a railway from Tripoli in Syria, to Koweit and the Persian Gulf. The Russian desideratum was Koweit. A line from Teheran to Mohammerah, and another from Tripoli to Koweit, would be a master-blow upon the prestige and the position of Great Britain.

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(1) The combined seaward stream of Euphrates and the Tigris.



The last great enterprize of the days of Naser-Uddin Shah, was the Tobacco régime of 1890. "This ill-judged concession gave full control over the production, sale, and <sup>export of</sup> ~~all~~ tobacco in Persia." (1) The Shah was to receive 15000 pounds per annum, in addition to a quarter of the annual net profits, after putting aside five percent. It was a great undertaking and the British concessionnaire, Mr. G.F. Talbot was sure of great results. The clergy showed themselves hostile to the concession, and the use of tobacco was ~~found~~ <sup>banned</sup>. Feelings ran high and riots broke out here and there. In Tabriz a multitude attacked the officers of the company, tearing down its placards. The uprising of the people began to assume wider scope, and once the Shah's troops had to fight down a band of rebels. After a great struggle the Shah gave way on January 26, 1892. And the concession met its death. £500,000 were loaned from the Imperial Bank, at an interest of 6%, the customs duties of the Gulf being mortgaged, and handed over to the concessionnaire. That comico-tragedy cost Persia a lot.

As Dr. Feuvrier (the Shah's European physician at the time) clearly states in his diary, Russians were responsible for a good part of the agitations. Quite unfortunately for herself, Great Britain did not meddle in the fiasco, and let the Russians do what they wished to. Henceforth the Russians were in ascendance. Naser-Uddin attempted one more concession. It was in the same year 1890. But the "Persian Bank Mining Corporation" was unfortunate from the start. It could not ~~command~~ command credit on the stock exchange, and crumbled four years later.

Here I shall not discuss in full the most important of all the concessions--the oil wells of Southern Persia. Its real value

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(1) Sykes, "A History of Persia" vol. II. 372.

fits into the events of that fateful year, 1914, and should be presented when we would reach that epoch. It suffices now to trace the origins of the Anglo-Persian oil company. An Australian rich man who had got some capital and wished to put it to useful work, got attracted by the prospects of the Persian oil, and obtained a concession from the Persian government, in 1901, for exploiting the oil fields of southern Persia. That gentleman, William Knox D'Arcy set down to work immediately. A detailed surveying was made, and at last struck out abundant oil in Khanikin. But the place was quite remote from the sea, and the transport of oil would prove costly. In five years, Mr. D'Arcy had spent 300,000 pounds out of his own pocket but had got sure of the existence of a great oil-field. Unable to continue the operations, he appealed to the then first Lord of Admiralty, Lord Selbourne, and by the latter's aid he got the help of the Burmah oil company and the famous Lord Strathcona. In 1908 oil was struck in Khuzistan. Now the enterprisers sure of the business, started instituting a corporation.

In 1909, the Anglo-Persian oil company had been formed with a capital of £1,200,000. The British public had at first little faith in the novelty.

From 1909 to 1913 the A.P.O.C. waxed stronger. A pipe line was laid from the interior to the coast, at Abadan, near Mohamerah. And there a refinery was built. Although the business was seemingly flourishing the scanty resources of the company would not meet the great expences involved. The help came from the British admirality in 1914, and that we shall see in another chapter. The Anglo-Persian oil company had troubles besetting its path. The most dangerous of all, was the hostility of the tribes and especially the Bakhtiariis. The regions in which this latter tribe were roaming about, had oil in plenty, but their intransigence would not allow

(1)  
 any operations. Large subsidies had to be given to the Bakhtiari to provide the working men and the company's staff with guards. Oftentimes those very policemen would molest them. At last the Indian government sent troops for the protection of the British, and progress was made thereafter in those dreaded localities. The Bakhtiari chieftains received shares in order to allow the extension of the business into their homes.

Hitherto I have been speaking only of concessions unaccompanied by loans. The second phase of the story begins from the year 1900, in other words from the first Russian loan. That transaction left a precedent. Concessions and loans were amalgamated. The greatest of Russian victories begin from that date. But no matter how much they ~~had~~ won, none of their gains could match in vital benefit, the oil-fields of southern Persia. That concession took the trophy of war for Great Britain in the Gulf and Mesopotamia.

As previously mentioned, the first loan of Persia was that of 1898. £500,000 were borrowed from the Imperial Bank of Persia, at six percent, to pay indemnities to the Tobacco Régie. The customs revenues of the Gulf ports, were mortgaged in return.

In 1900, Muzaffar-uddin Shah wanted money. Amin-uddowleh, the premier tried to negotiate a loan with London, and failed because the Englishmen were then busy with the Boer War, and greater issues were confronting them. And moreover the credit of Persia had suffered previously in the London Market. The Prime minister was dismissed and his successor a friend of the Russians, arranged for a loan with the Banque d'Escompte de Perse. The sum borrowed was 22,500,000 roubles (22,40,000) at 5%, for a period of seventy five years. The conditions were that Persia could not refund the loan, within the first ten years, that all the foreign loans of Persia

( special reference to the loan of 1892) should be paid from this sum, that the Persian government would not borrow from any state, without the permission of Russia and that all the customs-revenues except those of the Gulf region would be handed over to the Banque d'Escompte. That would subtract the dividends and return the surplus to the credit of the Persian government at intervals of six months.

This money was squandered in a short while, and again in 1902, another loan was contracted with the same bank. This time Russia got the right of constructing a road from Julfa on the Azarbayjan frontier to Teheran, via Tabriz. The new loan amounted to ten million roubles something over a million sterling. These two loans were disastrous for the Persian finance. The annual revenue at this time was around one million and a half pounds, and yet within two years, the Shah had borrowed double that sum, lavishing it on unproductive and even ruining expenditure.

The Belgian customs administration, also came about at this period. In 1898, a certain Belgian, M. Naus had been engaged by the government to direct the customs-Houses of Kermanshah and Tabriz. He soon got into favour with the Shah and in 1901, all the customs-Houses were entrusted to him. This M. Naus was rather unscrupulous and made himself in a short time obnoxious to the people. He became a great friend of the Russians, and used to deal contemptuously with the Persians. In 1907 the Parliament brought pressure upon the Shah and he was dismissed. But the customs-Houses remained in the hands of the Belgians until 1921.

The tariff arrangements with Russia in December 1902 was chiefly a work of Naus and his assistants. The new tariff was evidently a discrimination against Great Britain to the benefit of Russia. The charge of 5% was reduced to 1  $\frac{1}{2}$ % and 1  $\frac{1}{2}$ % in the case of

Russian petroleum and sugar, respectively, while tea largely a British import, was to pay 100% in duties. The new arrangement was not made public until the arrival of Viscount Downe <sup>(1)</sup> at Teheran in 1903. England had neither to repudiate the new tariffs and protest against them, or to make a treaty with Persia recognizing the new situation as a fait accompli and get the best possible. The second alternative was chosen, and in the same year 1903 a treaty was negotiated, by the terms of which England received a slightly better treatment.

In ~~1904~~ 1904 and 1905 Persia obtained by the permission of Russia two other loans. Both were from the government of India, through the Imperial Bank of Persia. The combined amount of the two loans, was £314,281, borrowed at 5%. The security was the customs-Houses of the south. Thus we see Persia had mortgaged by 1905 all of her customs revenues, leaving them to the foreigners and entrusting their direction to foreign hands.

In 1911 another loan was negotiated with the Imperial Bank of Persia. £1,250,000 was borrowed at 5%. This loan was effected prior to Mr. Shuster's arrival. And when Shuster tried to get a loan on purely financial basis from Messrs. Seligman Bros. of London, in the same year, both Russia and England impeded it and caused its failure. Thus when Shuster left under force in December 1911, the Persian government found themselves penniless.

From 1912 to 1921, the state was continuing its feeble existence, by British loans and subsidies. The advances from 1912 to 1914 amounted to £490,000 at 7%. Russia gave in the same period £1,891,500. In return an option for the construction of the Khurramabad railway road in Luristan, was granted to England, and the concession to build a line from Julfa to Teheran via Tabriz and

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(1) He was on a special mission to invest the Shah with the order of Garter.

one from Teheran to Khanekain on the Turkish frontier, was given to Russia. Persia pledged also not to give any concession having military, strategical, and political importance to any other Power, without the consent of Russia and England. In other words, Persia alienated this essential right of hers. Every concession could be looked at as having a military, strategical, or political importance.

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#### IV. The Persian Constitution and The British Attitude.

A Persian writer trying to underestimate the genuineness of ~~in~~ the constitutional movement, once said that the Persian constitution was born in the British Legation at Teheran, by the instrumentality of people who did not know what a constitution really was. The purpose of this chapter is to show how far reliance can be put upon the rash generalization of the fanciful writer. Our aim is to estimate the amount of British interest in the Persian Constitution.

Persia was not ripe for a constitutional government in 1903. Mr. Balfour believes that it has been interpreted by a large body of people as the right to do anything one wished to do. In other words constitutional government and anarchy were synonymous words to people whose minds were blank about each. Mr. Wratislaw, then the British consul at Tabriz, narrates in his book an amusing story, typical of the mentality of the man in the street, at the dawn of the constitution. He says that one day a rumour sprang out <sup>that</sup> in Tabriz, <sup>^</sup> hundreds of camel-loads of constitution were brought to the city, and would be distributed to the Populace on the morrow. Riza-Zadeh Shafak, a brilliant young modern Persian writer, and ~~the~~ holder of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from Berlin University, gives a still more illuminating incident. Banab a village-city in Azarbayjan, had elected its district council as ordained by the new system of Local Government. The people of Banab, could not grasp the meaning of a district council, consequently that body was obliged to introduce itself as a single person, and carved the following words on its seal, "His wishful servant <sup>(1)</sup> the council of Banab". Still other instances can be cited, which indicate the public mind of the time.

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**Footnote**  
(1) "His wishful servant" is used in Persia by the Ulemas while affixing their signatures to a document or paper.

But the picture should not be taken as dark as that. The constitution came as something fantastic to a majority of the nation. A good many in and out of the country, were surprized and even startled by its appearance. Still others looked at the innovation with fear and suspicion, and a large number tried to repulse it as heresy. But those who were pulling the strings, knew well what they were doing. There were profiteers, sons of chance, adventurers, and charlatans on the stage. There were bickerings, bargains, quarrels, personal gains, and all sorts of egotistic moves. There was murder and looting. The nation was not ready for a constitutional government leading to irresponsibility among the masses, in the terrible mess of the time. And yet, the Persian revolution was one of the most natural, and most timely events of the world. Just a review of the conditions in which the new century found the Persian Kingdom, would suffice to affirm this claim forwarded by the leaders of the constitutional movement.

Naser-Uddin Shah, the well-known despot and energetic ruler, fell before the bullets of a follower of the famous Jamal-Uddin-Al-Afghani, in the year 1896. His long reign was one full of events. As mentioned in a previous chapter, it was during his time that Persia lost her sovereignty over Herat, that Great Britain rose to dominance in the Persian Gulf, that European culture and European institutions filtered into the country, that concessions were granted to foreigners, and that Russian and British policies came to a sharp clash in the Middle East.

Naser-Uddin-Shah visited Europe thrice, and got alarmed by the degree of political freedom enjoyed by the occidental people. He was desirous of reform, but reforms to be effected only by his own initiative and will. He was extremely suspicious of European education, and did his best to check the grandees, in sending their sons for study to the foreign lands. One<sup>c</sup> passing through the streets of



his capital, he observed a few young men dressed in European Style. My father happened to be one of those young fellows who had recently returned from Europe. Another one of them was Hosein Kuli Khan Nawwab, the Democratic Foreign Minister at the time of engaging Mr. Morgan Shuster from America, and now a deputy in the parliament. These young men were planning to form a club on the model of those that they had seen during their sojourns in Europe. They sent an application to obtain the permission for starting a club. When the news reached Naser-Uddin, and he came to know that the petitioners were the men whom he had seen in the streets, he got enraged, and ordered a sharp warning to the insolent youth who had dared to imitate the "Farangis".<sup>(1)</sup>

Thus Naser-Uddin tried to repress the contagion of liberal thought. But two figures, each one prominent in his field, succeeded in arising the National Conscience during the reign of the reactionary Shah. One was Seyed Jamal-Uddin of Asadabad, Persia, known as Al-Afghani,<sup>(2)</sup> and the other Prince Malcom Khan, an Armenian convert to Islam, and a noted man of letters. Seyed Jamal-Uddin was twice invited to Persia, by the Shah, the first in 1886, and the last in 1889. At the first time he was made minister of war and a member of the Royal Council, his words carrying much weight in the responsible circles, and especially with the Shah. His ideas were soon found to be revolutionary, and he was permitted to leave the country for a "change of air"! The second visit of Seyed, was adventurous. The Shah tried to imprison him and he fled with a band of his disciples to the shrine of Shah Abdul-Azim, near Tengeran,

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1. Europeans. 2. Jamal-Uddin's nationality is a point of controversy. Many noted men, among whom Jurji Zaydan, the founder of the Egyptian review "Al-Halal", assert his Afghan nationality. General Houtum Schindler and Sir Percy Sykes mention him as coming from Asadabad, a village near Hamadan, Persia. I have got a proof for his Persian nationality, in my father's diary. On his second visit to Persia in 1889, Jamal-Uddin passed through Shiraz, where my father gained him at a dinner. Here Jamal-Uddin had told those present that he was from Asadabad of Hamadan.

from which place he was dragged out and exiled to Mesopotamia. Jamal-Uddin was a protagonist of pan-Islamism, and as such an inveterate foe of British Imperialistic policy. At times he intrigued with Russia against Great Britain.

Jamal-Uddin ended his years at Constantinople, surrounded by zealots from all parts of the Moslem world. He had succeeded in winning the Shi'elites of Karbala and Najaf to his plans, and Abdul-Hamid, the ambitious Sultan of Turkey, was unscrupulously encouraging him. Abdul-Hamid hoped to get elected as the supreme pontiff of the believers all over the globe, and Jamal-Uddin had promised him the high post. But the Seyed's enemies in Persia helped by the Shah, wrecked his opportunities.

Seyed Jamal-Uddin's influence was profound and deep over his disciples. The distrust of the European Powers, so ample and significant in later days, in the orient, was his inspiration for the most part. The British government had to deal with him, as a force to be reckoned with.

The other accountable figure Prince Malcom Khan who exerted mastery over the liberal-minded of Persia, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, was a different type of man. Prince Malcom Khan was not hostile to any European power and he never came into collision with any of their agents

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Prince Malcom Khan represented Persia at the British metropolis, from 1872 to 1889. When the Shah visited Europe, for the third time, at the latter date, he dismissed the old ambassador, on the instigation of Amin-Ussultan, the Atabak A'zam. The insulted man soon began to edit a newspaper called "Qanun", or "Law", in London.

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1. His title of Prince was an honorary one.

He advanced a plea for parliamentary rule, and supremacy of Law. The influence of the "Qanun on the rising generation, was complete. It echoed in unequivocal terms, the aspirations and the demands of the reformist.

Naser-Uddin's son, Muzaffar-Uddin was a weak man, much deteriorated in morals, kind-hearted, superstitious, and strongly lacking in will and decision. He was utterly in the hands of his degenerated courtiers who used to ho<sup>a</sup>rd money, rob the Nation, and sell honours, titles, and positions. Moreover he was badly ignorant of politics, and many say that he was illiterate, a claim, difficult to accept.

As soon as he got established on the throne, he sent home his father's prime minister, the well-known Amin-Ussultan. That was a hope to the liberals of the nation, and still more so, since the vacant position was offered to Amin-Uddowlah, a learned man of moderate disposition. The new Sa<sup>d</sup>ri-A'zam was professedly anti-Russian, and more or less inclined towards the British. Further hope was aroused by the appointment of Naser-Ul Mulk, a graduate of Balliol College, Oxford, later the Regent of Persia, to the Ministry of Finance. But Amin-Uddowleh had to quit office very soon, and Amin-Ussultan was back again. He was the man who negotiated the Russian loans.

From 1900 to 1903, Amin-Ussultan was wielding great power. He took the weak Shah twice to Europe, antagonized the British, and drew Persia into the Russian orbit. The Customs Convention with Russia, and the Shah's refusal to visit London, on his first trip, were his handiworks. The Times of August 27, 1903, announced that the Anglophile party was making plans to dethrone Muzaffar-Uddin, and replace him by his second son, Malik Mansur Mirza, Shua'-Ussaltaneh. Next came the news that the divines of Karbala and Najaf had petitioned the Shah regarding the sad plight of the country,

and upon his wavering answer, the leading "Mujtahid" had proposed to recognize the Sultan of Turkey, as the Supreme Pontiff of Islam, and offered him the protection of the Persian Kingdom. Amin-Ussultan was forced to resign, and flee from the country. That was in September 1903.

Amin-Ussultan was succeeded by Ayn-Uddowleh, an obstinate reactionary prince, who was reared in the traditions of the dying order. Ayn-Uddowleh is said to be the man mostly responsible for the Constitution, since his repressionist policy caused the outburst of the checked revolutionary tendencies. We may pass rapidly over the events of the years 1904 and 1905. Muzaffar-Uddin made a third tour of Europe in 1905, and was warmly received in St. Petersburg. The Russians had just got beaten in the Japanese War, and their disgrace had aroused wave of resentment against European domination, among all the Eastern Nations. Persia was not however immune from this general feeling, and there were signs of determination to repudiate the Russian tutelage, and sweep<sup>clean</sup> the Shah's court apparently favoured by the government of the Tzar.

Now was the chance for the British. They had no hope in Muzaffar-Uddin who was nearing his end. The crown-Prince, Muhamad Ali was an avowed friend of the Russians, and his evil genius, the notorious Shapshal, acting as his tutor, had filled his mind with fantastic ideas about the support forthcoming from the Emperor and the dangers inherent in a constitutional regime. Ayn-Uddowleh was not an ally of the Russians, and was actually suspected in later years of Anglophile sympathies; this assertion being strengthened by the fact that both Amin-Ussultan, and the Crown Prince, unconcealed friends of the Russians, were conspiring against him. As far as I

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1. Claimed by M. Panoff, upheld by Ed. Browne, and affirmed by the leaders of the revolution.

can see, Ayn-Uddowleh had no Foreign Policy, and his chief aim was to stifle the lulled voice of Liberalism. And since it was certain that the absolutism of the Kajar kings, and the irresponsibility of the degenerated courtiers, would work out as aid and abet to Russian designs, the British had no alternative but to ~~xxxx~~ throw their lot with the Liberals.

The inevitable came in December 1905. The people of Teheran rose against the arbitral rule of the Prime Minister, and were forced to submission. Next their leaders took sanctuary in the Shrine of Shah Abdul Azim, and Muzaffar-Uddin in his alarm, promised the establishment ~~xxx~~ of a court of justice. Normalcy returned for a while, but the Shah seemed not disposed to keep his word, and Ayn-Uddowleh was pressing his yoke harder and harder upon the people. Up till then there was no talk of constitution, and none spoke of changing the régime. All that the people wanted was the enforcement of justice and the dismissal of the obstinate prince-premier. But there was the chance for the liberal-minded, and they soon discovered that the British were ready to consent to the change in the system.

The Persian Liberals were not, on the other hand, willing to let the British replace the Russians. The Persian Liberals had the hope to play the British against the Russian, and so the other way round. That had been an old policy of the Shahs, sunk into oblivion since the last days of Naser-Uddin.

On July 19, a group of merchants and business men, met Mr. Grant Duff, the British chargé d'Affaires, in his summer quarters at Qulhak.<sup>1</sup> That was the turning-point in the destinies of Persia. The British representative told them in plain words that he would have no objection to the people taking sanctuary in the Legation

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1. A summer resort, near Teheran.

grounds at Teheran. By August 1, there were 13000 men in the British Legation, asking for justice! Now it was the British Chargé d'Affaires who took the demands of the people to the old Shah, and urged for redress. The Kind-hearted Muzaffar-Uddin instantly agreed to dismiss the Sadri-A'zam, and install the liberal Mushir-Uddowleh in his place. But the refugees at the British Legation had by then formulated new proposals. Mere dismissal of Ayn-Uddowleh would not satisfy the reformists who had been watching long for the opportunity to introduce the constitutional régime. The leaders of that huge multitude gathered in the Legation, asked for a constitution, the British Chargé d'Affaires once more transmitted their request to His Majesty, the new premier pushed the matter forth, a good many of the grandees supported the movement, and Muzaffar-Uddin submitted to the inevitable. On August 3, 1906, the Shah renounced his arbitrary rights and promulgated a decree announcing the grant of Constitution.

Tabriz had also followed the example of Teheran, taking sanctuary in the British Consulate, sending the British Consul to the Crown prince, and not dispersing until Mr. Grant Duff had telegraphed the news of the birth of Constitution. Mr. Wratislaw, then the Consul at Tabriz, gives a graphic picture of those days when his function was to act as middleman and conciliator between the Valiahd and his insolent subjects. In Rasht, Shiraz, and Isfahan, the people rose to protest against autocracy, and their counsellors were the British Consuls. The Russian influence was at a low ebb, and the people trusted the British agents, as their friends and well-wishers.

The "Majliss" proceeded without delay to write the constitution which was completed in December, and duly signed by the Shah, lying in His death-bed, and the Valiahd who had arrived at Teheran, shortly before. The Fundamental Laws were signed on December 30,

and Muzaffar-Uddin breathed his last, six days later.

The New Shah was crowned on January 19, 1907. From the first days he showed himself hostile to the Constitution. That was why the deputies were opposing him. And hence arose the cry that the parliament was interfering in administrative affairs. The correspondent of the Times in Teheran, was all the time commenting unfavourably on the plight of the Constitutional government. Public opinion in England had not taken interest in the changes effected in Persia, and consequently the Persian liberals could not rely for much help upon the British.

It was at this time that Sir Edward Grey was planning a re-approachment with Russia, and undoubtedly Persia was the pawn in the game. England encouraged the establishment of the constitution, but when Persia adopted a government on the European model, she shunned to uphold it in the face of the Russians' marked hostility. To quote the author of "Persia in Revolution", "The nation had given birth to a constitution which was described by Persian Liberals and Russo-phobes as England's spiritual child! Russian diplomatists agreed that England was its Mother, but they called the child illegitimate. England, if she had not acknowledged her parenthood, had certainly been god-parent. Shortly after the ceremony she, however, made friends with Russia (The Anglo-Russian Agreement), and henceforward if we are to believe the Persian Liberals, she forgot to look after the child, which died, poor little waif that it was! She stretched out no hand to save." The story of Anglo-Russian agreement belongs to another chapter, and is worth of separate treatment.

One can not but admit the difficulties confronting the first assembly. A lawless, debased, down-trodden, corrupted and feudal<sup>1</sup>

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1. I do not mean feudal in the terms of the Middle ages. I mean the existence of powerful, armed chieftains all over the country.

country had to be reformed, and adapted to the European conceptions of government, law, and administration. The monumental work of Lord Curzon, and the excellent treatise of Valentine Chirol are the best testimonies, to the defiled state in which the first "Majlis" found the Persian realm. People were ignorant of the meaning of constitution, charlatans and adventurers could profit by the breakdown of the Shah's powers, and they actually did. The Nation devoid of political consciousness could be led to disaster, and they were taken to impossible situations. But doing justice to the leaders of the constitution, necessitates a study of the turn of events at the end of the year 1907. That forms the subject-matter of our next chapter. The Persian Liberal movement began with the <sup>r</sup>intelligensia.

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## V. The Anglo-Russian Agreement.

England settled its disputes with France, in the year 1904. Russia and France had befriended each other in the early nineties. Austria, Germany and Italy had formed the Triple Alliance in 1882. The final touch of the commonly-called European system of balances, was naturally the Anglo-Russian reapproachment. There were no spoils in Europe to contend for, as much as England and Russia were concerned. It was in the Far and the Middle East that the two powers had conflicting interests. The treaty with Germany in 1901, and the alliance with Japan in 1902, had been unequivocal threats to Russia, by the British government. It was the defence of the Indian Empire that set Downing Street against the statesman in St. Petersburg. And it was the desire to navigate freely on the Persian Gulf, that had hardened the Russian diplomats in their antagonism to the British supremacy in the Southern waters of Asia. But both countries were afraid of a common enemy that was making head in those very regions, contested between them. It was the fear of Germany that drove Sir Edward Grey to bury the traditional Anti-Russian policy of Great Britain, and come to terms with an old foe.

Russia's defeat at the hands of Japan, was not without effects on the Anglo-Russian relations. The question of the Far East had got settled, by the interference of a third power that happened to be an ally of Great Britain, and therefore the whole problem had got centered in the Middle East. In that region there were Tibet, Afghanistan and Persia. It was certain that any scheme of friendship with Russia would preserve the Gulf and Afghanistan, as exclusively under British influence. England was desirous of an entente with Russia, for the purpose of presenting a united front to Germany, and also to guarantee the future of India's defence against Russian aggression. She was deadly tired of a continual pacific

campaign against Russia in the East, and there were other interests at stake, that demanded the concentration of British energy rather than its diversion upon an unfruitful struggle. Afghanistan and the Gulf would not be employed as pawns in the game of peace-making, because the security of the Indian Empire depended upon them; Tibet too could not be used for bargain, because it was more profitable to leave the strange country of Dalai Lama to its own fate. Tibet was a land relatively unknown to the Europeans, inhabited by hostile people, so radically different from the Westerners and of no economic benefit to exploiters. The best provision was to pledge non-intervention in Tibet, a safe way of avoiding conflict, expenditure, and local feuds.

Tibet excluded, Afghanistan excluded, and the Gulf excluded, Persia was left to be divided and apportioned between the two rivals now seeking cooperation. Sir Edward Grey was anxious to speed the settlement, and so was Mr. Morley, the Secretary of State for India. Morley set immediately to consult the viceroy, Lord Minto the man who drew up with him, some years later the famous scheme of Indian reforms. Minto was of the opinion that Central Asia should be excluded from any system of agreement, but Morley could not accept his view, since he apparently shared with Grey the conviction that every point of controversy should be cleared once for all. Meantime negotiations were going on in Petrograd between Sir Charles Handing, Sir Arthur Nicholson, Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace (the foreign editor of the Times), and M. Cassini, the Russian delegate. There appeared in the Times number of October 21, 1906, an article prognosticating an agreement between Russia and England, regarding their conflicts in the Middle East. That was some ten months before the official announcement of the Entente.

Before dealing with the final draft of the treaty, it is advisable to discuss the benefits derived by the British Empire, from the agreement of 1907. Professor George Brandes of Copenhagen states that, "the cooperation between Russia and England for disrupting the Persian independence, was an untoward action. But it is not important, according to the standards of the present age. The modern European policy has nothing to do with such moral consideration. If something is a moral item in politics, it should be of some utility. Edward Grey's policy regarding Persia, was neither this, nor that."<sup>1</sup> I do not agree with Prof. George Brandes who is one of the many who assert that the agreement of 1907 was of no use to Great Britain. That is a sheer ignorance of fact. I do not speak now of international probity, justice, righteousness or any other moral dogma. I do not consider the disregarded interests of Persia at this juncture. Let us look at the picture only from the angle of British advantage.

What was the European situation in 1906? The Algecirras conference had but just ended, and England had shown herself a firm defender of the French Cause, as against German apprehensions and designs, England was alarmed by the rapid increase of the German trade, and the unprecedented growth of German Navy. She had thrown her lot with the French, and it was of necessity to clear her old accounts with Russia, because the latter was an arm in arms friend of France. After all, it had been England keeping the balance, whenever an ambitious ruler had appeared on the continent. Once there was a Louis, then a Napoleon, and now a Kaiser seeking a

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1. Translated from the Persian translation of George Brandes' article in the paper "Politiken" of Copenhagen, published sometimes in the autumn of 1916.

place in the sun. And the Berlin- Baghdad ~~xxxxxx~~ line was also a thorn on the British side. That matter had to be righted in one way or another. Could the British refuse to give a free hand to Russia in Northern Persia? I believe that the answer is in the negative. England saved a colossal amount of unnecessary friction in the Middle East by agreeing to let Russia have her way in Northern Persia. She formed and cemented the Triple Entente, in anticipation of a future clash with Germany.

So much for the present discussion of the agreement. Now what were its exact terms that caused Lord Curzon to rage and look harassed? Here is the part of the Treaty dealing with Persia.

"The governments of Great Britain and Russia having mutually engaged to respect the integrity and independence of Persia, and sincerely desiring the ~~praxentian~~ preservation of order throughout the country and its peaceful development, as well as the permanent establishment of equal advantages for the trade and industry of all other nations;

"Considering that each of them has, for geographical and economic reasons, a special interest in the maintenance of peace and order in certain provinces of Persia adjoining or in the neighbourhood of , the Russian frontier on the one hand; and being desirous of avoiding all causes of conflict between their respective interests in the above-mentioned provinces of Persia;

"Have agreed on the following terms:="

1. "Great Britain engages not to seek for herself, and not to support in favour of British subjects, or in favour of the subjects of third Powers, any concession of political or commercial nature-- such as concessions for railways, banks, telegraphs, roads, trans-

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1. I refer to Lord Curzon's attacks on the agreement of 1907, in the House of Lords.

port, insurance, etc.-- beyond a line starting from Kasri-Shirin, passing Isfahan, Yezd, Kuhm, and ending at a point on the Persian frontier, and not to oppose, directly or indirectly, demands for similar concessions in this region which are supported by the Russian Government. It is understood that the above-mentioned places are included in the region in which Great Britain engages not to seek the concessions referred to.

II. "Russia, on her part, engages not to seek for herself, and not to support in favour of Russian subjects, or in favour of the subjects of Third Powers, any concession of political or commercial nature--such as concessions for railways, banks, telegraphs, roads, transport, insurance, etc.--beyond a line going from the Afghan frontier by way of Gazik, Birjand, Kerman, and ending at Bunder Abbas, and not to oppose, directly or indirectly, demand for similar concessions in this region which are supported by the British Government. It is understood that the above-mentioned places are included in this region in which Russia engages not to seek the concessions referred to.

III. "Russia, on her part engages not to support, without previous arrangement with Great Britain the grant of any concessions whatever to British subjects in the regions of Persia situated between the lines mentioned in Articles I and II.

"Great Britain undertakes a similar engagement as regards the grant of concessions to Russian subjects in the same regions of Persia.

"All concessions existing at present in their regions indicated in Articles I and II. are maintained."

The Article IV. confirms the guarantees and securities given to the Russian and the British banks by the Persian government, for loans contracted by the latter in previous years.

The fifth clause provides for consultation between the two Powers, prior to any step being taken, in case a direct control over the securities would be necessitated.

Such was the agreement of 1907. It was seemingly a harmless document, if one would take it all by itself. Persia's integrity was guaranteed. The two Powers had mutually shouldered the responsibility of respecting her independence. And there was no intimation of a partition of the country. But what it really meant, I shall try to elucidate by quoting people who looked at the question from different angles. The first to be consulted, will be Prof. Georges Brandes, already referred to at the beginning of this chapter.

Mr. Brandes views the agreement as such, "In the year 1907, the two states, defenders of Persia! in other words Russia and England concluded a treaty regarding the Persian question, without having asked the opinion of Persia herself, or even informing her of the business. To achieve their end that was weakening Persia, these two states resorted to the best means that they could conceive of, that which is marked in the vocabulary of politics, by the melodious words, "Peaceful penetration." At first they started in disrupting finance, in every possible way. They were energetically bent on destroying the economy of the country, and despatching the government to sheer poverty. Not before long, the Persian government had to go a-begging at the doors of these two states; and ask for a sum to spend on their bare necessities. Often-times the sum begged was less than 25000 pounds. Any time that penury was driving the Persian government to beseech for mercy, the two states would agree to help them; but the help was usually offered at a high price. Russia and England were profiteering by the compelling situation in which Persia was placed."

Then Prof. Brandes goes on to say "But when the Persian nation tried to raise its head, claim the same rights possessed by the European people, construct railways, build ports, get a constitution and a sound government, established parliamentary institutions and national ~~liberty~~ liberty, stop plundering in the name of concessions, and prevent enslaving and impoverishing Persia, difficulties presented themselves, and the two protector-states lost their temper. Russia became the play thing of Viscount Edward Grey, and ruined the constitution". The last sentence seems very strange in its connotation.

Even more fiery than Prof. Brandes, is Mr. Morgan Shuster. "Only the pen of a Macaulay or the brush of Verestchagin could adequately portray the rapidly shifting scenes attending the downfall of this ancient Nation, -- Scenes in which two powerful and presumably enlightened Christian countries played fast and loose with truth, honour, decency and law, one, at least, hesitating not even at the most barbarous cruelties to accomplish its political designs and to put Persia beyond hope of self-regeneration."

We shall now hear of <sup>from</sup> a more cautious writer, Prof. Edward Browne of Cambridge, "When this agreement became known it was generally regarded, both in this country and in Persia, as tantamount to a partition of Persia between her two powerful neighbours, whose ancient rivalry was thus to end in a division of the spoil, in which England manifestly got the worst of a very iniquitous bargain. The general feeling in this country was well expressed by a cartoon in the Punch, in which the English lion and the Russian bear were represented as mauling an unfortunate Persian Cat, the one saying to the other, 'You play with its head and I'll play with its tail, and we will both stroke the small of its back, while the poor cat murmurs, 'I don't remember that I was ever consulted about this arrangement.' And indeed it seemed a great slight to Persia

that, while the Amir of Afghanistan was consulted about the agreement (which touched his country much less nearly), she was not only not consulted beforehand, but not officially informed of its provisions for more than three weeks after it had been concluded."

Mr. H.F.B.Lynch, a man whose name is remembered for his constructive work in making roads in Persia and starting navigation on the Karun river, wrote in the April number (1908) of the "Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review," as much regarding the agreement, "They were not the grandees and the reactionaries, who may have profited by the Anglo-Russian rivalry, but the leaders of the reform movement, and the men who are engaged in pouring new wine into the musty old bottles of Persian Absolutism. This aspect of the convention is a Liberal interest, and I think I shall be able to show that it is also a British interest, perhaps the greatest of ~~the~~ British interests which are touched by the Convention.----- Let us hope that this convention may lead to better relations with Russia, and that she may realize and respect the substantial grounds for our fears. I am afraid that it can scarcely tend to improve our relations with Persia. Persia is the ghost at the feast which we are celebrating with Russia in honour of this convention. While feasting is in progress and the toasts are being exchanged, this small Nation--- which has contributed so much to the artistic and intellectual wealth of the world, and whose prospects looked at least promising before this convention was signed--- is lying between life and death, parcelled out, almost dismembered, helpless and friendless at our feet."

The journal "Habj-Ul-Matin"<sup>1</sup> wrote in its number of September

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1. An old paper of much repute and influence, published in Calcutta, India.



11, 1907, apropos of the agreement, the following lines, "The beauty of the thing is that Russia grants permission to England to open the doors of her commercial influence in the North, while England kindly vouchsafes the same permission to Russia in the South! But what business has Russia in Persia either to grant or withhold such permission?----- At any rate we fail to perceive on what ground these two powers give permission to each other to enter some one else's territory, or why they should spend money out of the guest's purse.

In the next number of the same paper which appeared on September 14, the discussion was continued. "It is worthy of special note that this agreement should take place at this critical juncture, when the internal affairs of Persia are in such confusion that the wisest men in the country are utterly at a loss as to how to remedy them."<sup>1</sup> With a powerful government, and a strong state, instead of the weak, unbalanced, infirm Persia of the time, the agreement ~~is~~ could not become a <sup>public</sup> document. In that case, it would paramount to a plan, say for partitioning Switzerland.

Now, before dealing with the reception of the agreement by the British parliament, I shall evaluate the merits of the objections raised against the treaty. I think we will be on the safe side, if we disregard the argument that the Russian sphere of influence brought Russia close to the Indian frontier, and opened before her opportunities for the future. Russia was already a neighbour to Afghanistan, prior to 1907, and further linking by obtaining an outpost in Khorasan, would not really amount to much. Moreover, for the time being, Russia had no evident designs concerning India. And one must not forget the strong base which the British had secured, by establishing themselves in Sistan, the

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1. From the translation of Prof. Edward Browne.

Kerman province, and on the Baluchistan frontier.

That British friendship with Russia, was a death-blow to the hopes of the Persians, was proved by subsequent events. Sir Edward Grey was utterly helpless before the Russian diplomats, at any time an emergency arose. As we shall see later, Grey would lodge a faint protest, and watch for the attitude of the Russian Government. If the latter would be found to be decisive in their point of view, Grey would instantly give way. There can be no <sup>better</sup> proof of the detriment to Persian interests, involved with the Agreement of 1907, than the aftermath. No assurance given by the British government, and no profession of faith by Downing Street can match the regularity and promptness of the Russian atrocities, (to be mentioned later) perpetrated, if not by the direct encouragement of the British statesmen, surely with the satisfaction that Great Britain would remain mute and silent. Then no wonder if England lost her prestige in Persia. As Prof. Browne hints at, the old Persian proverb says that, "Enemies are of three kinds: one's enemy, the enemy of one's friend, and the friend of one's enemy". According to Persians' calculations, Great Britain was falling within the third category.

The news of the conclusion of the Agreement, caused a panic in Teheran. The deputies asked the government for explanation, but the latter were ignorant of the case as much as the former. At last on September 5, the British ambassador broke silence, and addressed a note to the minister of Foreign Affairs, the said note being prepared with the knowledge of the Russian representative in Teheran. Here I shall quote in part that communication which remained unknown to Sir Edward Grey till a late year, 1011, and subsequently made no appearance in the British Blue Books.

"Information has reached me that the report is rife in Persia

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1. Stated on the authority of the Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy.

that the result of the agreement concluded between England and Russia will be the intervention of these two powers in Persia, and the partition of Persia between them. Your excellency is aware that the negotiations between England and Russia are of a wholly different character, since Mushir-Ulmulk recently visited both St. Petersburg and London, and discussed the matter with the ministers of Foreign Affairs of both Powers, who explicitly declared to him the objects aimed at by their respective governments in Persia, which assurance he has no doubt he has duly reported.

"-----Sir Edward Grey informs me that he has explained to Mushir-Ulmulk that he and Mr. Isvolsky are completely in accord on two fundamental points.

"Firstly, neither of the two parties will interfere in the affairs of Persia unless injury is inflicted on the persons or property of their subjects.

"Secondly, negotiations arising out of the Anglo-Russian Agreement must not violate the integrity and independence of Persia.

"Sir Edward Grey also observes that hitherto antagonism has existed between England and Russia, each of whom has endeavored to prevent the dominance of the other in Persia, and had this antagonism been prolonged in the present uncertain state of Persia, one or both of these two Powers might have been tempted to interfere in the internal affairs of Persia, so as not to allow the other to profit by the existing state of things, or to profit by it to the detriment of others. The objects of the present negotiations between England and Russia is to prevent such difficulties from arising between them, and these negotiations are in truth in no wise directed against Persia, as M. Isvolsky has clearly explained to Mushir-Ulmulk, saying, 'Neither of the two Powers seek anything from Persia, so that Persia can concentrate all her energies on the settlement of her internal affairs'".

"-----This is what M. Isvolsky says:---'This agreement between the two European Powers which have the greatest interest in Persia, based as it is on a guarantee of her independence and integrity, can only serve to further and promote Persian interests, for henceforth, Persia aided and assisted by these two powerful neighbouring states, can employ all her powers in internal reforms.

"-----The object of the two Powers in making this agreement is not in any way to attack, but rather to assure forever the independence of Persia. -----The two Powers hope that in the future Persia will be forever delivered from the fear of foreign intervention, and will thus be perfectly free to manage her own affairs in her own way, whereby advantages will accrue both to herself and to the whole world."

How far the words of Sir Cecil Spring-Rice came true, we shall see in other chapters. Enough to say that even this note did not remove the public fear.

The Persian government could not do anything, except announcing that they would not recognize the Anglo-Russian Agreement. And the matter ended there as far as the Persians were concerned.

In conclusion we shall deal with the attitude of the British Parliament towards what Lord Curzon termed the most important treaty concluded by the British Government in the last half-century.<sup>1</sup> The best worded and the most resolute attacks on the agreement, came from the conservative benches. A few progressive Liberals also raised their voice in opposition, but the supporters of Sir Edward Grey took the day. Lord Curzon who was thoroughly acquainted with the Middle-Eastern question, and had but a few years since, retired from the viceroyalty of India, made a vehement attack on the convention. "I am almost astounded", he said, "at the coolness, I might

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1. His speech in the House of Lords, on Feb. 6, 1908.

even say the affront, with which the British government is in the habit of parcelling out the territory of Powers whose independence and integrity it assures them at the same time it has no other intention to preserve, and only informs the Power concerned of the arrangement that has been made after the agreement had been concluded."

Then Lord Curzon went on to enumerate the technical weakness of the agreement. Russia had got the "Lion's share", Persian Gulf had not been included in the British sphere, and England's portion comprised <sup>ing</sup> only one trade route, was lying mostly in desert areas, and included but one port-Bandar Abbas. Moreover, he said that the clauses regarding Afghanistan, were not satisfactory, since England had committed herself to non-aggression while Russia had not. Lord Fitz Maurice, the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, The Marquess of Crewe, and Lord Sanderson undertook to answer the ex-vice-roy. Russia should possess the whole of Northern and Central Persia, because she had built roads and railways (!), and had trade interests, not to mention the Cossack brigade. Russia had recognized the British supremacy in the Gulf, in a separate note, and therefore the insertion of the <sup>at</sup> particular point, was unnecessary. The British ~~sphere~~ sphere had strategical value, and the security of a line drawn from Bandar Abbas up to Kerman and Seistan, was essential to the defence of the Indian Empire. The Baghdad-Khanekein Line was left to the Russians, because the latter could not tolerate otherwise, and negotiations would break up on that question, if England would have insisted on any other scheme.

Mr. Lynch and Mr. Balfour criticized the convention, in milder terms, but Earl Percy, the ex-Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, followed the same direction taken by Lord Curzon. British interests, ~~hereminaux~~

he reminded, had been sacrificed to a reapproachment with Russia. I believe that just as examination of the answers given by the Foreign Secretary, his colleagues, and supporters, reveal the leniency of the British government, all during the bargain. Russia was given what she had asked for, Persian Gulf had not been publicly acknowledged as preponderantly a British interest, and Great Britain was tucked in a corner, though strategically valuable, of <sup>great</sup> no economic benefit as compared with the rich part taken up by Russia. How can we explain that weakness?

Again we should remember the European arrangement, Sir Edward Grey showed a feeble front to the Russian, even at the time of the negotiations. Could have he done otherwise? I can not positively say yes, but I am inclined to believe that England could be a little hard, at the time when Russia had been weakened by the war in the Far East, Russia needing badly a reconstruction, and being anxious to get credits in the London market, could have been resisted. I do not think that the Russian menace was any greater in 1906, to make imperative such a hurried and unbecoming conclusion.

The suitable end to this chapter, is none but the words of Sir Edward Grey, which he uttered in defence of his prodigious handiwork, in the British House of Commons.

"I have received many resolutions protesting against an agreement with Russia during the constitutional crisis; but interference merely irritates. Our relations with Russia have improved greatly in the last two or three years; but without some agreement they must have grown worse. There comes a turning point in the relations between Nations, and if you pass it by, you may not have it again--  
-----The character of the bargain was determined when Lord Kitchener, the Commander-in-Chief in India on being asked how much of Persia he could defend, replied that he could only be responsible for the South-East. For this reason we confined our zone to Sistan,

the larger part of the province of Kerman, on Persian Mekran, and insisted on a neutral zone against the wishes of Isvolsky. It was of the utmost importance that henceforth Russia could no longer threaten the approaches to India; but we tacitly surrendered our preferential ~~position~~ position not only in the South, but in the Gulf, where it had been unchallenged for a century-----If Persia is to have, as I hope she will, the chance of working out her own constitutional problems, now so serious and difficult, in her own way; if, after years of misgovernment and bad government, she is to come by a constitutional means to a better form of government, to a better, stronger, and less corrupt administration, then I say that the chance of doing so without interference, her chance of working out those problems in her own way, has been greatly improved by the agreement between Russia and ourselves."

VI. THE FERMENT OF THE NEW ORDER1907 - 1910

In the last two chapters, we witnessed the accession of Muhammad Ali, and the conclusion of the agreement of 1907, between the two rival Powers--Russia and Great Britain. Here I do not intend to write a full detail of the events following the establishment of the New Order, since it is superfluous to our purpose. What is important is just to get a general view of the political and diplomatic arena of the country.

Muhammad Ali showed from the very first day of his reign a fierce reactionary character. He could never accept <sup>the</sup> situation. Being surrounded by corrupt advisors and courtiers who were submerged in vices and immoralities of every description, Muhammad Ali decided to wreck the constitution at his earliest possible opportunity. The first thing he did was to send for the Atabek, Amin-Ussultan, the shrewd, able and Russophile Minister of his father and grand-father, who was living in exile since 1903, and offer him the newly-created post of Prime-minister. The Atabek began to induce the deputies to consent to the proposed Anglo-Russian loan, but they were firm in their conviction that they should refuse their assent. Next he tried to put the deputies against one another, and thus initiate a court party. In that he was successful, but the bullet of a determined young banker from Tabriz, laid him low on August 31, 1907, the very day that the Anglo-Russian agreement was signed. In his death the Russians lost a great friend, and the liberals an energetic foe. Muhammad Ali then attempted to install a reactionary government, but the "Mejliss" was too strong for him, and the choice of the Atabek's successor fell upon a good friend of the British, Naser-Ul-mulk. As said in a previous chapter, Naser-Ul-mulk was a graduate of Oxford University, and an enlightened states-



man. Mr. Morgab Shuster believes that he had been a classmate of Sir Edward Grey, and knew personally the British Foreign Secretary.

In December, the despotic Shah designed a special treachery. First he let loose upon the Capital a band of ruffians headed by his confidential servants and accompanied by a group of reactionaries. Then he asked the premier who had resigned the previous day, to hasten to his palace outside the city. When Naser-Ul<sup>Ulmuk</sup>~~Ulmuk~~ arrived at the Shah's abode with a few other Liberals from the nobility who were also <sup>invited</sup>~~present~~ to the ruler's presence, all were siezed upon and put in chains. It was through the prompt intercession of Mr. George Churchill, the Oriental Secretary of the British Legation, that Naser-Ulmuk's life was saved. The outraged statesman soon left for Europe, where he resided till 1910, when he was called back to act as Regent to the boy-Shah, Ahmad Mirza. The December coup was a perfect failure, and the disgraced Shah once more took an oath of fidelity to the constitution.

In March 1908, the life of the Shah was attempted by some unknown men who were never found out. It intensified the resentment against the constitutionalists, which <sup>Muhammad</sup>~~Ali~~ Ali was cherishing. The parliament was busy meanwhile with drawing up a Finance Bill which was obnoxious to the Shah, since it would fix his civil list, and turn the Treasury into a National institution. The British were still for the Liberal cause, while the Russians hated the New Order. It was evident that Muhammad Ali would have the sympathy of the Russians if he would try to give a coup de grace to the feeble Constitution. The late Prof. Edward Browne of the Cambridge University, portrays masterfully the plight of Persia, at this period in his well-written apologia, "The Persian Revolution."

Though peace was apparently restored between the Shah and his parliament, conspiracies were not infrequent, and the fact was clear that Muhammad Ali could not get reconciled to a constitutional re-

gime. In May fresh controversies arose, the Parliament demanding the dismissal and banishment of certain courtiers, avowedly inimical to the new régime, and the Shah urging that the Press and the orators should stop writing or talking against his person, while the courtiers were fostering their anti-liberal activities, and the parties of freedom increasing their virulent attacks. At last on June 1, the Shah urging still his rights, gave way and sent home his evil advisors. But he continued to be in relations with them who had not gone far, one taking sanctuary in the Russian Legation, and the most insipid of them, the Shah's Russian tutor, Shapshal still instructing his pupil.

An untimely intervention on the part of the Legations exploded like a bombshell on June 2. On that day, the Russian and British representatives called upon Mushir-Uddowleh, the minister of Foreign Affairs, and protested against the rough treatment of the Shah by the 'Majlis'. Furthermore they threatened the government that with the Shah's throne in danger, the Russian government would find a case for armed intervention, if his deposition would be contemplated. Mr. Marling, the British charge d'affaires confirmed M. De Hartwig the Russian Minister, in the latter's statement that Russia would take action with the support and consent of Great Britain. The chimerical idea of intervention was first worded on June 2, 1908, the Russian representative. When the news reached the deputies, it had a depressing effect, and worked out the conclusion that M. De Hartwig, and Mr. Marling were probably driving at. Opposition to the Shah was shelved aside for future use under more hopeful conditions.

Exultant with the professed sympathy of the two Powers towards his person Muhammad Ali now resolved to act. The day after the memorable interference of the Legations, the Shah retired to Baghi-Shah

outside the city walls, and prepared for the assault upon the parliament, which was realized on June 23. The buildings of the "Majliss" were surrounded by troops, early on the morning. Shortly after fire was ordered and within a few hours, the game was up. Many of the constitutionalists were killed and a dozen of deputies most hostile to His Majesty, were taken to his presence. They, among whom were orators, writers, and poets, were murdered in various ways. A good number of the Liberals fled from the capital, and their houses were pillaged. The command of the city was given by the Shah to Colonel Liakhoff, the head of the Cossack Brigade, who instituted a harsh rule. Seemingly autocracy had returned to the great joy of M. De Hartwig.

On the same day that the constitution was destroyed in Teheran, telegraphic orders were sent to the governors of the provinces, instructing them to close down the provincial and district councils. The first city that refused the tyranny of the Shah, was Tabriz. Before long the Nationalists of that town, had established themselves on solid grounds, and were defying the troops despatched against them. The story of the siege of Tabriz, <sup>is</sup> so often told that I need not to dwell upon. The heroic stand of the famine-stricken inhabitants earned them the admiration and esteem of many Europeans. Two foreigners, one Mr. Moore, the correspondent of the Manchester Guardian and the other, Mr. Baskerville, a young American teacher of the Presbyterian High School in Tabriz, volunteered to fight in the Nationalist ranks. The American lost his life, while leading a sortie against the Royalist army.

However demoralization soon set in, and the Tabrizis lost both courage and hope, as a result of the shortage of supplies, and abuses of their chiefs. Food became scarce, and at last Sattar, a horse dealer by profession, who had shown much zeal and fighting

spirit in the early days of the blockade, rising to the position of high command, threatened a looting to the Europeans' houses and consulates. The Shah was now sure of victory, but his allies the Russians, alarmed by the menace to European property, took troops to Tabriz, and opened the way for the transportation of supplies. In April 1909, the episode came to an end, and the irregular bands composing for the most part the Royalist army, dispersed. Russia brought in troops to Persia, by tacit consent of Great Britain, and this was the first time that the Persian soil was transpassed by foreign army at the time of peace.

Meantime some other cities had risen to support the constitution. In March 1909, a certain Seyed Murteza of Tangestan<sup>1</sup> gathered around himself, a band of riflemen and attacked Bushire, driving out the government officials, declaring for the liberal cause. The British consulat intimated to the Seyed that since the customs revenues were mortgaged to the Imperial Bank, he could only take a part of the said revenues for the expenditures of his militia and staff, and should keep only three hundred riflemen, a large number being impossible to maintain. But Seyed Morteza paid no attention to the warning of the British authorities, and went on with his plans. The news of the Seyed's success was soon spread in Tangestan and the neighbouring districts, attracting profiteers, and all sorts of people to Bushire. The result as expected was rioting. The Customs House was broken in, and the bazars were pillaged. With matters brought to such a head, the British landed troops for the protection of foreign lives and properties. It was not until June 1909, that the governor of the Gulf Ports, Ahmad Khan, the Daryabagi took action against the Seyed, and obliged him to surrender. Henceforth a small company of Indian troops was kept in Bushire, until

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1. A district in the vicinity of Bushire.

1911, when new troops were brought in.

Rasht and Isfahan were the two most active cities after Tabriz. In the former town a nobleman of great wealth, who was some months before, commanding the Royalist troops against the Tabrizis, had put himself at the head of the movement, this grandee was Sipahdar-i-A'zam. In Isfahan two brothers Sardar-i-As'ad and Samsam-Ussaltaneh, chieftains of the famous Bakhtyari tribes, had also gone over to the Liberal camp. Now Russia was trying to induce Great Britain to a joint declaration in favour of Muhammad Ali's autocracy, but Sir Edward Grey wisely refused to commit himself to such a course. Thus he wrote to Sir Aurthur Nicholson, "Tell Izvolsky that I strongly deprecate any action which might have the appearance of intervening in internal affairs. I am convinced the best course is to limit our action; otherwise we may be burdened with the responsibility of maintaining an unpopular government."<sup>1</sup>

M. De Hartwig was secretly encouraging Muhammad Ali to resist, while openly, in the conjunction with the British Minister, he was advising moderation.<sup>2</sup> The British Legation was surrounded with guards in the early days of the coup d'etat to prevent the liberals from taking refuge therein. "The real victor was Hartwig, the vanquished were the British-----He (Hartwig) could not conceal his satisfaction, and his manners became insufferably patronising. It was his cognisance that the Legation was picketed and ~~the~~ British prestige fell to zero."<sup>3</sup> Muhammad Ali, undoubtedly instructed by Hartwig, telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey complaining that His Bri-

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1. "The Cambridge Hist. of Brit. Forgn. Policy" Vol. III 415

2. Ibid. 416.

3. Ditto.

tanic Majesty's representative in Teheran, was inviting the rebels to take "Bast" (sanctuary) in the Legation grounds. King Edward openly repudiated the allegation. Such were the first fruits of the Agreement of 1907, for Great Britain!

In October 1908, Sir George Barclay arrived at Teheran as the successor of Sir Cecil Spring-Rice. And in November M. De Hartwig was recalled. Hartwig's dismissal from Teheran, was inevitable since he was notoriously supporting the Shah, and antagonizing the British. About this time some friends of Persia headed by Edward Browne and H.F.B. Lynch, formed the Persia Committee in London, for the purpose of awakening public conscience regarding the miserable plight of that ancient people.

Muhammad Ali was now in need of money, and he had little left to mortgage for securing loans. Russia was insistent that the two Powers should lend him a sum. Sir Edward Grey flatly refused the proposal. It was impossible for him to take such a request to the House of Commons. And finally he told Izvolsky that ~~that~~ he would have no objection to Russia paying Muhammad Ali half of the suggested amount, but England would leave it to the future, until a parliament would be convened in Persia to vote for the loan. Till February 1909, Sir Edward Grey had succeeded in restraining Russia, but he could no longer withstand the pressure of his allies. He wrote on February 3, to the British Minister in Petrograd, that, "I should prefer to stand aloof, and let the chaos go on till the stronger wins. But if Russia differs, I will cooperate."<sup>1</sup> The result was the dispatch of Russian troops to Tabriz, in April 1909. Poor Russians, they wrecked the success of their protégé, Muhammad Ali, by relieving the city. They did not do it intentionally.

After the curtain was drawn down <sup>upon</sup> the Tabriz Drama, the Foreign Secretary urged that Muhammad Ali should abandon his obstinacy, from a cabinet, drive out his evil councillors, accord a general

1. "The Camb. Hist. of Brit. Forgn. Policy" vol. III 417.

amnesty, and fix a date for elections. Perhaps Sir Edward Grey was seeking the role of mediator, in order to restore a part of the ~~lost~~ <sup>lost</sup> prestige of Great Britain. Furthermore he made it clear that if Shah would accept his proposals, England would follow Russia in giving a loan of £100,000. M. Sablin, the new Russian Charge d'affaires was a reasonable man, and advised Muhammad Ali to conciliation. Thus the despotic Shah was forced to proclaim the restoration of the constitution in May 1909. But the Nationalists having already strengthened their positions in Rasht and Isfahan, heeded not the promises of the Shah who was notorious for breaking his word. In the first day of May Kezvin was captured by the constitutionalists of Rasht. The Bakhtyaris too began their march from Isfahan. The Russian government began threatening the nationalists, and landed forces in Enzeli, rapidly gaining Kezvin at the wake of the national volunteers who had left in the direction of the capital. But the Russian forces advanced no further than Kezvin.

Sardari-As'ad who was friendly to the British, telegraphed to the two Legations asking them to withhold any action, and let the affairs have their natural course. He declared that the nationalists had no spite against the Powers, and wished to live on good and amicable terms with their neighbours. Grey telegraphed to Barclay at Teheran, saying that, "Intervention must be avoided, but efforts should be made to persuade Sardar-i-As'ad to abandon his advance, and you shall explain to him the reforms proposed by the two governments.<sup>1</sup>"

Neither Sipahdar, nor Sirdar-i-As'ad, listened to the repeated warnings of the Legations. And after a little fighting with the Cossacks sent to bar their ways, the two bodies from Rasht and Isfahan, joined forces to the astonishment of their opponents, and

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1. "The Camb. Hist. of Brit. Forgn. Pol." Vol. III. 417

arrived at the capital on the early morning of July, 13, 1909. For three days street skirmishes were going on. At last on July 16, the Shah took refuge in the Russian Legation of Zargandeh<sup>1</sup>, thus automatically abdicating his throne. Colonel Liakoff who was besieged in the Cossacks headquarter, also surrendered and offered to continue his services under the new government. That evening a group of ex-deputies, exministers, notables and liberal leaders assembled in the parliament grounds, and voted the deposition of Muhammad Ali. His twelve years old son, Sultan Ahmad, was announced as his successor, and Azad-Ulmulk, the aged and revered head of the Kajar<sup>2</sup> tribe, was appointed to act as Regent to the boy-Shah. Russia and Great Britain promptly recognized the new king.

For some months, negotiations were dragging on regarding the ex-Shah, between the Legations and the nationalist government. At last a protocol signed on September 7, 1909, by the representatives of the two Powers and the Directory of the new government, fixing the ex-Shah's ~~pension~~ pension at £ 100,000 tumans (£18,666) per annum. He was to reside in Odessa and refrain from any action or propoganda against the constitutional régime.

It was also stipulated that Muhammad Ali would lose his right to a pension, if the two Ministers would get convinced that he was intriguing to destroy the constitution and the government of Persia. But when a year and a half later he launched upon a fresh attempt to reestablish his autocratic rule, the Russian and British ministers did their best and obtained for him a continuation of his pension.

New elections were ordered, and the same body that dethroned Muhammad Ali on July 16, continued to assemble and assume powers in the absence of the parliament. Since its membership was large,

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1. A summer resort, near Teheran. 2. The same from which the Royal House came.



something like four hundred, a Directory of twenty members including Sipahdar and Sardar-i-As'ad, was nominated to act as the ministry. Now that the country was going to resume a normal life, the presence of Russian troops in Tabriz and Kezvin, was annoying the Persian nationalists. Sir Edward Grey was not slow in telling his allies that the situation was illogical, and would cause unpopularity both in Persia and Westminster. But the statesmen in St. Petersburg, were clinging to the pretext that Northern Persia was disturbed, and foreign troops were needed to protect the foreign interests. As a matter of fact the nationalist government had to face a number of rebels trying to restore the old order, but the Russians were all the time making it difficult for the Persian authorities to establish their rule over the country. The ringleaders of Zanjan, and Azerbayejan insurgents, were patronized by the Russians, and when that gallant Armenian, Aphrem Khan, "The Garibaldi of Persia", set on the pursuit of Rahim Khan, a bandit chief, and the latter fled to Russia, the government of the Tzar refused to hand him over, in violation to the treaty of Turkomanchai. Rahim was not essentially a political offender, he was a criminal, robbing, killing and pillaging in towns, villages and highways. Sometimes after, the brigand guest of Russia was allowed to pass into Persia, and continue his evildeeds.

That the authority of the Central government was shaken, nobody can deny, and that a disinterested, assiduous and sincere effort was imperative, to save the country from anarchy, none doubt. Quite true, dissensions and petty strifes were disrupting the ranks of the nationalists, sapping their vitality and the energy they had displayed, in the early days. But one fact should not be forgotten, namely that the Russians were responsible for much of the disorder. They used to extend their protection to those offenders whom the

government was prosecuting. Thus the Russian troops remained in Persia.

On December 7, 1909, the Persian government agreed to ask for a loan from England and Russia, and engage foreign advisors, but declined to ~~have the~~ consider the employment of Russian Gendarmes officers. Six days later the government took up wallets to beg, as the Persians say themselves, and applied to the two Powers, for a loan of £500,000. They were answered on February 16, 1910, to the effect that the loan would be given upon certain conditions--privileges to construct railways and nominate military instructors in their Spheres of Influence. Merchants and traders begged their government not to accept the conditions put down by the Powers, and on April 10, the refusal was communicated to the Legations.

Meantime disorders were increasing in the South. On April 17, Mr. Bill, the British Consul in Shiraz was attacked on the Shiraz-Isfahan route. The affair caused some consternation. Prof. Browne believes that Mr. Bill had himself taken the initiative in the skirmish. There was no hope of any recovery, since the treasury was empty, and both Powers were demanding a high price for their loans. Persia turned to Germany, but Kaiser William was courting the Russians, and no money came forth from that direction. Messrs. Seligman Bros., a British firm, was asked for money, but Downing Street wrecked the loan. As it seemed Russia and Great Britain were bent upon ~~winning~~ cornering Persia in difficult straits, since she was hovering on the verge of bankruptcy. Finally in September 1910, driven from all sides, Persia approved the engagement of American advisors to set the Treasury right and effect economy. The government was then, composed of the Democrats, and the foreign minister, Husayn-Kuli Khan Nawwab (mentioned before) was doing his best to make Russia and Great Britain spare the country, but all in vain.

He himself, one of the best and most patriotic and disinterested statesmen of the time, was insulted twice by the Russians, so that he was forced to resign. The Persian Minister in London, complained to Sir Edward Grey of the treatment that Nawwab had received, but the Foreign Secretary tried to defend an indefensible conduct.

Horrified by the gloomy prospect, the Persian government assented in October 1910 to the concessions demanded by Russia early in the year, on the condition that the country would be evacuated. Meantime they had received on October 10, a note from Great Britain threatening that if within three months the anarchy in the South would not be overcome, troops would be sent to set in order that part of the country where English trade was suffering badly because of disturbances. Cries of indignation went up in Teheran, Kerbala, Najaf, Calcutta and even in London from the "Peace Association" against the note, which was widely interpreted as an ultimatum. The Turks were alarmed too, and in Constantinople such a language was used by some demonstrators, that the first dragoman of the British Embassy had to lodge a protest. On October 19, the Foreign office issued a communique, depreciating the great importance attached to the note of October 10, and at the same time, the Indian government disclaimed any responsibility regarding the line of action named in the said note. The Indian Moslems now joined protesting against the note. Till the end of the year notes were exchanged between the two countries. Finally it was agreed that Persia should form a militia for the patrolling of the roads, and Great Britain would help her financially to uphold that body. This was the origin of the Swedish Gendarmerie. At first ~~Italy~~<sup>Persia</sup> applied to Italy for officers, but her demand was refused, and next she applied for help to Sweden, which was readily granted. The anarchy in Fars, was well-nigh nearing its end and Nizam-Ussaltaneh, an able man was sent as governor. But he

proved unsuccessful later, and precipitated a quarrel with a leading family of Shiraz, that led to the landing of British troops in 1911.

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VII. THE PERSIAN IMBROGLIO.1911 - 1914

The year 1911 witnessed a supreme and notable effort of the Persians to regeneration, doomed to miserable failure by the malice of Russia, and the indifference of Great Britain. I refer to the engagement of Mr. Morgan Shuster as the Treasurer-General of Persia. Mr. Shuster arrived at Teheran in May 1911. It is undoubtedly true that Shuster identified himself from the very beginning with the Democrats. That is plainly shown by the tone of his apologia, "The strangling of Persia". The American financier was an ardent admirer of the Persian National movement, and could not conceal his open contempt for the Power that was encroaching upon the juvenile rights of the Persian Nation. That Power was Russia, and in opposing Russian interests, Mr. Shuster demolished the support that the British might have given him. Thus Shuster refusing indomitably to recognize the De Jure existence of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 and evincing a spirit of derision by his firm determination not to visit the Ministers of Great Britain and Russia, embroiled himself in politics. And that was his mistake, if we try to charge him with any blunder. But as Sir Percy Sykes observes had Shuster been another man, even then Russia would not tolerate his reforms.

It is useless to go into details of Shuster's work, but it is of importance to know that his first breach with Russia, was over the question of appointing a British officer to assume command over the Treasury gendarmerie, a force of Shuster's creation, intended to function all over Persia, and collect the retarded taxes from the recalcitrant landlords. Shuster's choice had fallen upon Major C.B. Stokes, the military attaché of the British Embassy at Teheran, whose term of service was coming to a close. Major Stokes was Anti-Russian. In his wrath against them he would refuse to

have any social relations with the allies of his government. Russians were disgusted when they heard of Shuster's plans. They were altogether antipathetic towards the proposed Treasury Gendarmerie that was to get busy in the Russian sphere, and then that it was hinted that a British officer would be put at the head of that body, they got enraged.

Russia was certainly alarmed at the prospect of having a resolute and Russophobic English officer operating in the Russian sphere. The acting-minister Maretoff suggested that a Swede might do as well. But Shuster confident in Stroke's integrity and wide experience, was insistent upon his employment. Everybody agrees that there was nothing legal against the engagement of Major Stokes, and that the British officer's reliable knowledge of Persia and its people, was a great asset to Mr. Shuster's schemes of reform. Presentations were made to London by the Russian government. Sir Edward Grey was writing to Buchanan, the Minister in St. Petersburg as such, "Benckendorff spoke with great anxiety lest Stokes might take part in military operations, when perhaps Russian officers might be on the other side. I agreed that it was undesirable he should do so"<sup>1</sup>.

Then Buchanan reports that the Russian press is in agitation, and Grey answers/saying, "We can not prevent Stokes serving Persia <sup>him</sup> But Russia is entitled to object to his employ in the North."

The Foreign Secretary telegraphs to Sir George Barclay at Teheran instructing him to "Warn Persia to drop Stokes unless they intend not to employ him in the North."<sup>2</sup> Russia is stringent, Shuster stands firm, and Sir Edward Grey has to find a safe exit.

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1. Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy. III. 420.

2. The Cambridge History III. 420.

The Persian government is notified that the Indian government can not lend the services of Major Strokes, and accept his resignation. And there the episode ended.

Mr. Shuster came once more into conflict with the Russians, in October. Under the orders of the government, the Treasurer-General sent a few gendarmes to confiscate the property of Shua'Ussaltaneh, the reactionary uncle of the boy-Shah. The Banque d'Escompte de Perse put forth a claim that the property in question had been mortgaged by the Prince, and the Bank was entitled to it. Russian guards came to oust the Treasury Gendarmes, and a stronger body of the latter went to drive the former away. And on November 2, M. Poklewski-Koziell, the Russian Minister, handed an ultimatum to the Persian government. Immediate withdrawal of the gendarmes from Shua-Ussaltaneh's property, and a formal apology for the insult alleged to have been made to the Russian Consular officers by the men of the Treasurer-General, were demanded. Mons. Poklewski-Koziell had made it plainly understood that no pourpals was allowed, and the answer should be either an emphatic "Yes" or a decisive "No". Meantime Russia was busy making preparations to invade the Northern Provinces.

Sir George Barclay, the British ambassador, urged surrender to Russian demands. And that was stated on the authority of no other than the Foreign Secretary. The Russians were now furthermore enraged by the appointment of Mr. Lecoffre, a British citizen, as the inspector of the Finance office in Tabriz. They could not tolerate a British functioning "in their Sphere". The answer of the Persian government to the Russian ultimatum was both wise and appropriate. The Foreign Minister, Vosouk-Uddowleh had carefully tried not to offend Russia. After an exposition of Persia's case, an offer for neutral investigation by a competent body, was made. In other words

Persia had suggested a commission of Enquiry, and Arbitration. Sir Edward Grey troubled by the Russian attitude towards the employment of Mr. Lecoffre, once more wired to Sir George Barclay disapproving of the action of the Treasurer-General. Mr. Shuster describes as such the scene of his audience with the British Minister, receiving Sir Edward Grey's comments. "Sir George went through the delivery of his message like a man taking medicine, and left without entering into any argument."

On November 18, the Russian Minister announced that diplomatic relations were severed between the two governments, since Persia had refused to accept the ultimatum. Four thousand Russian troops were en route for Persia. As Mr. Shuster points out, the advice of Sir Edward Grey to submission was accentuated by Russia's insistence on taking troops to Persia, which would cause an uproar in the House of Commons and endanger the life of the agreement of 1907.

November 25 witnessed the first triumph of Russia in her ~~xx~~ struggle with the American Treasurer-General. The terms of the first ultimatum were accepted. It was done in the hope of oncoming hordes of the Russian army in their march towards Persia, since "Sir Edward Grey had assured the Persian Cabinet, through the British Legation at Teheran, that if an apology was made to Russia, the Russian troops, which were already entering Persia would be withdrawn."<sup>1</sup> But mere hope is futile and blind. On November 29, the second Russian ultimatum was delivered to a state the integrity of which was supposedly guaranteed by the convention of 1907. Messrs. Shuster and Lecoffre should be dismissed and Persia should pledge not to engage any foreigner in her service, without the consent and approval of the two Powers. And most humiliating of all was the

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1. Shuster, "The Strangling of Persia" 165.



demand for indemnity. Persia was threatened to pay the expenses of the Imperial troops that had outraged her independence. The time limit was forty-eight hours.

Teheran, nay the whole country, was thrown into panic, and the parliament categorically refused with a unanimous voice, to submit this time to the Norht~~een~~ neighbour. Mr. Shuster both because of his sympathy with the Nationalist cause and his personal probity put at stake, describes pathetically the last meeting of the second Persian parliament. "A venerable priest of Islam arose. Time was slipping away and at noon the question would be beyond their vote to decide. This servant of God spoke briefly and to the point: 'It may be the will of Allah that our liberty and our sovereignty shall be taken from us by force, but let us not sign them away with our hands! ' One gesture of appeal with his trembling hands, and he resumed his seat."

"Simple words, these, yet winged one. Easy to utter in academic discussions; hard, bitterly hard, to say under the eye of a cruel and overpowering tyrant whose emissaries watched the speaker from the galleries and mentally marked him down for future imprisonment, torture, exile, or worse."

The repudiation of the ultimatum meant many things, among which was the fall of the frightened cabinet that had laid it before the deputies. The Russian army was drawing nearer to Teheran. Russian and British goods were boycotted by the clergy. Some twelve thousand ~~Russian~~ Russian troops had occupied Northern Persia. The situation was clearly dangerous.

At last the dismissed babinet decided to bow low before the master. On December 24, it assumed pwer and closed the doors of the parliament building to the nation's representatives. The bewildered Regent had sanctioned the coup, because he knew that ~~the~~

resistance was impossible before the Russians. The ultimatum was accepted. Shuster was dismissed. And a persecution of the nationalists followed.

Was Russia single-handed in putting an abrupt end to the short, promising and fruitful career of Mr. Morgan Shuster? No, Certainly not. Sir Edward Grey was the man who offered the suggestion to St. Petersburg, in an awkward way. He told his Russian allies that he would have no objection to Shuster's dismissal, since that latter had given him much trouble, appointing British officials.<sup>1</sup> Sir Edward Grey wished to shut down Russian's complaints against Shuster. He disliked any occasion that would lead to a controversy with the parliament at home, and his Russian friends abroad. The best method was to get rid, once, for all, of the obnoxious American. And ofcourse a beggar country is easily enslaved.

But the Foreign Secretary had to meet the House, and answer for Russian's sin. Mr. Dillon roared that, "It had been the policy of Russia to make the government of Persia impossible, so as to have an excuse to come in; and Great Britain had contoned every step she had taken."<sup>2</sup> Lord Ronaldshay exclaimed from the conservative benches in the Lords, "Russian actions made the regeneration of Persia almost impossible. Persia ought to have a fair chance." Grey made a long speech, defending his position and that of Russia. But it was simply an indication of weakness. Referring to Shuster, he said, "I quite admit his ability and his good intentions; but you cannot have the spirit of the Anglo-Russian Agreement upset and two great nations embroiled by the action of any individual." Was the spirit of the Agreement, ruining a helpless nation? All that

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1. The Cambridge History, vol. III

2. Ibid

Grey could promise to the House was the withdrawal of the demand for compensation.

It had been in anticipation of such a day that Sazanov had written this plain fact on the 8th October 1910, to his ambassador in Teheran, "The English pursuing as they do vital aims in Europe, will if necessary sacrifice certain interests in Asia in order to maintain the convention with us. These circumstances we can naturally turn to our own advantage, for instance in our Persian Policy." Prophetic words!!!

On December 13, Grey sketched his Persian policy. In the first place a government should rule the country that recognizes the bargain of 1907. Secondly the EX-Shah should not be imposed upon the Nation. Thirdly to a financial advisor acceptable to the Powers, should be entrusted the economy of Persia. Fourthly Persia has to receive a loan for the establishment of law and order. Fifthly the matter of indemnity should drop. And lastly Russian troops would have to withdraw, after Teheran's submission to the ultimatum, and the restoration of order and security. All the clauses of this statement, were enforced, except the best---- withdrawal of Russian troops. If the indemnity were not pressed forth, it was only because of its impossibility. Then what would the world say, if this point had not been dropped by Russia, and how could Grey face the parliament?

"When Mr. Shuster had gone, Anglo-Persian harmony was not again disturbed, for, Persia ceased to struggle against the chains which bound her to her two formidable guardians."<sup>1</sup>

An English writer of this tragedy, has tried to show Mr. Shuster as incapable and maladroit, whose removal was not necessarily disastrous. Sir Percy Sykes says yhat, "The failure of Shuster to evoke tolerable order out of chaos was deeply to be

regretted, and caused the friends of Persia to lose heart. He certainly was an unfortunate choice, as he lacked the exceptional qualities required for dealing with a problem so difficult and complicated; but even had Shuster proved to be as suitable as he was unsuitable, Russia would never have allowed him to succeed, and he was justified in terming his apologia 'The Strangling of Persia'.<sup>1</sup>

Then the Hon. J. M. Balfour words a strange assumption that is totally unbelievable in the light of Mr. Shuster's denunciation. He urges us to support that, ".....Mr. Shuster realized that in the face latent Persian opposition which existed success was impossible, and that he deliberately forced the quarrel with Russia to an issue, preferring to be defeated by the action of Britain and Russia rather than by Persian opposition!"<sup>2</sup> Shuster's letter to the "Times", and his eloquent book, both refute this accusation which make out the seemingly honest American expert as a double-faced charlatan.

In describing this Shuster affair, I have deliberately evaded to touch upon other issues. I have omitted to refer, to the abortive attempt of the Ex-Shah, Muhammad Ali, in July 1911, to regain his lost throne. His threat was quite serious since at one time his lawless Turkomans<sup>3</sup> had reached a distance of forty miles from the capital. That the Russians desired the restoration of the despotic and avaricious Ex-Shah, is a fact stated by all. Sykes says that his Russian colleague in Meshed has been intriguing and working for Muhammad Ali. Shuster mentions that an offer of service under the Ex-Shah, has been made to him by the Russian Minister.

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1. Sykes, "A History of Persia" Vol. II. 425-26
  2. Balfour "Recent Events In Persia" 102  
Balfour was the chief assistant to Sir ARMITAGE-SMITH the Financial advisor who was engaged under the provisions of the agreement of 1919.
  3. A merciless and cruel tribe dwelling in Astrabad, on the confines of the Russian frontiers.

Sir Edward Grey testifies to it in his telegram to Buchanan, "I do not see how we or Russia can acquiesce in his return." Then the Foreign Secretary proposes a joint veto, which M. Neratoff, the under-secretary of the Russian Foreign office, pushes aside.<sup>1</sup> On July 28, the Russian authorities dismissed the captain and the mate of the boat "Chistophoros", since the latter informed the public that the Ex-Shah had journeyed to Persia on the board of their steamer.<sup>2</sup>

The Persian government sent a note to the legations, on July 21, to the effect of the Ex-Shah's treacherous arrival, and the subsequent breakdown of the protocol of Sept. 7, 1909 relative to the maintenance of Muhammad Ali. Instantly the legations disclaimed all responsibility. But surely "Nonoe Vremya" knew of its government's intrigues to announce with a good deal of effrontery, on August 4, that "In the absence of a miracle, the Ex-Shah will be in Teheran in five days." And the miracle happened. Perhaps it was ~~the~~ this time the influence of Sir Edward Grey that retarded the Russians in taking effectual sides with Muhammad Ali. But I emphasize the fact that Russia intervened in many ways. As an instance I quote the case of Rashid-Ulmuk. This worthy, a former governor of Ardebil, had betrayed the troops under his command in an affray with the reactionary Shah-seven Tribes. He was taken to Tabriz, and imprisoned on a charge of high treason, Rashid-Ulmuk's sympathies were known to be for the old regime, and therefore on July 27, the Russian consul of Tabriz sent a body of Cossacks to force open the gates of the governorate and release the culprit. The Persian guards were repulsed, the acting governor-general was insulted, and Rashid was carried off. Sometime later the Russian protegée joined the bandit chieftain Shuja'-Uddowleh.

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1. The Cambridge History Vol. III. 420.

2. Browne, "The Press and Poetry of Modern Persia" 330.

Muhammad Ali failed to regain his lost throne, and I believe Sir Edward Grey was very thankful for that.

The formation of the Swedish Gendarmerie was another feat of the year 1911. On January 3, the government of Sweden informed the Persian government that they should be ready to lend the assistance and service of Swedish officers. The British government was quite willing to support this new body, and consented to forward a loan for its upkeep. General Hjalmarson and his subordinate officers arrived at Teheran, and started with his job. People hoped that the British ultimatum of October 16, 1910, would not be resorted to, and Southern Persia would be saved from Foreign intervention. And so the British move of October 1911, and the effect of the bombshell. It shattered those hopes that were seemingly coming to get realization. The unfortunate and high-handed action of Nizam-Ussaltaneh in Fars,<sup>1</sup> that had no legal basis, and was simply a personal act of revenge, should be counted as chiefly responsible for giving ~~the~~ a pretence to the British. The hostile demonstrations before the British consulate in Shiraz, by a mob, on May 18, did also contribute to the list of British grievances. On November 13, the Indian troops arrived at Shiraz.

This manoeuvre not only did not allay the rising flames of hatred against the British, which detestation was a corollary of the British support given to the Russian encroachments, but actually caused further disturbance. In December, when the struggle between Shusterism and Russia was at its full swing, British goods were boycotted in Shiraz.<sup>2</sup> And in the closing days of the year, Mr. Smart, the consul in Shiraz, was attacked with his Indian guards, on the Bushire-Shiraz route. Smart was taken prisoner. I

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1. I refer to his attempt at the overthrow of the Kawam Family.

2. Browne, "The Press and Poetry of Modern Persia" 334.

am not certain about the treatment meted to him. Browne mentions that he was dealt with kindly and respectfully. However he was taken to Kazerun by the tribesmen, and released there.

The year 1911 witnessed two more events, each of much importance. I mean the installation of the Regent at his post, and the assassination of that able and conscientious son of Iran, Sani'-Uddowleh. He was murdered by two Russian subjects who were demanded by the Russian legation, and deported to Russia, without any punishment. Sani'-Uddowleh was an expert in financial affairs, and his attempts at reform were always impeded by the Russians and the British. When there was a talk of his appointment to the premiership, in May 1908, Mr. Marling wrote to Sir Edward Grey that no choice would be ~~w~~worst than his.<sup>1</sup> The Persian constitution had been written under the inspiration of this capable leader.

1911 ended with disaster, and the year 1912 began with the same. On January 1, which happened to coincide with "Ashura"<sup>2</sup> (Moharram 10), Russian authorities executed the leading Nationalist personalities of Tabriz. The chief among the victims was Thikat-Ul-Islam, the foremost clergy of Azarbayejan. As an Englishman put it sometime later, the hanging of Thikat-Ul-Islam, on the day of "Ashura" amounted to the public execution of the Archbishop of Canterbury on Good Friday. It sent a thrill among the Moslems who were touched to the core, and had no way to redress the great outrage. To quote Prof. Edward Browne, "In most cases the houses of ~~in~~ the victims were blown up with dynamite by the Russians, who installed as governor Samad Khan Shuja'-Uddowleh, with the support of Mr. Shipley, the British consul at Tabriz, and the concurrence of the British Foreign office. This miscreant tortured, killed, and

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1. Blue Book on Persia, Vol. I (1908) No. 121.

2. The day of the Martyrdom of Hosein, the third Imam of the Shiites.

extorted many..... The executions continued in Tabriz at any rate until August 1912, and similar deeds were done throughout Azarbayjan.<sup>1</sup>

The next horrible scene of the drama, was enacted in Meshed, "The sacred city of Persia". Sir Percy Sykes was then, the consul in Meshed and took part in the tragedy. Better to hear the story from him.

"As already mentioned in this chapter, my Russian colleague in the Sacred City of Persia worked hard in the interests of the Ex-Shah. He even went so far as to encourage Yusuf Herati, a notorious agent-provocateur, to carry on a propaganda in his favor from the shelter of the Consulate. I reported this to the British legation, with the result that, by the instructions of the Russian Minister, Yusuf with his followers were expelled from the consulate, but he immediately proceeded to the Shrine where my colleague could continue to employ him. Established in the sacred precincts, he was able to collect large numbers of men and women, including hundreds of pilgrims, to listen to his reactionary speeches; whereupon the Russians gave out that the lives of their subjects were endangered, and brought in a considerable force of troops. The leading inhabitants of Meshed, with whom I was in close touch, clearly saw the trap and used every effort to save the situation, but in vain. The Russians had determined to bombard the shrine, held by their own agents, and whether the populace was quiet or not was immaterial. On March 29, the guns opened fire. There was practically no resistance, although Yusuf and his men, as instructed fired some shots, but many innocent pilgrims and citizens were killed and wounded. After dark, Yusuf and the other agents were sent out of the city in a waggon using the gate which the Russians

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1. Browne, "The Press and Poetry of Modern Persia." 336.



had opened in the city wall, held under guard. A few days later Yusuf Herati wrote to me, complaining that my colleague had rewarded his valuable services most inadequately! The Persian authorities were now instigated by the Russians to take action and Yusuf Herati was captured to put to death without trial, his corpse, which could make no awkward confessions, being paraded in the streets."

In view of the antipathy of Sir Percy Sykes towards the Russian plots, it is no wonder if the Russians asked for his removal. A ~~late~~ letter of Buchanan to Grey in 1912 reveals much in this respect. "Finally, Sanzanoff said," writes Buchanan, "That he had shown his good intentions by recalling Pokhitonoff,<sup>1</sup> and that he would have no objection to recalling Dabija<sup>2</sup> at the first suitable opportunity. He could not however do so immediately, as otherwise it would appear as if he were acting under pressure. He would much prefer, however, that Sykes should be moved at the same time."<sup>3</sup>

Sir Edward Grey knew well of the situation. He was watching the atrocities perpetrated under the eyes of his representatives, in a country whose integrity had been guaranteed by his masterpiece of 1907, and was unable to word an effective veto. With the Potsdam Agreement hanging like a guillotine over the head of his Russian Entente, what could Grey utter in defence of a land that had no friends? Nothing. And Russia was given a free hand. Even the impulsive Kaiser had stepped aside in favour of Russia.

"The Sphere" of September 21, 1912, had an exposing article by Mr. Douglas Turner. The writer had outlined the morbid state of

1. The Russian consul at Teheran, responsible for the deadlock with Shuster, over the Shua'-Ussaltaneh's property.
2. The Russian consul at Meshed.
3. Buchanan, "My Mission to Russia" Vol. I. 113.

Northern Persia, concluding with an imposing parallelism. "In thinking over the situation in Persia I can not but compare it to the state of Korea three years ago when all the signs of Russian aggression which I have mentioned were so significantly paralleled by the Japanese-----Japanese money everywhere, Japanese signboards, Japanese goods, and Japanese soldiers. The inference is obvious."

The crucification of Persia", wrote a certain Sundata Raja, in "The American Times of Orient Review" of September 1912, "is no longer a secret, and inspite of vague pretences and mischievous sympathies, the fact cannot be denied that all the resources of the Anglo-Russian diplomacy were fully used to disturb incessantly the peace of Persia. It is a historical record that persian tragedy, and the parts played by Russia and England will always be remembered as long as history lives."

Mr. Shuster's vacant post was given to M. Mornard, the Belgian chief director of the customs. This gentleman was a favourite with Russia, and by and by the British began to suspect him as being extremist in his pro-Russian sympathies. Going over my father's papers, I have found out that M. Bourgeois, the head of the Gulf Customs-Houses, was constantly in conflict with the British resident. The Mornard would take no step to remove this Belgian who had made himself unpleasant to the British. The new Treasurer-General was despised by the Persians, and the following verses translated by Browne, are a good evidence of that hatred.

"The Persian nature---so the Franks repeat--

"Is fraught with falsehood, fashioned with deceit:

"Yet if by Mornard we may judge the Franks

"The Persian nature with the Angles ranks."

England was now demanding the concession to build a railway

from Muhammareh on the Persian Gulf, to Khorramabad, further North, in Lurestan. The Persian Cabinet, though a puppet in the hands of the legations was unwilling to agree to the proposal, after having accepted the humiliating terms of the loan of 1912.

I should mention in passing that Persia's pledge to Russia, not ~~only~~ to construct a railway, had expired on August 8, 1910. Trying to set up a government entirely independent on their will, the two Powers, suggested to get back Sa'd-Uddowleh, one of the old associates of Muhammad Ali, and put him at the head of the executive. Sir Edward Grey had drawn up a list of conditions to which the eighty-five years old Sa'd-Uddowleh had to submit. The nominated premier had to let the two Powers direct systematically the Persian Finances, and command the governors of the provinces and districts to comply with the new order. In return the Powers would see to such measures of moral and material support that SaadUddowleh, and his lieutenants use in ruling the country.<sup>1</sup> Then the Foreign Secretary gave the assurance that as soon as the concessions demanded were approved, subsidies would be granted. With the Persians the Premiership of Sa'd-Uddowleh was tantamount to blasphemy. It caused a tumult, and as the legations did not want to create further troubles, the matter was soon dropped. The cabinet that came into power at the end of the year 1912, was a coalition of the Moderates, Nationalists and Democrats. The Regent had left for Europe in June and intended to remain for a year outside the country. There was then the talk of the restoration of the parliament, but Russia was objecting to that measure, since she was insisting upon the formation of a strong government or in other words, a Russophile cabinet, before the new elections would take place.

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1. Blue Book on Persia Vol. I (1913) No. 346.

The talk of the concessions came to a head in the early months of the year 1913, and led to the resignation of two of the nationalist ministers, the two brothers Mushir-Uddowleh and Motamen-Ulmuik, and the Democrat Minister Mosrowfi-Ulmaalek. What was left of the mutilated cabinet which included Vasouk-Uddowleh and his brother ~~xx~~ and the veteran Ayn-Uddowleh,<sup>1</sup> signed the concession of the Julfa-Tabriz railway to Russia, and the option for the construction of the Muhammareh line to England.

In April 1913, fresh troops were sent to Southern Persia, by the Indian government. Here I quote the text of a personal letter written by Colonel Cox to the governor of the Ports <sup>2</sup> regarding the housing of those troops. It is dated 10, 4, 13.

"My Dear Mowaghar Ed Dowleh. The cavalry arrive ~~xx~~ on 16th. Half of them will embark that day, and the rest 10 days later. I have discussed with Major Dunsford and Hewlett the question of their location while here, and we are of the opinion~~x~~ that it would be best and most convenient from the point of view~~x~~ of supplies and communications to them to be camped near the Malek's house.<sup>3</sup> I wrote and asked your excellency if you would have any objection to their camping on the poece of fallow land shown in blue on the attached sketch. I expect you yourself are the owner but I am not sure."

The location shown on the map, is strategically important, since it is suited at the junction of the four roads leading to the Bushire city, Sabzabad (the British Residency), to telegraph station, and Mashileh (the Shiraz route).

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1. The Prime Minister whose repressionist policy led to the demand for constitutional government.
  2. The father of the writer.
  3. British Headquarters in Bushire.

The news of the arrival of new contingents caused a fresh outburst of anger and hatred against the British. In June they had to encounter the opposition of the tribesmen on the coasts of Tangistan. Alarmed by the gravity of the situation, the governor of the Ports sent the following cable to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

"It is a few days since the British have started operations on the Tangistan ~~roads~~ coast, in the village of Mohammad Ameri, commonly called Madummeri, which is near Dilbar,<sup>1</sup> and is a stronghold of illegal trade. Five British soldiers had gone near the coast, when the riflemen of Muhammad Ameri started shooting at them, four getting wounded and one killed. Finally the British landed at the village. The inhabitants had taken ashore 15 boats, lest the British would capture them. Since it needed hard work to float them anew, the British sailors set fire to the boats. At such a time that the men-of-war are operating, a sailor has been killed, and five have got wounded, the British are pressing for a large sum in compensation. I wonder with what means and ways the government proposes to force indemnities from the Tangistanis and seize upon the culprits'. The cause of the success of European states, is that they lend an ear to the statements of their officials, so that when the British Consul-General in Bushire advises the despatch of war boats against the Tangistanis, the government at home, or the Indian government welcomes his advice. But this servant who for two years pleads and begs for military force at the Ports, receives indifference as his answers. Several times presentations were made for two maxim guns, and no heed was given to them. I beseech your excellency to refer to telegrams (numbers are quoted) to the Ministry of ~~Foreign Affairs~~ Interior, and those (numbers----) to the Ministry

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1. Written both "Dilbar" and "Dilvar".

of Foreign Affairs..... Delbar, Mohammad Ameri and the other Ports of Tangistan from which the British ask for indemnities, and surrender of bandits, are at a distance of fifteen to forty five miles from Bushire. It is possible to repress the offenders from this base, either by land or sea, if enough forces would be prepared..... On the other hand the naval force of the Persian government consists of the boat "Persopolis" that is utterly useless and can not journey, the boat "Muzaffar" and three small vessels that are scattered around the Ports. "Muzaffar" that is relatively of some use, is lying in Muhammareh under the command of a Belgian officer and the Customs House. Whenever the governor of the Ports needs the service of a boat, just as when he is in demand of a single Kran to defray necessary expenditure, he has to wire to Teheran and count time to see when the answer comes. It is certain that nothing can be done in this way. If I had some force at my command, things would not have come to such a length leading the British to take actions. Now that the Tangistanis are placed under the pressure of the British, if the Persian government would not proceed to provide the ports with a military force, henceforth more dire events should be expected than the past. My duty is to give information. Not only within these two years I have communicated what I should, but during the last twenty years, I have over and over again analyzed the defects and the ~~inconveniences~~ inconveniences of the situation of the Ports, for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs."

The Teheran government gave no attention as usual to the entreaties of the governor of the Ports, and the British were left to themselves to punish those who had dared to question their authority.

This second despatch of troops was quite strange in view of

the promise given to the Persian government that the Persian soil would be evacuated in April. In the same month that forces were increased! Here is a telegram from Mukhber-Ussaltaneh, the governor-General of Fars, to the governor of the Ports, giving the glad tidings. It is dated March 30, 1913.

"In return of the friendly attitude of Great Britain, we have to express our thanks. A tract is prepared which should be brought to the attention of the élite<sup>1</sup> as well as the public. It will be published in Shiraz, and its announcements by your excellency will be timely and fitting."

Then the text of the declaration follows, of which I shall reproduce some extracts.

"The splendid help of the British during the days of disorder that had comprizes the Persian government, as a consequence of the revolution, is an undeniable fact. And those well-informed of political subtelties, know precisely that if it had not been for the friendly course of the policy of the British government, greater drawbacks would have beset the way of the Persian government and Nation..... The results of the toils of this country's leading men, were obtained by moral and material support of the neighbouring state ..... The financial aid extended in loans, at several instances and hard situations, needs description, If that is interpreted in other ~~ways~~ ways, the King-Emperors' mighty will at withdrawal of Indian troops from Persian territory, abrogates and nullifies all those conceptions.....To prove friendship and remove difficulties the August King of Great Britain and Emperor of India, has ordered his troops to leave Persia. On the sixth day of April.. .....They will start from Shiraz for Bushire, and thence proceed

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1. Probably meaning the responsible and noted men.

to India. In return this amicable move, the Ministers of the State have such decreed that in order to recompense the last events, great effort should be undertaken, the terms of friendship and commercial relations being observed at the highest degree....."

And in April fresh bands poured into the country. This Mukher-Ussaltaneh who had been sent to Fars on the insistence of the British, and had praised so eloquently the "neighboring state," could not but turn anti-British, when he felt his word disgraced in the eyes of the public. And when the storm came in 1914, he chose to embrace the cause of the Central Powers. If Great Britain had desisted from following the lead of her ally, and had done her best to solidify and empower the Swedish Gendarmerie that was a new symbol to the Persian nationalists, she would have kept her prestige, escaped much trouble and experienced a friendship, assuring at the same time the security of the trade routes in Southern Persia. It was England's persistence to keep an army in Persia, that offered the German propagandists a fertile ground for distortion and success. It was Lord Hardinge's policy that ~~laid~~ laid low the British reputation among the tribesmen, and made them fling their doors open before Herr Wassmus and company.

On the eve of the World War, Great Britain had become afraid of the Russian expansion in Persia. Since the days of the Potsdam Agreement, England had tried to counteract the efforts of the Russians. The German government published a book called "Englische Dokumente Zur Erdrosselung Persiens" in 1917, which was soon translated into Persian by the magazine "Kaveh", the organ of the Persian pro-German party, in Berlin, under the title "Revelations of Craft Or British Hypocrisy And Deceit." The book contains valuable



documents found in the Shiraz consulate, when it was pillaged by the Germans and their associates, in November 1915. I can not take much responsibility for the authenticity of the documents reproduced, since the book is written during the war, by a belligerent, directed against the other. But altogether they seem sound since they reflect upon events and occasions which found realization. I propose to translate extracts from some of the documents which will be unfortunately a crude reversion into English, since I have no access to the originals that are presumably in possession of the German Foreign office.

The first document worthy of consideration is a circular sent by Sir Walter Townley, The British Minister, to the British consuls in Isfahan, Shairaz, Tabriz, Meshed, Kerman and Bushire. It deals with the situation in Persia, and is dated March 23, 1914.

"-----The affairs in Tabriz are much disappointing, in view of the outward conduct of Shuja'NUddowleh, and the independence that he has achieved through Russian support.....It is terribly hard to get the funds necessary for the upkeep of the Gendarmerie, as expenses having reached a total of £600,000 per annum."<sup>1</sup>

The trans-Persian railway scheme has led to difficult straits. It seems that the negotiations in London and Petersburg will end in no results. Russia desires to extend the railway line from the Kerman to Shah-Bahar,<sup>2</sup> while His Majesty's government stands against locating the terminus at the Eastern side of Bandar Abbas."

The railway that Sir Walter alludes to, was the projected Baku-Nushki (Baluchistan) line taken by the "Societe d'Etudes de Paris" financed by Russians, British and French. It never found out a practical solution, owing to Russo-British deadlock and the war of 1914.

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1. The Gendarmerie was kept by British money advances.

2. A port in Persian Baluchistan.

The second circular to the same gentleman, is dated June, 26, 1914, and in it we read the following lines:

With the coronation day<sup>(1)</sup> nearing, prospects in the capital, look quite dark and gloomy. The governments are in dire need of money, ~~and~~ and from what source that would be forthcoming is unknown. It seems that His Majesty's government are not prepared to give any aid, whatsoever. On the other hand the Persian government are quite unwilling to ask Russia for aid, since they are afraid that the latter would again insist on certain concessions and privileges such as navigation on the Urumya Lake,<sup>2</sup> reconsideration of the Russo-Persian frontier line near the plain of Moghan, certain irrigation works, lease of some lands, and moreover the right to irrigate Karkunan which entails taking the waters of the Karun river from a source in Kuh-Rang, and getting them around into the plains of Isfahan, in return of the financial help."

Next Sir Walter proceeds to give an account of Russian malefaction in the North, such as collecting taxes on the properties of both Russians and the Russian protégés, according to their wish, under direct orders from Petersburg, and the establishment of Russian postal services in Tabriz, Meshed, and Teheran.

The paragraph below is especially worthy of consideration.

"It is conceived that London and Petersburg are thinking of a fundamental rehabilitation of the whole Persian problem, coming to decide upon the possible way of changing the agreement of 1907 so that it may be made more effective, suitable to the present day conditions. This case is necessitated by the Russian procedures of

1. Referring to the coronation of Sultan Ahmad Shah, the last ruler of his dynasty, that took place in July 1914.
2. In Azerbaijan.

late, and perhaps to an extent by the understanding reached recently between His Majesty's government and the Anglo-Persian oil Company, which provides us with new duties and responsibilities in Southern Persia, that should be defended."

As a matter of fact the arrangement alluded to, by the British Minister, was made public in August, right after the outbreak of war. As one might reason, the plan was drawn in June, some two months before the August tragedy.

The third circular was written on August 22, and is rather a description of the coronation and an account of the composition of the new cabinet. It mentions the advancement of £50,000 for the Swedish Gendarmerie, by Great Britain, and speaks of virtual rule of the Russians over their spheres.

These circulars as well as other letters exchanged between Townley and O'Connor the consul in Shiraz, which are reproduced in the above-mentioned book, indicate the suspicion with which the British were watching the Russian activities. Townley himself had to quit Persia, because he and the Russian Minister, Korostovetz, could not cooperate. The farewell letter of Sir Walter, reproduced in original, in the publication of the German Foreign office is a bare testimony to the fact. The letter is dated April 8, 1915.

"My dear O'Connor, Well, my time in Persia is coming rapidly to an end and in a little more than a week I return my face homeward and the so-called land of the rose will see me no more. I am going home on leave granted me in most encouraging language, but without my having asked for it, and because Korostovetz and I could not hit it off. Who could hit it off with poor Korostovetz?.....I have been expecting this termination of my sojourn in Persia for some time, almost eversince I came here, because I felt sure that our friends on the banks of the Nava would get tired of somebody

who would not sit down and see them quietly absorb all Persia. Azerbaijan was bad enough for the Muscovite appetite, and after having a good bite at Isfahan the scheme was in course of elaboration to lay hands on Fars through the same channel as they had tried to incorporate Isfahan in their sphere of complete control. The only thing to do to check them was to carry the war into their own stronghold, Azerbaijan, to make them hold their hand in the centre and South.<sup>1</sup> This I did to some purpose and got them much on the raw by showing up various of their scandals. Two things they could not forgive; first, the appointment of Samsam<sup>2</sup> to Isfahan which served to show up the hollowness of their position there. It will take them sometime to reestablish it, though dear old Graham<sup>3</sup> will help them all he can by his blunders. Second, the presence of the Imperial Bank in the Russian zone as the agency through which the revenues were transferred to Teheran....."

This letter of Townley, and the exacting language of Sykes, prove that the British had got alarmed by the colossal success attending the ~~British~~ Russian forward march in Persia. Moreover the British government had responsibilities at home and in India which called upon a check to Russian irresponsibility. The House of Commons had to be kept contented, if Grey desired not to see his Russian entente going to pieces. The Indian Moslems, faithful subjects of His Majesty, were already groaning against Russian tyranny in Persia, and finally Russia was seemingly drawing closer to the Gulf under the guise of friendship. These factors would contribute to the fears of the British government.

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1. Referring to Russo-Turkish struggle in Northern Persia.
  2. The Bakhtyari chieftain who was pro-British and anti-Russian.
  3. The British consul in Isfahan.

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VIII. British Policy and The Gulf Ports  
1911-1914

( The Narrative of Muwakkar-Uddowleh  
The Governor-General of the  
Gulf Ports )

An Introductory Note.

The writer's father, Muwakkar-Uddowleh, a government official in service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who was well-acquainted with the Gulf, through his previous experiences as the resident-agent of the Foreign office in the Gulf Ports, and Persian Consul-General in Bombay, was nominated to the post of governor of the Ports and the Island of the Persian Gulf, in April 1911, and his appointment was kept secret until his arrival at Bushire. As his own written record indicates, his appointment was contrary to the wishes of the British, because the latter desired to have a more lenient man to deal with, in the Gulf. The British occupied Bushire officially in August 1915, and deported Muwakkar-Uddowleh to India. There in 1919, he wrote a few pages about the days of his governorship in the Gulf. I have thought it more fitting to translate my father's narrative and insert it in here to tell us something more of the years that we have already covered. This I have chosen, because it is both comprehensive and concise. It throws light upon the events as evidenced by an official responsible for the Gulf. I will try to verify the testimony of my father, either in the footnotes, or in the appendix.

The Narrative.

"Before my appointment as the Governor-General of the Gulf Ports, such an anarchy ruled in those parts, that the Persian government, though accustomed to the situation for long, thought of

an effective remedy. Although the British officials were incessantly complaining of insecurity and disorder, they would not comply with the removal of the former governor, because he had utterly yielded to the will of the British, and had adopted a life-long course of submission and obedience towards them. Foreigners knew well that the internal troubles of Persia, were the best pretexts for unlawful intervention and occupation. And that was why they would resort to every trick to disturb the peace and tranquility, if a locality had a chance to enjoy them.<sup>1</sup>

"The Persian government appointed me first to serve as the Envoy Extraordinary at the court of Delhi, since the King-Emperor was coming to get crowned in India. Before having started, I was telegraphed with the secret code of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to proceed immediately to Bushire, and enjoined upon me a dead silence regarding my post, until I would reach the destination. I did as I was told. Though I was very ill and the roads were desperately unsafe, I managed to reach Bushire on 17 Hamal 1329 (April 7, 1911). The former governor, Ahmad Khan Daryabagi, had sensed the change, through the agency of the telegraph office, and had sought refuge in the British Consulate, on the very day of my arrival, although I had no evil intentions regarding him.

"When I was at a distance of three miles from Bushire, the British Consul-General who was an acquaintance of mine wrote me a friendly letter, and revealed the news that the Daryabagi had taken sanctuary in his grounds. The same evening I answered the letter, and gave guarantees for the security of the terrified ex-governor. A few days later he left for Mohammarah.

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1. A claim seemingly hard to prove. But the action of the Russians in the North, and their help to the brigands and rebels, can be taken as indicator.

"Though claiming friendship and intimacy with me, the British Consul was infuriated by the discretion of the Persian government, because there existed a great difference between me and the retiring governor. He had found his duty in obeying the orders of the alien government,<sup>1</sup> while during the terms of service as the agent of the Foreign office in the Gulf Ports, I had not committed myself to any action, but defending the rights of Persia, asserting the dignity of my government, and protesting rightly against the unjustifiable intervention of the Foreigners.

"A week before my arrival the city disturbances had attained such a climax that some of the government artillerymen in Bushire, got engaged in a skirmish with the chief of the Police and his assistant who had come from Teheran. The second officer fled to the Turkish Consulate, after a pass of arms. The artillerymen pursued and murdered him brutally in the Consulate. The governor was unable to punish the offenders and had joined the rank of the spectators. It was a plain fact that the Turkish Consul would protest vehemently against the violation of the consulate grounds, and insist upon the dismissal of the governor.

"Thanks to the ignorance of the past governors, and the negligence of Persia's administrators, the city of Bushire is still of the size of a village, and its population rarely exceeds ten thousand. Notwithstanding that, the Daryabagi,<sup>2</sup> Amir Tuman,<sup>3</sup> or according to some European satirists, the only admiral of the kingdom of Persia, though occupying the post of governor for some years, was so incapable of regulating affairs that none dared to

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1. Perhaps a proof can be found in his appointment in 1915, to the post he had lost in 1911. Plainly he was a nominee of the British in 1915, because he came to assume office at a time when the legal governor was in exile, and the British were the masters of the situation. 2. "Daryabagi" is an honorary title, denoting an Admiral. To day it is obsolete, and no longer in use. 3. Amir Tuman means a commander of ten thousand soldiers.

leave his house, one hour after sunset, in fear of the rascals who infested the town.

"Though coming to Bushire with only a secretary and a few personal servants, being unescorted by a single soldier or cavalryman, the government having no army in the city, and the artillerymen being a band of corrupt and wicked thieves, keeping in open revolt, I succeeded to effect, since God willed it, such an order that the British, the foremost partizans of Daryabagi, bore witness to the solid organization of law and security.<sup>1</sup> The only force that I could organize, in the first days of my arrival, was restricted to fifty riflemen from the suburbs. Witnessing the transformation, the Persian statesmen who had been jaded for years, by the disorder in the Ports, and the continual complaints from in and out, began applauding, and gave promises of help and support, but all in words. I pleaded hard for the formation of a small military force, which appeal met with procrastination."

I am breaking here the narrative to reproduce a despatch of Muwakkar-Uddowleh to the Ministry of the Interior at Teheran dated Rabi' II 1331 (March 1913), asking for military support.

"The Ministry of the Interior,

"After two weeks that the Arab and Baharlu<sup>2</sup> Brigands had besieged Bandar Abbas and Minab, and the government riflemen were defending the two towns, the rebels were put to flight, and now driven out of the precincts of Bandar Abbas. Thanks God they were unable to enter the city, but I managed to get one hundred riflemen

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1. Speaking of the plight of Persia, in years intervening between the signing of the Anglo-Russian agreement, and the Great War, Sir Percy Sykes makes the following remarks, "Great Britain anxious to avoid fresh commitments, supported the Swedish gendarmerie and tried to secure capable governors for South Persia" "A History of Persia" Vol. II. P. 433

2. Two of the local tribes.



to send to the arena of the battle, and have ordered by cable, 50,000 cartridges for Bandar Abbas, from Mascat.

"May I implore now the government to pay attention to the military force of the Ports? From the days of the late Majesty, Muzaffar-Uddin Shah, Bushire had four hundred soldiers, ninety artillerymen, and fifty cavalrymen. Your Excellency are aware of the fact that after Sheykh Mohammad's sedition, at first the corps of the riflemen of Bandar Lingeh had an annual pay of 24,000 Tomans, and until two years ago they were of receipt of 8,000 Tomans, per annum. That of Bandar Abbas, Minab and Shamil used to get 10,000 Tomans, every year from the government. In these two last years, notwithstanding terrible disorders how much has the government given for the military forces of the Ports?

"I take the honour to state that the taxes of the two last years have all been collected without a penny of unnecessary expenditure, burdened on the government, and occurrence of any bloodshed. The revenues of the Gulf Customs-House, has increased in these two years, and if a comparison would be made with the past years, the truth of the case will be revealed. It is evident that without order and security, the increase in the revenues of the Customs-House, and the collection of the taxes, are not possible. My government is based on moral force in the absence of material means, but the administration of the country is impossible without military force.

"Last year I wrote several times that two Maxim guns were necessary for the Ports, and no attention was given to my demand. A few days ago that alarming news was continually pouring in from Bandar Abbas, I was obliged to send a cable to Europe, for two Maxim guns. Surely, your Excellency have seen in the Reuter Telegrams, that the British warship has taken ashore a Maxim gun, for the Consulate in Bandar Abbas. Fifty soldiers taken down with the

gun, have returned to the boat. If Bandar Abbas had a Maxim gun, the British would not land one. May I implore that the Customs office would be instructed to pay the price of the two guns that I have ordered, according to the bill which will be received? For the military force of the ports, if it is possible to send a reformed regiment from the capital, that is the best. If it is not practical will your Excellency authorize me to form a local regiment from Dashti and Dashtistan? Then only a European officer is needed for supreme command, to effect full discipline. It is my humblest request to your Excellency to honour me with a favourable answer, about the price of the two guns, and a regiment <sup>for</sup> ~~of~~ the Ports."

As far as I know neither of this appeal, or any other of its kind, had any effect upon the Teheran Ministers. They were so absorbed with their bickerings, and so hard pressed upon by the Russians, that they had no time for important issues.

Now to go back again to the narrative of the governor of the Gulf Ports.

"The Persian government had ceded the Customs revenues of the Ports to the British, that being the mortgage of their debts. And the British officials would not let a single Kran from those revenues go to the necessary expenditure of the Gulf Ports. The taxes would not suffice for the cost of the government services, so that sometimes months would elapse, and I was not in receipt of my salary, and that of my staff, and of the police force that I had organized.

"I met Nizam-Ussaltaneh<sup>1</sup> in Kazerun.<sup>2</sup> He was on his way from

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1. A Persian Statesman who had a turbulent career, all throughout his life. He formed the "National Government" in Kermanshah, in 1918, siding with the Central Powers. Achieving a brilliant success at the start, he lost at the end, and fled to Constantinople. Nizam died in 1922.

2. A small town on the Shiraz-Bushire route.

Arabistan going to Shiraz, and intended to pass through Bushire. When governor of Shiraz, he decided to put an end to the Kawam<sup>1</sup> family, and consequently met with disaster.<sup>2</sup> At this time,<sup>3</sup> Muhammad Ali Mirza, the Ex-Shah, had inflamed Northern Persia, by his fresh attempts to regain the lost throne. I daresay that the only locality in the realm, that enjoyed peace and security, was the Gulf Ports. It had so impressed the rulers of Persia that it seemed to them almost a miracle. After Nezam-Ussaltanek had failed in his enterprize in Shiraz, and had taken to flight, the British pretending that Fars was involved in anarchy, landed a force of Indian cavalrymen and infantry at Bushire. I had no adequate force to prevent their disembarkation."

( See the appendix No. 312 for the text of the letter of ~~XXXX~~ H.B.M.'s Consul-General to the governor of the Ports regarding the troops )

"The Persian Government had been asked at the same time to afford the guards the usual customs facilities.

"The only means at my disposal was to stop the boatmen to take them ashore, from the harbour which was at a distance of three miles from the land. At last Vosouk-Uddowleh, now the Prime Minister, and then the Minister of Foreign Affairs, telegraphed to me, asking to let the boatmen bring ashore the uncalled guests. This act of the British was premeditated. The Russian and the British governments had arranged to land troops in Persia, from North and South.<sup>4</sup>

"All over Persia, the people were enraged. Telegrams were pour-

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1. A powerful family of the old lineage, residing in Shiraz. The chief of this family, was at times the virtual ruler of the Fars Province.

2. As a result, Nezam was outlawed by the government.

3. 1911.

4. It was in November 1911 that the two Russian ultimatums were delivered, following by the march on Teheran, and outrages in Tabriz and Meshed.

ing incessantly from the "Ulemas" and the "Anjumans"<sup>1</sup> urging a boycottage of English and Russian goods.<sup>2</sup> Caught in these straits, by God's blessings I succeeded to keep such an order in the Ports, that not a single person, foreigner or native, found a case to complain of. Though perhaps the alien government were very anxious to seek a pretext, and justify with, the presence of their army, no act of misdemeanor was perpetuated by anyone. True, an attack was made on the British troops in the Shiraz route. But that happened in Fars, and had no connection with the Ports."

Once more I break the narrative to quote a letter written by the Persian Minister in London to the governor of the Gulf Ports, in August 1912. This letter shows clearly that there were in the British Metropolis, some people who were interested in exaggerating the state of affairs in Persia, trying to induce the British government to take action. Possibly they were the stockholders of the Imperial Bank, and the Anglo-Persian oil Company. Here is the text of the said correspondence:

"Dear Sir:

I was very glad to receive your esteemed letter of Rajab 28, and get the knowledge of its contents. I agree with you that rumors about anarchy in Southern Persia, are the exaggerations of a group that crave for agitation. Here too there are a number of people who have devoted their energies to this purpose, and are inciting the British government to intervention. An account of the affairs had been prepared for publication, and your Excellency's letter arrived at due time, to be used as a proof for my arguments. That article was published through the Reuter's Agency. Enclosed is a cutting of it. But unfortunately on the very day that this account

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1. Political clubs.

2. For the despatch of the governor of the Ports to the central government, regarding the arrival of the troops, see the appendix.

was printed in the papers, the news of the defeat of Gendarmerie near Shiraz, which was an indication of disturbances on the Bushire-Shiraz route was also published in the same journals. Though I explained the case of Gendarmerie's defeat according to the intelligence received from Teheran, and succeeded in dispelling the very bad effect that the event had made on the public, which the trouble-managers were trying to utilize for their own purposes. Surely you have seen it in the papers.

"I think that it will be of much use, and I shall be very grateful for it, if you kindly send for the use of the Embassy, a detailed and allround report about the present condition of the trade routes, and also your opinion about the event near Shiraz, to which I have alluded, and which is contradictory to your assuring tone about the safety of the Shiraz Route. Any other information which you deem necessary to put at the knowledge of the Embassy, would much oblige."

The "Illustrated London News" of Sept. 28, 1912, had a drawing sketch of the boy-Shah, with these words at its top, "Ruler of a Land which May Be A Danger to the World's peace". And then under it, there was the following explanation, "The 'Times' echoed the feeling of many the other day when it said, in a leader dealing with M. Sazanoff's visit to Great Britain: 'A country in the State in which Persia is today is apt to become as great a danger to the peace of the world as a derelict in midocean to the safety of navigation.....If the whole fabric of Persian Sovereignty is not to collapse altogether, Persia must be governed unless Russia and Great Britain respectively assume a more direct responsibility that they have hitherto undertaken for the administration and public security of the Northern and Southern provinces in which their interests predominates. This means, in fact, if not in terms, a revision,

or rather an amplification of the Anglo-Russian Convention. It will no doubt present difficulties. But they will not prove insurmountable if the two governments subordinate all contentions, questions of secondary importance to the larger interests they possess in common! The boy-Shah is, of course, under a Regent".

The "Times" correspondent was all the time sending news about Persia's anarchical conditions, exaggerating it as much as possible, inviting British and Russian control, and alarming those gentlemen who had their material interest at stake. But not until the outbreak of the war, and Turkey's entrance into the European conflagration, were the Gulf Ports involved in serious troubles.

We shall now hear the rest of the story told by the governor of the Ports.

"Three years and four months had passed, since my arrival at Bushire, when the European war broke out. I acted promptly in such a way as not to let the British get any chance of protest or grievance. Even my predecessor, the Daryabagi, who was by then, in service of Mokhber-Us-Saltaneh,<sup>1</sup> the governor-general of Fars, and had become the commander of the Fars army, began making excursions in the Bushire route, inducing vainly the people to rise. The British consul-general complained against him, to the Legation in Teheran and he was put under the injunction not to intrude into the Bushire route.

"In the first days of my appointment, I established a Court of Justice, and chose as its head a learned man whom I had taken with me, from Shiraz. The Ecclesiastics began to oppose the court, because their business was closed down. They issued a decree in which

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1. A pro-German Statesman, and one of the members of the committee that drew up the Electoral Law of 1906. He is now the Prime Minister, since 1927.

they denounced the House of Justice, as the "Habt" and "Taghut".<sup>1</sup> I sent them a message through one of their own number, and told ~~the~~ them to elect one among themselves, one whose seal and decree would be respected and obeyed by all the others. Then and then only I would close the court, and put into the hands of the élite, all the judicial and religious cases, else I should not let us become the laughing-stock of the foreigners, in this Islamic Land, where a clergy of this quarter, annuls the decision of the clergy of the other.<sup>2</sup> Then I recalled to their memories several legal cases which had been for years the cause of conflict and controversy among the clergy and the people of different quarters, and which had ~~been~~ received a final settlement in the court, in a short time. At last since none of them was ready to acknowledge the superiority of the other, they gave way, and accepted the new situation. Perchance, one of the ecclesiasts, Agha Sheykh Ali Dashti had a quarrel with somebody over a Wakf<sup>3</sup> property. Due to the interference of the British Consul who was siding with the defendant, the case had been unjustly settled, during the days of the former governor. I referred the matter to the court, and the British got no way of entering into the business. The right of Agha Sheykh Ali was ascertained, and I gave to his possession the disputed property. Then the uncleanness of "Habt" and "Taghut" disappeared from the court!

"Afterwards I organized a Police Force in uniform, a body of horsemen and an Artillery force composed of a few individuals. Altogether they numbered one hundred. Thanks to God, order was kept with this militia. I constructed a tower<sup>4</sup> three miles far from

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1. According to Islamic traditions, two idols worshipped by the Arabs prior to the days of Prophet Muhammad. 2. This fact is interesting especially in view of the capitulations and extraterritorial rights. 3. A Religious endowment. 4. When the news of the construction of this tower, reached Shiraz, the Democrats spread a rumor that it had been built for the use of the British troops, and consequently bitter attacks were made on the governor in the (cont....

Bushire where the incoming Tangistanis and Dashtistanis<sup>1</sup> had to deposit their weapons, before entering the city. And the scheme ~~press~~ proved essential to the maintenance of order.

"I did all in my power to help the Finance office, so that the American Mr. Shuster who was the Treasurer-General, and resigned subsequent to the Russian demand, thanked me for my efforts, in a telegram. And all said that the only governor in this realm, who received the gratitude of the Treasurer-General, was this man.

"Next I formed a municipality, set up to cleanse the city. The waste and dirt of years that had got accumulated under the ground, were drawn out. The town was cleansed, within the range of possibility. The streets and the roads as far as the outskirts of the city, were lighted. Then I resolved to arrange for a water supply.

"I made a contract with an English company to introduce electricity into Bushire. The machinery ~~of~~ was imported, and electric lamps were put up in the streets. Matters went on smoothly for a month. But the company would not proceed with the terms of the contract, the British were unduly supporting the firm, and the war days were disturbing the situation. The work had to stop. The German firms were ready to resume the business, but to avoid the possibility of future troubles, I entered into agreement with a British House. If war had not been ushered in, I would have dealt too with the water supply.

"I write in detail, in order to make it clear that though I was patriotic, and were defending the rights of my country, the foreigners had no case to grumble about, and were giving evidence to the proper run of affairs in the Gulf Ports. 'And glory lays in the confession of the enemies'."

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(continuation of the previous page) press, and on the pulpit.  
1. Tribesmen living in the vicinity of Bushire.



Here I stop the Narrative since we have reached a new chapter,  
The Outbreak of the European War. Henceforth Persia becomes a  
theatre of war, apparently an unimportant one, but really of much  
significance to the destinies of the Allied Powers.

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IX. The First Year of the War

The European conflagration started in the first days of August. And on August 10, Royal Assent was accorded to the Bill authorizing the Admiralty to invest a sum of £2,200,000 in the Anglo-Persian oil company. From that day the Persian oil fields came under the virtual ~~rule~~ <sup>rule</sup> of direction of the British government. The Navy needed a great deal of oil during the war, and as somebody remarked it was the Anglo-Persian oil company that won England's wars in the East, in the great struggle. When the peace came, the company's capital was standing at a grand sum of Twenty million pounds, five millions of which, was the investments of the Whitehall. I shall not pass without remarking that the man chiefly responsible for the government's entry, was Mr. Winston Churchill, then the First Lord of Admiralty.

England knew from the start that Turkey's sympathies were on the side of the Teutonic Powers. And that was why she began preparations in the Gulf before Turkey's entrance into the game. As for Persia, she declared her nominal neutrality at once, while British and Russian troops were sojourning on her soils. That neutrality was just a piece of humour. I wonder whether the government really expected the belligerents to take it seriously.

In the latter part of October, troops were sent to Bahrein. A despatch of the governor of the Ports<sup>1</sup> to the Ministry of the Interior, speaks of the event.

".....I have to inform your Excellency that today the first vice-consul of the British consulate-general came and affirmed the appointment of Sir Percy Cox, as the consul-general of the Gulf, stating too his arrival at Bahrein, in companion with the ex-first vice-consul of the consulate-general, six thousand Indian

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1. Muwakkar-Uddowleh, the Writer's father.

infantrymen and two artillery batteries. He alleged that this move is only in view of the Turkish threatening gestures, and that the British government want to take necessary precaution. They have circulated in Bahrein a long declaration written in unrefined Persian, apparently a translation, by an Indian interpreter. Its support is that Great Britain has been a defender of the small states, since the days of Napoleon, and the Ottomans have been ungrateful towards the British who have always been their friends.

"And that this landing of troops at Bahrein is just a precautionary measure designed to keep the Ottomans at bay. The British government it says furthermore, are cognizant of the friendship of the governor of Bahrein, and have no intention to occupy his territory.

"The Indian troops are still on board and have not been landed."<sup>1</sup>

A week later, on November 4, Turkey declared war against Great Britain, and the latter's expectations came but true.

Now we shall return to the interrupted narrative.

"At last the European war came about. One whole year of the period, I was in Bushire, and observed strictly the neutrality of the Persian Government, as far as it was within my reach, in the topsy-turvy ways of the time. Four months after the outbreak of the war,<sup>1</sup> the British made a night-raid on the German Consulate which was situated out of the town, and far from any dwelling. The German Consul, and a German merchant and his wife who were living in the precincts of the consulate, were siezed upon. Without giving them time to dress up, they were carried in pyjamas to a boat which they had brought to the harbour, on purpose.

"Sometimes before this event, they had arrested some Germans

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1. Evidently a hasty mistake in calculation since the arrest of Dr. Listermann occurred in March 1915.

in Mohammareh, with the help of the governor.<sup>1</sup> A German who was acting-Consul in Bushire, for a while before the war, and had gone to Egypt, was newly appointed to a post in Persia. He was coming to the Gulf, by the Baghdad Route. The British got the intelligence and set on his pursuit. In the vicinity of Bandar Rig, a minor port in the Gulf, he was captured, through the instrumentality of the local chieftain. Two or three other Germans, his subordinates, were also arrested. But the man, Wassmuss managed so dexterously to find an exit from the prison-tent, and reach Borazjan,<sup>2</sup> that amazed everybody.

"The capture of the German consul in Bushire by the British authorities, which was a violation of Persia's neutrality, and the imprisonment of the German officials whose chief Wassmuss found the means to escape and save himself, caused a general indignation in Southern Persia.<sup>3</sup> I sent a formal and strongly-worded protest to the British consulate,<sup>4</sup> and wired the tyrannical moves of the British to the Minister of State. Since Bushire had no military force

1. Sheykh Khaz'al an Arab chieftain who assumed a position of independence, by the British help. 2. A village near Bushire, on the road to Shiraz. 3. Refer to the appendix for the declaration of the Bushire clergy, their telegram to the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Teheran, and the declaration of the British Consuls in Bushire. 4. The following is the text of the protest addressed to the British Consulate:

"The British Consul-General.

With an astounding surprise, beyond my power of expression, I heard this morning that last night, three hours to the dawn, a large number of Indian troops with British officers had made a raid to the German Consulate, and the house of the agent of the German tradehouse, taking the Consul, Dr. Listemann, and Monsieur and Madame Eisenhut out of their beds, in night-dress, transporting them immediately to a boat anchoring in Rishehr. I protest vigorously against this action on the part of the Consulate-General, which implies violation and disregard of the Persian State, and demand from the Consulate-General to render back Dr. Listemann, and Monsieur and Madame Eisenhut. These I invoke, in the name of His Imperial Majesty's government."

to resist the British force, and any irresponsible act committed by the common people would lead to a catastrophe, and cause embarrassment to the central government, I used every means to calm down the nerves of the clergy, and the people, and they did not resort to any thing mischievous.

"On the other hand when Wassmuss arrived at Borazjan, he instigated Ghazanfar-Ussaltaneh, the local chieftain, and the other leading men of Dashtistan, and Dashti, to effect an uprising and he himself started for Shiraz. Mokhber-Ussaltaneh, the governor-General of Fars, who had received his education in Germany, and had made the acquaintance of Wassmuss some years earlier, secretly induced the people to give a befitting welcome to the German Wassmuss who had put on Persian garbs, and was professing Mohammadan Faith. The German Minister in Teheran, was remitting him money, with which he had organized a band of cavalry and riflemen. He had found in Fars, a secure outpost, and was ~~visiting Borazjan and Tangistan~~ busy rousing up the people. At one time he was visiting Borazjan and Tangistan, and at the other making a tour amidst the tribes of the vicinity of Shiraz. The more the British authorities insisted upon the Persian government to prevent Wassmuss from further propaganda, the more the governor of Fars, treated him respectfully and friendly.

"At such a time the headman of Rishehr,<sup>1</sup> whom I had dismissed sometime before, was induced by the chieftains of Dashti and Dashtistan who were in alliance with Wassmuss, to gather forces and attack in the dead of night, the houses of the British, put them to sword, and loot the English Bank. I had no troops at my command, of the Gendarms under the Swedish officers, there were only thirty

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1. A village on the seashore, near Bushire.

in Bushire, their officer being a young man of nineteen. I ordered these thirty gendarmes and a few policemen and horsemen that I had in my service, to arrest the headman of Rishehr. Fighting began towards the dawn. The Gendarmes abandoned the field, with their officer. Obligated by the force of circumstances, I applied to the British army for help. They sent me reinforcements. The headman of Rishehr, and his followers fled, and took refuge in a holy shrine, near the village. The casualties included a government horseman, and an Indian Sepoy. The refugees in the shrine, were surrounded, and had to surrender at the end. The sedition was killed.

"All during my term of office, I pleaded hard with the government, for a military force in Bushire, but to no avail. The Persian government was continually drawing loans<sup>1</sup> from the British Treasury, and providing the governor of Fars with funds to uphold the military head-quarters in Shiraz. With all the support of the central government, the governor could not collect taxes in Fars. But they expected a miracle from the governor of the Gulf Ports, with empty hands, and lack of any military backing.

"The friendly attitude of the governor of Fars, towards the Germans, and the perpetual agitation carried on in Dashti and Dashedistan culminated in a pact between the tribal chieftains, namely Ghazanfar-Ussaltaneh of Borazjan, Sheykh Hussein of Ckahn-Kutah, and Zaer Khader of Tangistan.<sup>2</sup> They used to despatch manifestoes and declarations to Bushire, almost every day.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand the

1. Referring to the ~~money~~ subsidy for the upkeep of the Gendarmerie.  
 2. See the appendix for the pact of the alliance of the chieftains. Its seventh clause indicates that Wassmuss had undertaken to give financial aid to the tribal union. Moreover the military discipline agreed upon, is clearly an inspiration of a foreigner, namely Wassmuss, because its regularity is above the standard of the knowledge of the tribes. 3. See the appendix for the text of two of those declarations. Their tone is evidently pro-German. One of them alludes to revolution in India, which was a clear hope of the central Powers.

British began to increase their forces in Bushire."

Here I stop again with the narration to quote a telegraphic despatch of the governor of the Ports to the Ministry of the Interior, in April 1915, regarding the arrival of fresh contingents of British troops.

"A British vessel has brought 400 Indian troops to replace those here, whose terms of service have <sup>ex</sup> expired. All the boatmen of Bushire~~m~~ have refused to carry them ashore. The British have been obliged to get four large boats from Bahrein, for the purpose of landing the troops. I have used every method of discussion with the acting-consul-general to dissuade him from landing these men in place of those whose terms of service have expired, and none has been successful. If the government would allot a small military force to Bushire, as I have several times demanded, all of the excuses of the British would be overridden. Just now the acting consul general has come to ask me to oblige the boatmen to help the landing of the troops. I answered that such a course would be impossible, and would cause public agitation. May I ask your Excellency to forward a copy of this telegram to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs."

Turkey's movements in Northern Persia, are worthy of notice at this juncture. In October, prior to taking sides with the central Powers, Turkey had led her forces into Northern Persia, after having settled her main differences with Russia over the Persian frontier. As soon as the hostilities started Russian and Turkish troops, found themselves face to face with each other on a soil alien to both. The Kurds of Azarbayjan sided with the Turks, and the Christian minorities <sup>1</sup> went over to the Russians. The issue

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1. Assyrians and Nestorians.

was at first undecided, but at last owing to the heavy attack on Russian lines in Caucasus, Turkey could occupy Urumyiah and Tabriz, in the early months of the year 1915. But with the offensive on the Caucasian flank repulsed, Russia was again the master of the situation in the spring of the same year.

Meantime England was watching the game with much interest unable to interfere in anyway, since she was engaged in Irak. With the year 1915, German propaganda was in full swing. They had already succeeded to attract to their cause, some prominent and responsible men, such as Mokhber-Ussaltaneh, the governor of Fars, Fazim-Ussaltaneh, the governor of Luristan, and Mostawfi-Ulmamalek, premier in August 1914. Even Bakhtyaris, the allies of the British, were swerving in their sympathies and some of their chieftains had deserted the British. But still England had friends while Russia had none, except for a band of corrupt reactionaries. As a matter of fact a good many of the friends of Great Britain left her, because they bitterly resented her ally, Russia. Had England been anti-Russian, undoubtedly even her most inveterate foes would have joined hands with her. The people of the South had got enraged by the presence of British troops on their land, but they had now suffered as much as their brethren in the North. The politicians were aggrieved by the continual support given by the British to Russian cruelties, but still there was very little of specific malefactions on the part of the Southern neighbour, to grudge about. A good many knew that in ~~many~~ some instances such as the expulsion of Mr. Shuster, Sir Edward Grey had been the brain of the plot, and the Russian diplomats, foolish tools on the stage, but yet only the haughty attitude of the Russians had left a deep impression upon the plain people. England was dragged along by Russia, into the



vortex of the Persians' hatred. Else her place was in the side-ways.

Returning to Muwakkar-Uddowleh's narration, he continues to say, "At last in the first days of Ramazan 1333 (July 1915) two English officers and some Indian soldiers set out on a spying expedition <sup>1</sup> to Tangistan, all without my information. Six miles out of Bushire, they came face to face with a band of the tribesmen who were lurking around, as if in expectation of an attack on the part of the British. Both of the officers were killed.<sup>2</sup> Meantime hardly a day would pass without me writing and wiring to the Ministers of the State, asking them to restrain the governor of Fars, in his pro-German activities.<sup>3</sup> The Gendarmerie under the Swedish officers, was openly anti-British. The road from Shiraz to Bushire was completely in his hands. And the Gendarmes garrisoned in Borazjan, were siding with Wassmuss.

While the British were declaring themselves friendly, thanking me for my efforts to repress disorder, they suddenly occupied

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1. Wilson, "Mesopotamia" Vol. I. 26.

2. Wilson mentions only one killed, namely Capt. Ranking.

3. A dispatch of the governor of the Ports to the Teheran government, in June 1915, regarding the activities of Wassmuss, "This morning I had a long talk with the British acting ~~gambax~~-consul-general, about the situation in Borazjan and Tangistan. The latter declares that the central government have not made any attempt to restrain Wassmuss, since he has come to these parts. Recently three Germans who have engaged some horsemen from Shiraz, have joined him, with arms and cartridges. Zaer Khader of Tangistan, and Sheykh Hosein of Cahah-Kutch have put their sons and relatives at his disposal, under the guise of riflemen and cavalry. Wassmuss is busy buying munition and gathering ~~the~~ contingents. Ali Delbari is sent to induce the chieftains of Dashti, to join the confederacy. Ghazanfar-Ussaltaneh has obliged the people of Borazjan to purchase arms, against their wishes. Every day they bring rifles from Kazerun and other places for sale in Borazjan. Furthermore the acting-consul adds that the government have not even intercepted the deciphered cables that are daily exchanged between Wassmuss and the German Embassy. Therefore he says, if an action would not be taken to force Wassmuss to retire to Shiraz, and stop the said telegrams, the British will land troops and will not give the telegraphic lines for the use of the Persian office. My own information confirms these contentions. It is even said that the Germans who have recently joined Wassmuss, have had

Bushire on the night of Ramazan 26, 1333 (Aug. 8, 1915). Some warships were brought into the harbour. The next morning the British Consul came with apologies, that he was sorry to occupy Bushire, under the orders of His Majesty's Government. At the same time I received a cable-message from Sir Percy Cox, the political resident in Basrah, who was priorly the Consul-General of the Gulf Ports. The purport of the telegram was to the effect that, 'since the Persian government is aiding our enemies, and the governor of Fars, has harboured an anti-British agitation, we are forced to occupy Bushire. We are very sorry to cause you trouble, but will do our best to make you feel as comfortable as possible'."

Before going any further with the narration, it is necessary to speak at length, of the causes that led the British to launch upon an act of open hostility against the Persian government.

In May 1915 the talk came of setting up a cabinet wholly ~~max-~~  
~~maxim~~ subversive to the legations. The Democratic premiers Mostawfi-Ulmamalek and Moshir-Uddowleh had been ousted, chiefly by the arrogance of the Allies. Indeed the British Minister was responsible for the resignation of Mushir-Uddowleh. After the fall of the cabinet, the British and Russian Ministers called upon Sa'd-Uddowleh, the same man whose nomination in 1913, had caused a storm, to form a cabinet. The Majliss that had been elected and convened

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(cont.) two maxim guns with them. The people of Dashtistan, are uneducated and ignorant. Wassmuss has got ~~in~~ some wireless apparatus. Every day he goes up a mound, sets down these tools, tells the people that he is communicating with Teheran and Berlin, and spreads absurd news. I implore that His Excellency Mokhber-Ussalteneh would be told to call Wassmuss to Kazerun, under the pretexts that important ~~business~~ revelations should be told to him, and Borazjan is not the right place for personal communications. Then he should be dispatched to Shiraz, under the care of Gendarmerie. Today if the whole of Southern Persia would get aflame, Wassmuss has not a bit to matter, but as soon as the people of Dashtistan, would resort to some action by the insinuation of Wassmuss, a number of British troops, right now in Basreh will be landed here. It is probable that they will not rest satisfied with the occupation of Bushire, and will advance till Borazjan, so far that the road is smooth."

in the previous year, instantly rose to fury, and refused any dealing with the old reactionary Sa'd-Uddowleh. The "Near East" of July 9, 1915, criticized severely this choice in such terms, "To put forward such a candidate, whom both the Russian and British Legations knew well from previous experience, was astonishing. It would have been blind policy at ordinary times; but how unpardonable and disastrous at this juncture when everything should be done to win public opinion and to inspire confidence."

The Ministers of the central Powers got terrified by the news, and drove to the Shah's palace at night, asking him to revise his decision. The parliamentarians in their alarm accepted a man who would still have been obnoxious in a different horizon and setting. Ayn-Uddowleh became premier, with Prince Farman-Farma, the old friend of the British at the Ministry of the Interior.

No Democrat took any portfolio under him, except one. As soon as this cabinet was in power, the Allies were sure of the friendliness of the central government. But soon a crisis came in July. Husein Rauf Bey, a Turkish commander had passed into a Persian frontier from Mezopotamia and had encountered the opposition of the Sanjabi tribes. The Democrats and some independents in the parliament accused Prince Farman-Farma of complicity in the plot against the Turks, demanded an interpellation and shouted him down. The veteran prime minister clung to collective responsibility of the ministers and meddled in a dirty business from which it was his duty to stand aloof. Evidently there was no cabinet, and the deadlock lasted for over a month. As soon as the news leaked out that Mostawfi-Ulmamalek was going to form another Democratic cabinet, the British struck their blow in Bushire.

The death of captain Ranking and Major Oliphant in the hands of the Tangistanis, was still an invective for the occupation of

Bushire. I propose to translate parts of a dispatch of Mowakkar-Uddowleh <sup>1</sup> related to the events mentioned above. This telegram pictures the conditions of the Ports, a month before the coup of August 8. It is addressed to the Ministry of the Interior and dates July 18.

"On the morning of Monday Sha'ban 29 <sup>2</sup> the news came that some of Tangistani and Chah-Kutahi rebels have assembled around a hill at a distance of three Farsakhs <sup>3</sup> from Bushire, and half a Farsakh <sup>4</sup> from the British Residency outside the city, having a design to attack the barricades of the British troops. The same afternoon Major Oliphant, an officer of the Regiment, and Captain Ranking the second vice-consul, together with six cavalrymen and twenty sepoy and infantry set out from the barricade in the vicinity of the British Residency, towards that hill, for getting intelligence. They were unaware that the rebels had set an ambush in the pits, and suddenly found themselves amidst the villeys of the tribesmen. The Major and also the Captain were killed in addition to an Indian cavalryman. The sepoy got wounded, and the rest took themselves to the safety of their barricades, in retreat. Instantly a number of sepoy were sent in pursuit of the rebels, but reaching the spot, the dark had come, and the tribesmen had dispersed. Since repeated news had affirmed that the rebels mean to attack the houses of the British, and their telegraph office, that evening, I distributed the scanty number of Police and horsemen that I have in service, among the houses of the Aliens in the outskirts of the city, and assumed personally the duty of watching over the whole business.....

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1. The writer's father.

2. July 12.

3. Nine miles.

4. One and a half mile.

"On the night of Sha'ban 30,<sup>1</sup> I was informed by the telegraph office that the British have not handed over the line,<sup>2</sup> investigating the matter; I was told that the lines have been cut off.....It is said that the German, Herr Wassmuss, has directed the few horse-men whom he has brought from Shiraz, to cut the wire between Bushire and Borazjan. Though I have no forces, I have designated a few persons to watch over the line..... During this long time, and especially within these few last months, I have said as much as I could, of the imperative necessity of a small contingent for Bushire. If only one of my demands had been accepted, these unwholesome events would not have happened. I besought that a body of Gendarmerie should be allocated to Bushire, for collecting taxes from Dashti and Dashtistan, whose pay would have been provided from the spot, but of no avail. I pleaded that the Gendarmerie should be ordered to take Herr Wassmuss to Shiraz with no result. As I have already said in my last deciphered cable, it seems that the Ministers of the State have left the Ports out of the map of Persia. In such a case all my appealing is but an idle talk."

At this very time the Turks and the Germans were meditating an attack upon the Russian forces in West and North-Western Persia. Their first initiative had failed, but they had every hope in the second offensive. Russians could not divert much of their forces to an insignificant theatre of war, about which the British were the most anxious. India was in danger, and that would suffice to justify the British occupation of Bushire. There was a double ~~purpose~~ ~~in~~ purpose in the Coup. It was intended both as a measure of

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1. July 13.

2. By some arrangement the telegraphic lines were used by the Indo-European telegraph office in daytime and by the Persian office at night.

intimidation to the hostile government that was coming in power at Teheran, and a defensive move against the active propaganda work of Wassmuss and other German emissaries that had invaded Southern Persia. But the occupation of Bushire was a blunder in that it utterly alienated against the British, those Persians who were undecided as to their peoclivities.

Now to turn back to the narrative.

"Guards were set around my house. Although none had resisted their raid on the governerate, they had broken and locked doors of the rooms, pillaging the valuable furniture, and the silver articles. I telephoned to the British Consul, and he drove to the scene accompanied by my steward. The few remnants of the booty were gathered and put in a room which was locked in turn. The Consul ordered the Indian guards to report next day on the looted goods. The following morning, the Consul went to the governorate, with my steward, only to discover that the room locked by him was broken into, during the night, and the best taken off. And there was none around but the Indian guards. Such a barbarity was displayed in this robbery that I can not conceive of. Nothing was left safe and sound. The government papers and documents were torn and destroyed. Later on the British officials, themselves recorded two sacks of torn papers in the list of the remaining articles.

"As long as the British government had not occupied Bushire, the Tangistanis had refrained from entering Rishahr and the city. But now that the foreigners had embezzled the Bushire peninsula, putting barbed wires all around on the seaside, as well as the desert, and stationing guards to watch over; two nights after the occupation, the Tangistanis rushed in, defying all the defensive preparations. The Indian Sepoys were not only unable to resist

the intruders, but dared not to come out of their head-quarters which was a thousand feet far from my house.

"At first they surrounded my dwellings, and began firing on the assumption that the Indian troops were lodged in there. My riflemen now disarmed by the British, shouted to them, 'the Indians are not here. We are of yourselves'. In that hell of the hot weather, the Indian guards set in my house had crept into their rooms, locking the doors from inside. It is evident that the members of my family suffered a great shock, amidst that torrent of bullets.

"The Tangistanis hearing the call of my riflemen, stopped ~~fire~~ firing retreated in the direction of Malik-Uttujar's mansion,<sup>1</sup> and the Indo-European Telegraph office. In that raid some poor Indians, and a number of mules were shot. Near the dawn, they withdrew. For a week that I remained in Bushire, after the occupation, every night the tribesmen used to attack one of the buildings outside the city, housed by the Europeans. Two night prior to my departure, they made a sortie on the Russian Consulate which was situated close by the town.

"On 6th Shawwal (Aug. 18) we left for Bombay. The British soldiers escorted my carriage to the seashore outside the city, and remained there until we were put in a steamboat which they had arranged for. After our departure to India, the Tangistanis were constantly fighting the British. As far as it was ascertained a number of English officers and Indian soldiers were killed. Three months later, the Persian government recalled Mokhber-Ussalteneh from Fars,<sup>2</sup> after his policy had set the whole province aflame with revolt.

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1. The head-quarters of the British army.

2. Due to the fall of the Democratic Cabinet of Teheran.

"In Moharram 1334 (Nov. 1915) the Persian Gendarmerie in Shiraz, instructed by Herr Wassmuss, siezed upon the British Consul, Colonel O'connor, the head of the Indo-European Telegraph office, the manager of the English Bank, and a few others. They were sent to Ahrum in Tangistan, a distance of eighteen miles from Bushire. They were interred for a while, and when the British made a sham peace with the tribesmen, the prisoners were exchanged. Some goods belonging to the Tangistanis, confiscated by the British, was also restored to their owners.

"During the seventy days of occupation, the British Government had incurred with difficulties and losses beyond its computation. Some of the clergy, a number of agitators, and a group of ruffians, all headed by Ahmad Khan, the Daryabagi who had assumed the title of "Rais-Ulmujahedin", or "The leader of the National Volunteers," had assembled in Borazjan. Now <sup>1</sup> the British authorities came on terms with the Persian government, to hand over the port, conditioned by certain undertakings on the part of the latter. Those men gathered in Borazjan, were ignorant of the fact that Ahmad Khan, the Daryabagi, "The leader of the National Volunteers" was only an agent of the British.

"While discussion was going on between the Persian government and the British authorities, the latter came out with the ~~proposal~~ proposal that since the Daryabagi was sojourning only at distance of thirty six miles from Bushire, it would be appropriate to instal him as the governor of the Gulf Ports. And the Daryabagi had told the people that England was on her knees, and as soon as he would set his foot in Bushire, arrangements would be made for the expulsion of the foreign army. Thus the Daryabagi entered Bushire in

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1. Nov. 1915.



Dhull-Hajjih (Nov.). But this double-facedness was short-lived. Tribesmen and his followers who had accompanied him to Borazjan, came to know of his desertation. The result was the arrest of the British Consul, and the other Englishmen in Shiraz." the rest of the narration deals with personal matters that are not consonant with the subject-matter of this chapter.

Thus in November, Bushire was handed back nominally to the Persian authorities. There were still the troops, still the British censorship, and British administration. The Daryabagi was a puppet in the hands of Major Trevor, the British acting -Consul General. Some of the Bushire democrats had been deported to India, during the first days of the occupation, and they were kept there in the Tana prison, for a while.

The Times of India of October 1, 1915 had strange news, "Much satisfaction will be felt at the knowledge that the occupation of Bushire was undertaken with the consent of Persia". Nothing can be farther from truth. At the time of the occupation, Persia had no cabinet. The designated premier was anti-British, in and out, as subsequent events amply proved. And the governor of the ports had no intelligence whatsoever of the meditated move of the British, though he had pictured its possibility to his government, a month earlier.

The same paper had still some more startling revelations to make on November 19. "Lord Robert Cecil's statement in the House of Commons, that our one desire is to maintain the most friendly relations with Persia, is one which can be supported to the full, by an appeal to recent history. Under the inspiration of Lord Hardinge<sup>1</sup>, British policy in Persia has been directed to strengthening the hands of the government in every possible manner and to

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1. The Viceroy of India 1911-1916.

refraining from any steps which might embarrass that government or weaken its independence and integrity. In pursuit of this policy we have, in conjunction with Russia, lent Persia the large sums of money necessary to carry on the administration, and have foregone the interest on those loans in order to relieve the present embarrassments of the government. When the whole of Southern Persia was given up to lawlessness we refrained from adopting any of the measures which we might reasonably have taken in order to safeguard British property. Indeed our own scrupulousness has been in some ways a source of weakness."

England landed troops as early as 1911, and yet the Times of India claims that Great Britain resorted to no action on the Persian soil. The forcible removal of Dr. Listermann from Bushire, was indeed a measure of scrupulousness! I do not mean to attack the British intervention in the South. During the war they had to cope with a formidable enemy that was an opportunist. They too had to turn opportunists to beat the enemy on the common ground. It is in the false look of innocence, that I am trying to expose.

Great Britain could not have befriended the people of the South, because she was an ally of Russia, the hated and detested power. But by using more tact she could have avoided much difficulty with the Tangistanis. I do not want to question the genuineness of the sympathies of the tribal chieftains, since in so doing I may unnecessarily hurt the feelings of many of their admirers. But one thing is certain. The German propaganda was responsible for much. Could not the British do the same? I may be shown as partial towards the conduct of the governor of the Ports who happened to be my father. Muwwakkar-Uddowleh was trying to defend strictly the neutrality of Persia----an impossible task. Thus he met the opposition of both parties. A defenceless, weak and impoverished

Persia filled with all sorts of foreign agents, from generals down to propagandists, could not be termed neutral. The vacillating government of Teheran that had no goal, aim, or principle was incompatible with the declared neutrality, no matter how emphatic, it was worded. As a matter of fact, there was no Persian government existent at the time. Persia had to throw her lot with either side --- get salvation or ~~imperialism~~ perish. But Persians gave the final touch to their misery and degradation by setting against each other. Some, and a majority they were, rallied to the banner of Kaiser William II whom they were madly idolizing. Some more of them, became supporters of the Allied cause, and those were mostly reactionary grandees, and members of the nobility. A small minority chose to call themselves neutral, and suffer at the hands of both parties of belligerents. They had the illusion of neutrality.

Towards the end of the year 1915, the Allies' fortune in Persia was at a low ebb. The central government was democratic and as such hostile to the Entente Powers, although a pro-British statesman as Vosouk-Uddowleh had the portfolio of Finance. The whole of the Fars province was in the hands of Germany's friends. In November the British consulate in Shiraz was raided by the Persian Nationalists and Democrats that had set up a provisory government, and Lt. Colonel O'Connor, the consul, had to surrender. He and the rest of the British colony were arrested and despatched to Tangistan. Kawam-Ulmulk, the leading member of the nobility in Shiraz who was also the hereditary Mayor, had thrown his lot with the British and had to flee to Bushire. In Isfahan an attempt was made on the life of Grahame, the British consul, but he escaped the bullet which shot down an Indian. The ~~Russian~~ <sup>Russian</sup> vice-consul in Isfahan was assassinated, as well as Gholam Ali Khan Nawwab, a

Persian who was the British vice-consul in Shiraz. In Kerman, the pro-German party was in ascendance, and German propagandists were running over the province, finding their way to Afghanistan. Yazd was also in the hands of the anti-Allies group. And so was Kirman-shah. The British sent Farrukh Shah, a young cousin of Agha Khan,<sup>1</sup> to Kirman, where he could rally his co-religionists to the aid of the British, since Agha Khan was a liberal supporter of the Allied cause, and Kirman had a good number of Sevener.<sup>2</sup> But the Germans instigated their Persian friends to murder the young emissary from India. And poor fellow fell a victim to intrigues, in which he had involved himself, much against the advice of his near relative in Bombay.<sup>3</sup>

Then in November 15, came the climax. The Russian troops were steadily marching on Teheran, from the Enzeli and Kezvin direction. At last they reached Karaj, twenty five miles to the West of Teheran. The young Shah got terrified in common with his democratic cabinet and democratic parliament. Prince Henry of Reuss the German minister and his two colleagues urged the Shah to leave the capital and proceed to Isfahan under the protection of the Swedish Gendarmerie that had ~~embraced~~ embraced the German cause. At first the helpless ruler welcomed the suggestion, and ordered the seat of government to be removed to Isfahan, in view of the Russian onslaught. The Ministry and the parliament followed by the Democrats and the Nationalists set out for Kum, accompanied by the Representatives of the Central Powers. The Shah was to start in the late afternoon. But a spell was cast upon him by the Allies Minister and Prince Farman-Farma who had got the opportunity to assent himself, by the absence of his antagonists. They told the Shah, that if he would go off, he

1. The famous head of the Ismaili sect of Shiites, in India.

2. Ismailis.

3. I got this fact while in India.

would never return. And that was enough. The Shah remained in the capital, and the Russian troops turned their path towards Kum, the second Sacred city of Persia, then the seat of the Democratic government.

Prince Farman-Farma formed a cabinet and instantly dismissed Mokhber-Ussaltaneh from Fars. And thus the "Times of India" of November 22, gave out the news, "Mukhber-Ussaltaneh, a former governor-general of Southern Persia who has been recalled in ~~deference~~ deference to the wishes of Britain, has been succeeded by Prince Nusrat-Uddowleh, an uncle of the Shah. He has proceeded to his post with an adviser who is a strong pro-Entente."

Here I end the story of the struggle in this chapter. On November 16, 1915, though the Germans were still powerful, the central government became pro-British.

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X. THE YEARS OF STRUGGLE1916-1919

The first year of the war came to an end, with Germany's prestige standing high in Persia. Of the seventeen branches of the Imperial Bank that provided money and credit to the British agents, troops, and representatives, seven were in the hands of Germans, namely those of Shiraz, Isfahan, Yezd, Kirman, Kermanshah, Hamadan and Sultanabad. Nizam-Ussaltaneh had openly declared in favor of the Central Powers, and was gathering forces in Western Persia. He formed what he called the "National Government" in Kermanshah, composed of the Democrat members of the parliament, who had fled before the Russian army from Kum where they had assembled since their dramatic exit from Teheran in November, to Isfahan, and thence to Kermanshah. Nizam sent a telegram to the Shah who had confided his destinies to his pro-Allies advisors and the Ministers of the Entente Powers, asking him to renounce the treacherous cabinet of Teheran, and proceeded to the support of the Central Governments. Meantime General Baratoff, the Russian chief had captured Kum, Isfahan, Sultanabad, Kazvin, Hamadan, and was threatening Kirmanshah. Field-Marshal Von der Goltz who was accorded the supreme command of the German, Turkish and Persian forces, was disgraced, though he exerted much to save the retreat. At the end of January, the Russians seemed to be the undisputed masters of the situation. General Bartoff even sent a message to General Townshedd who was besieged in Kut, encouraging the latter to keep on, until he would send a force to relieve the British. But the promise was never fulfilled. In April Kut fell before the onslaught of the Turks, much to the ruin of British prestige. That catastrophe coupled with the notorious failure of the Dardanelles campaign gave both impetus and

material to the German propagandists. In the same month, April, an agent of the British, the old Agha Beder and his two brothers were assassinated in Lingen on the Gulf.

The tribesmen around Bushire had not been subdued, and the British had only succeeded in clearing the vicinity of the city. The gallant Rais Ali Delbari, the ally of Dr. Listemann, in the past days, was killed in a skirmish with the British army, and the victors were sure of having got rid of a determined foe. Wassmuss though having failed in his activities, since the British had not been swept out, the Afghanistan Mission had come to naught, and the seditious plot in Punjab, had been discovered, was ever-energetic, successfully blocking the Bushire-Shiraz route. Before dealing with the Sykes Mission that put an end to the disturbances in Southern Persia, and turned the province of Fars into a British dependency, we should continue the story of the campaign in Western Persia, and get a look at the Teheran Government.

With the Turkish victory at Kut, and the temporary suspension of Baghdad offensive, Enver Pasha who had presented himself at Baghdad, directed once more the Turkish troops into Persia. In May the Russians were driven off, from Kermanshah to Hamadan, and again Nizam-Ussaltanek appeared with his chauvinistic National Government. Kezvin and Teheran were menaced, but the Turkish armies stood at a halt in a spot midway between Hamadan and Kezvin. And this situation continued till the end of the year, when the fall of Baghdad in March, 1917, decided the fate of the self-styled National Government of Persia.

Meantime the affairs in the South, were rapidly changing to the disadvantage of the Central Powers. By the end of the previous year, Russians, as mentioned before, had cleared the Teheran—

Isfahan route, driving out the Germans, Turks and their partizans from Isfahan. But they could venture no forward move, since the spreading of the army over a large territory was not strategically wise. Moreover I think that the British were unwilling to see the Russians sweep down into Fars, and all of a sudden come to encamp by the shores of the Persian Gulf. The British had tried to push into the heart of the unsubdued province, from Bushire, but their experiences with the Tangistanis, proved their futility of their plan. Therefore they struck upon another ingenious scheme which achieved success. General Sykes was commissioned in January 1916 to land at Bandar Abbas, recruit a band of volunteers, march on Kerman that had become a stronghold of German propaganda, especially in its direction towards Afghanistan, and then turn towards Shiraz. The British commander arrived at Bandar Abbas in March. The story of the mission of the Brigadier-General Sir Percy Sykes, reads like an adventure usually connected with the heart of Africa, or the unexplored regions of the New World. Dashing through a hostile territory, with only a handful of men, a few friends around, and dangers ahead, Sykes saved Fars for Great Britain, by mere tact and energy. And as such a high tribute is due to his marvellous feat. It is both unnecessary and irrelevant to go into the details of the expedition. Sykes stayed in Bandar Abbas long enough to secure some hold on the imagination of the Persian folk, and then started to Kerman with the reinforcements that had reached him from India. Kawwam-Ulmuik who had fled from Shiraz, in the previous year, had met Sir Percy Cox in Bushire arranging for an assault upon Shiraz, with the aid of the British. From Bushire he retired to Lingeh, and General Sykes coming from India, brought him a fair amount of munitions, presumably upon the bid of Sir Percy Cox. Kawwam was able to march inland, and his Khamsa tribesmen began to flock



around him.<sup>1</sup> He was successfully nearing Shiraz, to the alarm of the "Committee of National Independence" that was holding the city, when an accident in the hunting-field, ended his career. That was a temporary drawback to the British, but the deceased's son, now Kawam-Ulmulk, accomplished his father's task. The Germans, Democrats, Nationalists and Gendarmes were routed, beaten and imprisoned.

On the other hand, Sykes had pushed towards Kirman, dispersing the German bands who finally fell into the hands of Kawam-Ulmulk, and were put in safe custody. Rapidly a native contingent was raised in Kirman, and Sykes confiding the city to one of his subordinate officers, directed his small force towards Yezd---a march of 220 miles. In July, Yezd was reached. Before starting for Shiraz, Sykes received the intelligence that the Russian commander in Isfahan was in urgent need of his help, since the Bakhtyaris, Turks and Germans were planning an attack upon the city, and Colonel Belomestonov had only six hundred men with two field-guns. Obligated to alter his direction, and the situation being grave, General Sykes speedily set out for Isfahan. On September 11, he entered <sup>the</sup> city of Abbas the Great. During his sojourn in Isfahan Sykes dispatched a force against the robber bands that were infesting the trade route to Ahwaz<sup>2</sup> and made it safe for transportation and the movement of the Karavans.

Farman-Farma, that old and loyal friend of the British had been appointed governor-general of Fars, early in the year, but could not proceed to his post, because of the opposition he would meet. However, at last in October, Kawam-Ulmulk consented to join hands with Farman-Farma whom he was at first suspecting, and the Prince-governor hastened to Shiraz. Sykes had then to follow him,

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1. Khamsa tribesmen are seven tribes, whose chief command was hereditarily vested in the Kawam family, though the Kawams were not of those tribes. 2. In Khuzistan, near the Karun River.

raise the proposed fighting force and establish order in the province shaken by a year of trouble and unrest. On November 11, the one thousand miles march of Sir Percy Sykes was accomplished, and the British column entered Shiraz, showed in very cordially by Prince Farman-Farma and Kawam-Ulmulk. Apparently Southern Persia was going to enjoy peace and tranquility, for the time to come.

The Swedish Gendarmerie that had gone over to the German side, was now disbanded though scattered bodies still continued to patrol the roads. The Swedish officers had taken to flight, and the ablest of the Persian officers such as Mohammad Taghi Khan who was later honoured in Berlin with an Iron Cross, were open partizans of the Central Powers. They were still holding out in Western Persia, but in the South their authority had wellnigh vanished. Sir Percy Sykes came to the conclusion that the best way of getting a trained force at hand, was to engage the gendarmes, and take them in. Moreover if they were left alone, they possessed arms, rifles and munitions, and would prove troublesome at times. This new force created by General Sykes, was the foundation of the South Persian Rifles.

Now to turn to the Central government at Teheran, we stopped in November 1915, when the democratic cabinet fell through its own action. The self-imposed exodus brought to power a Pro-Allied combination, headed by Prince Farman-Farma. This new cabinet declared in favour of the allies and in December proposed an alliance with them,<sup>1</sup> which was referred by the Legations to their respective governments. I believe that neither England, nor Russia wished to have Persia entering the war, because such an event would give a new orientation to the whole business. Then <sup>Persia</sup> ~~Russia~~ would be officially ranging with the Allies, and at the end of the war, she was to receive a treatment far different from the realities of the

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1. Gibbons "The New Map of Asia" 291 ; "Daily Graphic" Feb. 2, 1916.

situation. And the entry of Persia into the war, would have also made such an impression upon the pro-German elements that would entail much more conflict in the interior, ultimately leading to a heavy expenditure that had to be borne by the two Powers. Therefore the offer of December, never found realization, and Persia remained neutral as before! A queer situation indeed!

The cabinet of Prince Farman-Farma was just an emergency affair. In April he gave his seat to Sipahdari-A'zam, now Sipahsalari-A'zam, getting prepared for his journey to Fars, to the governorship of which province he was appointed, as mentioned before. This new cabinet was also to all practical purposes pro-Allied. Composed of the nobility, it included a few of the die-hards. But the premiership of Sipahsalari-A'zam, was an indication to the rising influence of the Russians, because that gentleman was a well-known Russophile. This government continued in office, till August, when another cabinet of the same sympathies replaced it under the headship of Vosouk-Uddowleh. Thus we see that the year 1916, was successful for the Allies in Persia. The Teheran government was friendly. The South was under their authority, as well as the central and Eastern Persia. The whole trouble had now got concentrated in the Western and North-Western sections of the country.

The next year, 1917, was by far more eventful than its predecessor. Two great happenings changed the whole face of the Persian problem. One was the fall of Baghdad which laid open the Mesopotamian plain to the British conquerors, and the other the collapse of the Tzarist Russia, both in March. The capture of the city of the Caliphs, put a sharp end to the Turkish and German operations in Western Persia. Early in the year, as the British army was slowly advancing upon Baghdad, the Russians were chasing down the National Government of Persia, or rather, the forces of the Central Powers.

On the day that Baghdad fell, the Turks were leaving Kermanshah. With the news of the remarkable victory, the Turkish commander gave up the game. On April 2, the British and the Russian troops met on the Mesopotamian soil, and the long-protracted plan found realization. Now that the Mesopotamian campaign had for all practical purposes, reached its final phase, and the British were the masters of the land of two Rivers, they could have more freedom of action in Persia.

It was fortunate for the British that the operations in Irak reached completion, at the time when the Russian revolution got to start. Else it might have meant a victory for the Central Powers. In March Tzarism crashed down. At first there was no sign of disturbance, and the upheaval of the social order. People thought that what would be a Liberal Government would assume power, and drive the war to its logical end. But soon it became evident, that Russia was undergoing a greater revolution than that of March. The morale of the army had utterly and absolutely broken down. There was no more a distinction of rank, and the officers were treated with contempt by the men. It was of utmost necessity to do something for the situation. The Russian troops could no more be trusted with the defence of the country that had so painfully been cleared of the enemy in the two previous years. And when the Bolshevik Coup was effected in November, Great Britain had the ordeal of meeting an ally turned into foe, all by her side.

Mr. Gibbons asserts in his book, "The New Map of Asia", that as early as May 1915, the British and Russian governments had modified the agreement of 1907, doing away with the neutral zone. I believe that such a step was warranted by the operations that Great Britain was to undertake in the Fars province. The oil fields of

than a simple Khuzistan that had become even more <sup>A</sup> British interest, an interest of the Admiralty, were situated too in the neutral zone, and England had to safeguard her rights in that portion of the country. On September 28, 1915, a debate on Persia, was going on in the House of Commons. In answer to Colonel Yate's questions, Lord Robert Cecil, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, made a long statement, in the course of which he spoke these words, "Then, at Isfahan which is within our portion of Persia, there was also an attack---pure murder, ofcourse upon the British consul-General." The agreement of 1907 had put Isfahan in the Russian zone, and the claim of Lord Robert Cecil, seemed a flat contradiction of that treaty, unless we assume that as Mr. Gibbons states, the agreement had been subjected to changes in the first months of the war. At any rate one fact is certain, that by getting established in the neutral zone, even before the war, the British had materially altered the situation.

In June 1917, the cabinet of Vosouk-Uddowleh that was so friendly to the British, and had organized officially the South Persia Rifles in April, resigned and was succeeded by a cabinet under the premiership of Ala-Ussaltaneh. The prime minister was in person inclined to the British, but his Nationalist Ministers were the stronger, and naturally began opposing the "Southern neighbour". The recognition accorded to the S.P.R. was cancelled. But the British paid no attention to the Central Government, though their ~~ma~~ monthly subsidies were upholding the mockery of the state.

In the same month that Vossouk quitted office, Sir Percy Sykes had hastened to Teheran, to sign the necessary papers and contracts for the S.P.R. The Times of India announced the news on June 7, and expressed hopes that the South Persia Rifles was to reach a

number of 11,000 men. But soon he found out that the new cabinet was not of the same stuff as the old, and as he himself puts it, "This attitude was unwarrantable and added materially to my difficulties." The tribes in the South, would get more unruly, when they would hear of the conduct of their government, and that came to be true. There came a new stir in the ranks of the Tangistanis who had beaten out of the vicinity of Bushire, and a new plot was in process of maturing. Solat-Uddowleh, the powerful and Anglo-phobe chieftain of the Mashkai tribe, was getting involved in the business, although a truce was made between him and General Sykes in the summer of 1917, and for the time being he was kept out. But Naser Divan the head man of Kazerun took action, and drove out the contingents of the S.P.R. stationed in his city. Any step against him would prove disastrous, because Kazerun was situated behind difficult passes in the mountain, and moreover he was backed by the Tangistanis, Dashti, and Dashtistani tribesmen who had not yet been subdued by the British. Thus all throughout the year 1917, the ~~British~~ Bushire-Shiraz route, except for some miles in the precincts of the two cities, was barred to the foreign troops. The chief artery of British trade during the period was the road from Ahvaz to Isfahan, opened by Messrs. Lynch, and cleared of the bandits by the British army. Though unsuccessful on the Bushire-Shiraz route, the S.P.R. was able to punish a good many of the tribal chieftains in Fars, who had taken to pillage and highway robbery.

The Persian Nationalists were looking with suspicion and hatred at this body of troops, because it was apparently a British concern, But I believe that though open to suspicion in that respect, the South Persia Rifles did much constructive work. The stupendous task of calming a large province that was in clutches of anarchy

and disorder, where thieves, robbers and all sorts of rogues were freely disturbing the peaceful life of the inhabitants, and where commerce and agriculture had practically dwindled to nil, was entrusted to this organization and at the end it was for the main part well done. I sympathize with those patriots against whom this force was used, since their purpose was, though not always unselfish, an ideal for which they had toiled and laboured for long, making sacrifices over and over again; but I doubt the wisdom of their operations in the period that we are now going to examine, at a time when they could get no help or aid from any direction, except their meagre resources. They should have tried to make the best of the worst situation, by conciliatory means.

Towards the end of the year 1917, the Turko-German danger was assuming a new aspect. Once more the Indian Empire was in danger. The demoralized Russian army was fast melting off, creating a big gap in Western and North-Western Persia. Germany and Turkey were pushing through Caucasia, and soon they would have been in Batum, masters of the rich oil fields, whence they could easily reach the eastern coast of the Caspian and helped by the Moslems of Turkistan arrive at the Indo-Afghan frontier. The way was open. Russia was defeated, broken down, and anarchical.

The menace was real. The mere presence of Turkish troops on the Afghan frontier, was enough to set ablaze the country of Amir Habibullah who though a friend of the British could do nothing but place himself at the head of his people, in order to save his throne. As a matter of fact Habibullah's constant answer to the Turkish and German emissaries had been that he could not break off with the British, unless German and Turkish troops would be in Afghanistan, in sufficient numbers. In that way he had juggled with the messed-

gers of the Central Powers. Something was now to be done, to impede the Germano-Turkish progress towards Central Asia. Therefore in the last days of December, Major-General L.C. Dunserville was appointed to take a number of officers, dash headlock into Caucasus and organize a force of Georgians, and Armenians to bar in the way of the Turkish troops.

Leaving aside the Persian theatre for a while, let us get a peep at those gentlemen who were directing the British Empire from White-Hall. The war cabinet was pursuing its aims, Lord Curzon of Kedleston was one of its members, having been placed at the head of the Foreign Office. Lord Grey was no more in Downing street, and Curzon who had groaned and grumbled for years against the Persian policy of Grey, had now set himself in his own calculations to redress the wrongs of his predecessors, little thinking that he might also fall into the same pit as the gentleman before him, namely into an erroneous judgment. Whenever I look at Curzon's professions of Faith, I get struck by a paradox---the over-sentimentality of the great statesman, and his subsequent rigidity. Was Curzon a hypocrite? That I can not admit, since he was always straightforward. At any rate Curzon was clamouring for the Dunserville expedition, though the Indian office was skeptical about it. And so were these gentlemen responsible for Mesopotamia. But Lord Curzon had his own views and thus he expressed them to the Imperial War Cabinet on June 25, 1918:

".....Neither Germany nor her Allies must ever again be permitted to occupy Palestine or Mesopotamia; every effort must be made to recreate Russia---even though it may take ten years or twenty years---as a bulwark against German penetration towards India; and, finally we must endeavor by every means in our power to secure a friendly Persia and a loyal Afghanistan"(1). But Lord Curzon was

1. Ronaldshay "The Life of Lord Curzon" III. 211.



mistaken in his tactics.

As Sir William Robertson, chief of the Imperial General Staff prior to the appointment of Sir Henry Wilson, believed, "What was needed was to dispatch to the centers of intrigue and dissatisfaction a few Englishmen of the right type to give our version of the state of affairs, furnish them with money to pay handsomely for intelligence and other services rendered, and provide them with just sufficient escort to ensure their personal safety."<sup>1</sup> But Curzon, ~~Marling~~<sup>2</sup> and Dunsterville, won the contest. And forces were dispatched from ~~the~~ Mesopotamia to Persia, after the failure of General Dunsterville to reach Baku in February, because of the hostility of the Bolshevik government in the former city and Enzeli.

The Dunsterville mission was, to my belief, rather an adventure than a real war measure. Caught amidst unfriendly Persians, Turks established in the North-Western part of Azerbaijan, and suspicious Bolsheviks of Enzeli and Caucasus, the British General set himself to the task of creating a Western Persia Cordon, recruiting troops and checking the advancement of Turks into the heart of Persia and towards the capital. At this time two Russian Generals, Baratoff, the fallen hero of 1915 and 1916, and Bicherakoff were still lingering in Persia, with a band of unruly men. General Dunsterville agreed to pay the arrears and the debts of General Bicherakoff's troops, if the latter would stay for some more time in Persia, till the British army of native recruits under British officers would be able to fill in the gap caused by their departure. Bicherakoff agreed to the bargain and marched on Kezvin, waiting for the arrival of the British.

General Dunsterville spent the winter and part of the spring

1. Wilson "Mesopotamia" Vol. II. 27

2. H.B.M. Minister at Teheran.

in Hamadan, instituting famine relief, and for all practical purposes ruling over the city. This strange move on the part of the British, that was so closely akin to the policies of the Tzarist Russia, made the Democrats and the Nationalists believe that the British meant to profit from the bankruptcy of Russia, and become masters of the country. Moreover persecutions were in full swing, especially in Kezvin where a rough Russian officer was despotically governing the city on the authority of Bicharakoff who was in turn upheld by the British.

At last in June, Dunsterville removing his headquarters to Kazvin, consented to Bicharakoff's departure to Russia. The Russian commander wished to get home and arrange for his future, and thus he was quite impatient. The road to the sea was blocked by the Jangalis, a band of so-called patriots who were friendly to the Central Powers, and hated the British. Special reference will be made to their leader, Kuchik Khan, in a later chapter. Bicharakoff cut along their lines, opened the way for the British, reached Enzeli, and made for Caucasus. Dunsterville, then reenforced by troops from Mesopotamia, overthrew the Bolshevik government of Enzeli, imprisoned the members of the local soviet, defeated the Jangalis, and sailed for Baku where the Bolshevik government was also deposed, and which was besieged by the Turks, helped by the Moslems of the country. But he found it impossible to hold out, because of the total inefficiency and lack of discipline reigning among the defenders of the city. He withdrew on the night of September 14, and the famous "Dunster-force" ended its career. But one thing it had accomplished. The Turks were prevented from pouring down from Azarbayjan, and Western Persia passed under British military occupation.

While these events were going on in another part of Persia, General Sykes had a busy time in the South. The news of the breakdown of Russia, and the presence of an actively-hostile government in Teheran had encouraged the tribesmen of Fars to rise in mass against the British. For around January, the old Democrat, Mostoufi-Ulmanalek, the same upright and conscientious gentleman who was holding office in November 1915, had become prime minister, and his cabinet included Mokhber-Ussaltanek and Mushir-Uddowleh. To all intents and purposes, this body was anti-British. I suppose that the reason for the success of this cabinet was the vanishing of the powers of the Tsar~~ist~~ Russia. No more Cossacks at the gates of the Capital, and the British army taken up with a multip~~le~~ of tasks in the South, a Democratic cabinet could flourish. But as soon as the British got a foothold in Western Persia, and Sir Charles Marling could stand on a firm ground in Teheran, the Democratic government melted away in the spring, to be succeeded by another under the premiership of the aged Bakhtyari chief, Samsam-Ussaltaneh. Though less hostile than the previous one, the new Cabinet was still uncompromising. Now the Capital was to witness a series of political crimes, and assassination, alleged to have been instigated by Prince Firuz, the son of Prince Farman-Farma, and the other Anglophile leader, in the hope of bringing down the Cabinet. I do not take the responsibility for the imputation, since nothing tangible and reliable ever came to light, out of the mess, but a vague satisfaction that the murders were committed by a certain secret society called "The Iron Committee." But I cannot at the same time discard the impression of the fact that as soon as the cabinet crumbled in August under the stress of the situation and its incompetence to allay popular feelings and persecute the unknown criminals, Vosouk-Uddowleh, the Arch-Anglophile statesman, became the prime minister,

and Prince Firuz assumed the portfolio for Finance. Has there been a secret behind the gloomy political scene at the time? It may or may not have been.

At any rate the encouragement said to have been received from the Teheran Government, caused a general uprising against the British in the South. The heart and soul of the movement was Solat-Uddowleh who disliked the British, hated Prince Farman-Farma, the governor of Fars, and had a family feud with Kawam-Ulmulk. Since the latter two were supporters of the British, Solat felt that he had been degraded because of the power enjoyed by his enemies, Kawam-Ulmulk and Prince Farman-Farma. Naser-Divan of Kazerun and the Tangistanis had also joined hands with Solat. Even among the Khamsa tribes of Kawam-Ulmulk, the movement had made a headway. In Shiraz itself the Democrats, long silenced, were sympathizing with Solat, and the enemies of Kawam, were also favourable towards the uprising. The business was very complex, and Sykes showed remarkable courage and audacity. In May the open attack began by the Khamsais, and Shiraz was besieged. During the struggle, the Persian officers of a body of S.P.R. stationed in the Khaneh-Zenyan fort, twenty six miles from Shiraz, on the Bushire route, joined the Khamsais, and thus left a side of the city open to the enemy. But a defeat inflicted upon the besiegers, ameliorated the situation. The fourteen young men who were inspired by a patriotic motive, but were highly guilty as far as military law and discipline were concerned, were sentenced to death and executed. That was a heavy blow to the heart of the Persians. I think that imprisonment and banishment would have been a wiser policy, though it may be argued that strictness and rigorous action were more fitting the occasion. However a discussion of the morality of the case, as opposed to legality, is not called-for here.

Now the British struck upon a better means of crushing their antagonists. Shiraz was kept under a stern rule by their friend, Prince Farman-Farma, and a brother of Solat was appointed officially as the head of the Kashkai tribes, and was sent against him. At this juncture came the epidemic (Influenza) of 1918. It played havoc in Persia. Ten thousand people died in Shiraz and the total absence of sanitary services made the destruction complete. The Khamsais were terribly weakened, their morale was broken down and the whole episode ended in October. Now for the first time since 1915, the Shiraz-Bushire route was opened to the British forces. The Influenza was a stronger opponent than the British for the warlike tribes.

Immediately the British set to construct a motor road between Bushire and Shiraz. A light railroad was laid from Bushire to Borazjan, a distance of thirty seven miles. The Bushire force under General Douglas resumed operations against the Tangistanis, and the heart-broken leaders, Sheykh Hosein Khan of Chah Kutah, Zaer Khader of Ahrum, Ghazanfar-Ussaltaneh of Borazjan, and Naser-Divan of Kazerun, were put to flight. Later they made peace in March 1919. Thus when the war was over in Europe, Persia was laid at the feet of the British.

Before closing this narration of the years of struggle, I have to touch upon a subject that later in 1919 came to the foreground namely the future relations between Persia and Great Britain. In the Peace of Brest-litvosk, Bolshevik Russia denounced the agreement of 1907. In February 1918 Lord Curzon read the funeral oration of the said agreement, in the House of Lords. The master-deed of Sir Edwards Grey, had been shattered to pieces. Russia was an enemy of Great Britain in 1918. In March, the British government sent a note

to the Nationalist Cabinet of Teheran announcing their policy. It was stipulated that the integrity and the independence of Persia, was their concern. They proposed to patrol Persia's frontiers against the encroachments of foreign troops! and especially guard the boundaries of Azarbayjan after the war. From this last item, we can measure the fear of Russia, entertained by the Downing Street. Then it was asked that Persia should recognize officially the South Parsia Rifles, and leave the question of a uniform force for the whole country, till the termination of the war, when it would be discussed by the two governments. And lastly, if Persia would show herself conciliatory, financial aid would be given as well as the abrogation of the agreement of 1907----a dead treaty, one party to which had already repudiated. The Persian government replied that the S.P.R. could not be recognized, that the presence of British troops on the Persian soil, was contradictory to the integrity of the state, and that they expected the British to take their own way, and leave the people of Persia to themselves. A bold answer which unfortunately had one response, superior force and superior strength.

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## II. The Anglo-Persian Agreement.

November 1918, witnessed the end of the greatest struggle ever engaged in by Mankind. The war was at end, and restoration of normal conditions was imperative.

In the last chapter we followed the course of events that culminated in the establishment of the supreme authority of Great Britain in Southern Persia. The Dunsterville Mission of the North, though successful in filling in the gap created by the break-up of the Russian forces, had failed in its immediate purpose, the relief of the city of Baku. In September 1918, Baku fell before the combined forces of the Turks, and the Moslems of Caucasus. But in October the Turks collapsed, and the British troops had no difficulty in occupying the provinces North of the Aras river. The Allies had still the hope to crush Bolshevism, and the British advance into the Russian territory, was accentuated by the same desire. The British thought it wise to back the Separatist Movements of the Caucasus, and uphold the weak and tottering governments of anti-Bolshevists.

The tide that pushed up the Nationalists of Turkey, and submerged the counter-revolutionary movements of Russia, had no place in this chapter. Enough to say that the Allies lost much in money and men, and the Red Russians proved victorious at the end. The most tragic point in the last game, was the fate of Armenia. The new inexperienced Republic fell before the onslaught of the Turks and the Russians, and no hand was raised to save it. Perhaps it was again the European situation that was responsible for the catastrophe.

By the middle of the year 1919, it had become evident that the Allies could not coup directly with the Bolsheviks. They could not because it was madness to launch upon a second war. No public

opinion would tolerate the new crusade. In August 1919, the British army had to evacuate the Caucasus except the Batum area. One by one the governments of Georgia, Armenia, Batum and Azarbayjan<sup>1</sup> were all threatened by the Bolshevik rule. Thus England ~~found~~<sup>found</sup> herself faced with a foe more exacting than the Huns of Central Europe! The Soviet government possessed an effective ~~weapon~~ weapon that ~~so~~ could pass unnoticed the hills and plains of Persia, into Afghanistan and India. That was revolutionary propaganda. Then two courses were open before the British statesmen--either to impose a hard and fast rule over Persia, or to control her indirectly thus helping the country to stand firm before the Northern horde. India was again in danger.

The first path was out of question. The British taxpayer could not shoulder a new set of burdens. England was going to undertake new commitments in Irak and Palestine. British troops were already scattered from the Dardanelles to the steppes of Central Asia. With demoralization in view, with additional responsibilities, with the state of public mind in and out the country, and with the vastness of the area under occupation, it was impossible to concentrate a large force in Persia, in the year 1919. When I speak of the public mind, I can well recollect the disgust and ill-feeling created in Paris and Washington, after the treaty of 1919. Therefore the next alternative was adopted. England, or to be more accurate, Lord Curzon resolved to help Persia out of the quagmire in which she had struck, and then bring her into the orbit of Britain's satellites. A strong Persia sustained by Great Britain was needed to pose as a barrier between the India Empire and the Red menace. And especially so, since Afghanistan, the old, sincere ally of the British, was showing symptoms of unrest. The ruling Amir, Habib-

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1. Not to be confused with the province of Azarbayjan in Persia.



Ullah Khan, a staunch friend of Great Britain, had been killed at the dead of night, in his camp, and his successor, the Ex-king Amanullah was antagonizing the British.

A little diversion on Lord Curzon's personal sympathies, is helpful, at this juncture. Marquis Curzon of Kedleston had a great care for the Persians. Perhaps among his contemporary statesmen in England, he was the one most versed on the subject of Persia. He knew the country well, had travelled in it extensively, and had made a careful and genial study of the character of its people. When, in the early days of 1918, the Eastern Committee of the War Cabinet was discussing the new adventure in Persia and Caucasus, Lord Curzon rebuked his colleagues who were opposing the measure, in such terms, "I take it that this policy would please the Persians better than any other, but it would be immoral, feeble, and disastrous".<sup>1</sup> Then he proceeded to declare that next to his homeland, no other country had for him such a charm and fascination as Persia, and it had been his cherished hope and desire for years, to extend a helping hand to the Persians, in the hour of their afflictions and miseries. Sir Arnold Wilson believes that the whole of British policy in Persia and Caucasus, in those days "was from first to last that of Lord Curzon rather than that of the Cabinet." Furthermore he says, "It was opposed (though not always consistently) by the chief of the Imperial Staff, and by Mr. Edwin Montagu, then Secretary of State for India".<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Montagu explained the situation to Lord Curzon on 6th January 1918, in a note. "I cannot", he wrote, "regard the policy of the Eastern Committee in relation to Persia as satisfactory unless a genuine attempt is made to put our position in ~~India~~ Persia on a footing satisfactory to the Persians by <sup>re</sup>establishing their confidence in us as being anxious to help but not desirous to control.

1. Wilson, "Mesop." II. 29

2. "Mesop." II 43.

I have warned the Eastern Committee more than once of the grave difficulty which I am experiencing, and which I shall experience more and more in the future, of getting contributions from the Indian revenues to expenditure in Persia. I cannot honestly make the attempt in future if the policy is one in which neither the India office nor the government of India concur". But Lord Curzon could not move from his stand.

The Foreign Secretary had his right hand man in Sir Percy Cox. This astute and resourceful gentleman, was ordered to Teheran, in August 1918, to succeed the retiring Minister, Sir Charles Marling, When Sir Percy reached his destination in September, the Teheran Government were friendly and inclined to the British. The only Minister who had served in the anti-British Cabinets of Mostawfi-Ulmamalek, and Samsam-Ussaltaneh, and could not share the same sympathies as his colleagues, was Mushaver-Ulmamalek occupying the post of Foreign Affairs. But Vosouk-Uddowleh could soon contrive a method to oust the credulous minister and replace him with one of his own liking. He was chosen to head the delegation to the Peace Conference, and present the case of Persia. The absentee minister was succeeded by the famous Prince Firuz, Nosrat-Uddowleh. Another equally-zealot man was taken into the cabinet, in the person of Prince Akbar Mirza, Sarem-Uddowleh, a son of Zill-Ussultan, and a cousin of the Ex-Shah. Vosouk-Uddowleh, Prince Firuz, and Sarem-Uddowleh, were the men responsible for the Anglo-Persian agreement of 1919.

The Persian delegation to the Peace Conference, remains a puzzle. The government that sent those gentlemen to Paris, were beyond doubt partizans of the British. The influence of Sir Percy Cox, was greatly felt in the responsible Circles of Teheran, and he could have easily checked the high-handed action. And it is impossible

to conjecture that Sir Percy knew nothing of the attitude that the Foreign Office, and the British Cabinet, would assume towards that ill-fated band of Persian dreamers. Therefore why did not he stop that unfortunate business? Are we to believe that the whole affair was but a sham, intended to relieve the helpless situation of Persia, and meant to discredit the unsympathetic Foreign Minister? I am rather bent to favour this view. If the government advised by a well-informed man as Sir Percy Cox, desired a serious job, they would not formulate much demands and proposals as to make them a laughing stock of the British papers.

"The Foreign Minister, Mushaver-Ulmamalek," says Mr. Balfour, "Not being considered sympathetic to what was proposed,<sup>1</sup> was despatched to Paris to lay Persia's Case before the Peace Conference. It is freely alleged that this was done by arrangement with the British Foreign Office. Certainly his experiences were sufficiently unfortunate to furnish ground for such an allegation. Refused an interview by a plenipotentiary, lecture by a high official, and refused permission to visit England by Lord Curzon, it is hardly surprizing to learn that from that time his sentiments have been violently anti-British." Indeed the head of the Persian delegation, was refused a hearing in the conference.

"Persia", writes Mr. Herbert Adams Gibbons, "suffered all horrors of war---invasion, destruction of cities and country sides, loss of life among the civilian population, famine and economic paralysis without the glory of the advantages of belligerency." Persia was said to have been neutral, and therefore not entitled to a seat in the Peace Conference. The business seems fantastic enough. Brazil that was only belligerent in name, and did not pay

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1. Referring to the Treaty with Great Britain.

for the acts of war, was invited to clear her accounts with the ~~pro~~ prostrated foe, but Persia that had been a scene of warfare, and a theatre of war, was not allowed to ask for retribution, since she had declared a nominal neutrality, a neutrality violated by both parties. Again there are people who assert that Great Britain repulsed Persia from the precincts of the Sacred Conference of Peace, in order to deal with her single-handed.

There appeared in "The New Age" of 29th May 1919, an article under the heading "Persia and England" signed by Marmaduke Pickthall. It was a fiery denunciation of British policy in regard to Persia, and began, "The territorial claims put forward by the Persian Government have been treated as ridiculous at the Peace Conference and, which is more unfortunate, in the English Press. If we wish to impress all orientals, with the notion that, simply because they are orientals, they can expect no justice from us, it is politic to adopt such an attitude. But surely, if our aims are purely selfish, as perhaps they are, it would be wise to cloak ~~x~~ them; or what becomes of our renowned hypocrisy which has served England well in the past, especially in Asia, where noble sentiments are taken at their surface value if supported now and then by some small act? But there is nothing cunning in our present Asiatic policy. It is merely brutal. And our victims who mistook the mantle of hypocrisy which we have worn so long for our real character, are sure to be aggrieved as well as injured by it. That is a pity."<sup>11</sup> Then the writer tries to defend the Persian stand-point, condemns the Russian aggression and the convention of 1909, and at last arrives at the core of his discussion. England, he maintains, wishes to replace the Imperial Russia on the Persian soil. And pleading for Persia he ends his article with strange words. "It may be of

real advantage to us in the future to be able to point to one part of the map of Asia where England has done right."

But surely we are interested to examine the claims of the Persian delegates, that caused an upheaval of sarcasm and scorn. The fanciful Foreign Minister had drawn up a document entitled, "Claims of Persia before the Conference of the Preliminaries of Peace at Paris". And that memorandum contained three parts. Part one dealt with unfair treaties, and especially the master-piece of Lord Grey. Abolition of Capitulations, and withdrawal of consular guards, were asked for in that part one. Then the second section was a plea for the restoration of Persia's legitimate possessions! to wit the Trans-Caspian provinces, the Caucasus, the Turkish Kurdistan and ~~in~~ the Holy cities of Irak. The third part was a demand for reparations. Persia had been trodden to death by the belligerent armies during the war, and now she was asking for recompensation. The third set of claims was lodged against Russia, Turkey, and Germany, Great Britain being deliberately and wisely left out. Here is no place to evaluate the merits of these claims. But a word in passing is desirable. If the demand for the restoration and annexation of territories, were superfluous and insane, though having some elements of justification, the other two parts of the Foreign Minister's documents, were worthy of notice. Persia suffered beyond hope, during the war by privation and misery. She needed help and service in that direction. And that aid had to be sanctioned by an International body, rather than by Lord Curzon and his associates.

While Mushaver-Ulmamalek was struggling in Paris for a way to the Conference, the government in Teheran were negotiating with Sir Percy Cox. The business was kept strongly secret, and it took nearly months till a conclusion was reached. The final draft of the

agreement, together with its supplementary documents, were signed in Teheran, on August 9, 1919. Instantly it aroused indignation and protest in and out the country. The Nationalists and the Democrats left over from the war time, declared that their country had been sold to the British by the prime minister and his colleagues. Sipahdar A'zam<sup>1</sup> left the government in dissension. Six of the notables and ex-ministers of Teheran, who were causing trouble by their excessive opposition to the agreement, were arrested and exiled in Kashan.<sup>2</sup> Many others of the Democratic leaders were either imprisoned, or hurried out of the capital. The French papers, notably Le Temps showed a distrust towards the British designs in Persia. And the American papers were none the less pessimistic.

In England, the agreement did not have the full-hearted support of the Cabinet. The India office was still demurring, on account of the heavy strain that would be put upon the Indian administration. But if Lord Curzon meant anything by concluding the agreement of 1919, surely he had in mind to end the era of military occupation, and relieve the India office from its anxiety. However it was implicitly understood that Persian reforms could not be effected overnight, and evacuation was sheer folly at the time being. Before putting the Finance in order, which was not an easy task, and required patient work, the British government could not stop the subsidies that were keeping up the nominal Central Government. With the roar of anger that went high after the publicity of the agreement, the Teheran Government was more in need of British money and army. Azarbayjan was practically in revolt. The Crown Prince had left the city of Tabriz to act in the place of his brother, the Shah who was going to start on a trip to Europe. And

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1. Prime minister, prior to the Coup d'etat of 1921.

2. A city south of Teheran, notorious for its insects and scorpions.

the Democrats there had declared for a government essentially anti-British in nature. The only cities that were leading a calm existence were those occupied by the British troops. And therefore the very enactment of the agreement would necessitate the presence of the British army in Persia.

"Here is the text of the agreement of 1919.

Preamble: In virtue of the close ties of friendship which have existed between the two governments in the past, and in the conviction that it is in the essential and mutual interests of both in future that these ties should be cemented, and that the progress and prosperity of Persia should be promoted to the utmost, it is hereby agreed between the Persian government on the one hand, and His Britanic Majesty's Minister action on behalf of his government, on the other, as follows:

1. The British Government reiterates, in the most categorical manner, the undertakings which they have repeatedly given in the past, to respect absolutely the independence and integrity of Persia.

2. The British Government will supply, at the cost of the Persian Government, the services of whatever advisors may, after consultation between the two governments, may be considered necessary for the several departments of the Persian administration. These advisers shall be engaged on contracts and endowed with adequate powers, the nature of which shall be the matter of agreement between the Persian government and the advisors.

3. The British Government will supply, at the cost of the Persian Government, such officers and other munitions and equipment of modern type as may be adjudged necessary by a joint commission of military experts. British and Persian, which shall assemble forthwith for the purpose of estimating the needs of Persia in respect of <sup>the</sup> formation of a uniform force which the Persian govern-

ment proposes to create for the establishment and preservation of order in the country and on its frontiers.

4. For the purpose of financing the reforms indicated in clauses 2 and 3 of this Agreement, the British government offer to provide to arrange a substantial loan for the Persian government, for which adequate security shall be sought by the two governments in the consultation in the revenues of the customs or other sources of income at the disposal of the Persian government. Pending the completion of negotiations for such a loan, the British government will supply an account of it such funds as may be necessary for initiating the said reforms.

5. The British government fully recognizing the urgent needs which exists for the improvement of communications in Persia, with a view both to the extension of trade and the prevention of famine, are prepared to cooperate with the Persian government for the encouragement of Anglo-Persian enterprise in this direction, both by means of railway construction and other forms of transport; subject always to the examination of the problems by experts, and to agreement between the two governments as to particular projects which may be most necessary, practicable and profitable.

6. The two governments agree to the appointment forthwith of a joint-committee of experts for the examination and revision of the existing customs Tariff, with a view to its reconstruction on a basis calculated to accord with the legitimate interests of the country and to promote its prosperity."

On the same day that the text of the agreement was signed, a second document was drawn up by the provisions of which Great Britain granted a loan of 2,000,000 pounds to Persia, redeemable in twenty years, and charged with an interest of 7% per annum. As security for the loan, the customs receipts of the Customs-Houses



already mortgaged by the contract of 8th May 1911, and others unspecified, were stipulated. This new loan was the most dangerous part of the whole business. A virtual authority over the Customs-Houses, and the revision of the tariffs which would undoubtedly be effected by the special benefit of British trade, meant in the last analysis, a control upon the economic life of the Nation. And when we consider the presence of British advisors in the Finance office with sufficient powers at their disposal, the picture will be complete. Then the joint military expert commission which was in other words an effective British board, would place the security and order of the country in the hands of the British. Persia had no military expert in 1919, if we mean by military experts those gentlemen found in the staffs of the European states.

Just as Lord Curzon stigmatized the convention of 1907, the cherished handiwork of Lord Grey, the latter deplored the conclusion of the agreement of 1919, in turn the desideratum of Marquis Curzon. "Here was a case" said Lord Grey of Fallodon, "of helping a weak country where the League of Nations ought to have been brought into the matter, and it was a great pity that the League was not brought in." If the League were to be given a hand in the affair, the Persian delegates to the Peace Conference, would not have been turned out. Lord Curzon meant to create a bulwark between the Red army and the Indian Empire, solely by British money and control.

There are people who simply know how to criticize, but are sadly unable to accomplish any piece of constructive work. Perhaps Lord Curzon could leave the business to the generosity of the League, but how could he get the assurance that the British interests of the day, would be safeguarded, especially at a time when the League of Nations was still an ideal rather than a fact? Only

a few months had elapsed since the birth of the Treaty of Versailles, and no treaty had been made yet with Turkey, Bulgaria, Hungary and Austria. The Red menace was threatening, and the only escape was to secure a strong hand in Persia, under the cloak of agreements and honourable undertakings. I do not mean to defend the convention of 1919, but I believe that the world conditions were as much responsible for that blunder, as the persons involved in the drama. England or rather Lord Curzon could not read the orientations of the coming years. And for the time being, that course was the safer.

Vosouk-Uddowleh was only able to sign the agreement, but its ratification was a business of the parliament. The prime minister had called for elections in the previous year, but the matter was going on slowly, and moreover Vosouk-Uddowleh did not have the courage to face the new Majlis. He could provide a good number of ~~xxx~~ seats for his partizans, but he was not capable of manipulating the whole ~~business~~ process. Many of the Democrats had got elected, and there was the danger that his allies would forsake him at the hour of the trial. Thus the fate of the agreement was still in obedience, and Vosouk-Uddowleh could just plod on for a short while.

In the Autumn of 1919, the Shah visited Europe, and received a hearty reception in England. He was accompanied by the Foreign Minister, Prince Firuz, who remained in London, leaving his Royal Master to return alone. In May 1920, Mr. (now Sir) Sydney Armitage Smith arrived at Teheran, as the financial advisor to the Persian Government. Mr. Balfour, whom I have quoted several times in these pages, came with him, as his chief assistant. Mr. Armitage-Smith could not take up his work immediately, since the agreement had still remained unratified. The Anglo-Persian Military commission met

met in 1919, and handed a unanimous report on the reorganization of the army, to the government. The said report comprized a part summarizing the dangers confronting Persia, and a scheme for the formation of a force sixty thousand strong. The chief Military advisor was designed to be British, But the chief Staff Officer would be a Persian. However the recommendations of the commission, never found realization, and remained in the files, waiting for better days. I was unable to find the composition of the board, but I presume that the Persians sitting in the commission, were officers of the Cossack Brigade.

A few words in ending about the subsidies granted by the British government. 3,500,000 Krans (about £85,000 at par) were given monthly for the current expenses of the government, and 1,000,000 Krans (About 25,000 £ at par) for the upkeep of the Cossack Division. In addition to those, local subsidies were accorded as well as personal. Mr. Balfour puts the whole figures at a monthly amount of £225,000. The direct subsidies to the central government, as well as many in the other categories, were continued for two years after the armistice. If the British money would not support the weak government of Teheran, the latter would perish in twenty four hours. Taxation figures were just on paper, and Finance offices were kept for show, but no grandee or chieftain cared to pity the empty Treasury of the State.

The Agreement of 1919, if had been let to function, might have had carried some substantial gains to both parties, but in the long run it would have turned Persia to a dependency of the British Empire. Great Britain had consented to help Persia in her claims for reparations and rectification of some frontiers, and had promised not to charge her for the expenses of the army of occupation. But all of those good things were tied up with the ratification of

the agreement. Lord Curzon was impatient about its final acceptance, but had to count time and wait. It was his destiny to witness its final collapse in two years.

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### XII. The Bolshevik Menace

In a previous chapter I alluded to the famous Dunsterville Force, and the push towards Caucasia, to stop the march of the Turks towards Central Asia. The Turkish collapse came soon, and next followed the rise of the Bolsheviks. General Dunsterville portrays with tact and discretion the inability of the British army to keep the Caucasus, in his masterly written memoirs. At the end of 1919, the British had to evacuate the Russian provinces. The Caspian flotilla had been handed over to General Denikin, and after his failure, they were interned in Enzeli. By 1920, Bolsheviks had subdued Caucasia and Georgia. And their next move was naturally towards Persia. As it is usually the case with the Soviet, its propaganda precedes its action. Sir Arnold Wilson states that in 1920, the communist missionaries were spreading the Glad Tiding, in Irak. With Persia the affair was somewhat different. In the Gilan province there was a Persian Robin Hood, by the name of Kuchik Khan who was fighting the rich, even sometime prior to the establishment of the Marxists in Caucasia. He was a decided enemy of the British, and a reviler of the Teheran Government. Certain other people who were equally zealous as Kuchik Khan, about the sad plight of the country, had embraced the communistic doctorines, and had gone to Tiflis and Baku to encourage an invasion of Persia, which they believed would amount to the overthrow of British Yoke, and the return of the lost independence. I do not doubt their good intentions, but their ways and tactics, were miserably poor and wretched. Kuchic Khan was ready to welcome any anti-British movement since he was still cherishing the memory of defeat in the hands of the British, in 1918. Enzeli had a short experience of Bolshevik rule, and was not averse to the idea of a second trial.

The position of the British in the South, was perfectly sound and stabilized. The South Persia Rifles under their British officers, were keeping order in Fars, Kirman and the Gulf Ports. In July 1920, the Daryabagi marched upon the stronghold of Sheykh Hosein, and after a skirmish, the latter and his son were killed. Thus disappeared from the scene, an inveterate foe of the British, who had caused them incessant troubles. Zaer Khader was in flight, and so were the other chieftains. Trevor, the British Consul-General in Bushire, was the real administrator of the Gulf Ports.

As much as the British were satisfactorily established in the South, their grasp on the North was weak. Mesopotamia was seething with unrest. The question of Irak needs a separate treatise. Here I shall deal with it as far as it has had some touching upon the situation in Northern Persia. In the British Cabinet opinion was divided. Lord Curzon was urging the fulfillment of the obligations met through the agreement of 1919.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Montagu, the Secretary for India, was on the contrary insisting upon the concentration of British energy in Irak. England had begun demoralization, and the upkeep of a large force in Irak and Persia seemed next to impossibility. The British taxpayer could not maintain the war machinery any more. The only way out was to divide the forces, civil and military, between the two countries, and try to effect an equilibrium.

It was at this very time that the Caliphate movement was gaining ground in India, and spreading out among the rank and file of the Moslems. A revival of pan-Islamism was imminent. Pan-Turanism was also making headway, and Enver Pasha was in the Russian Turkistan, exploiting the national feelings of the population. The Bolshevik propaganda was also sweeping down like a torrent, over

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1. The Times. Jan. 19, 1920.

the Eastern Nations. Thus the British were hopelessly caught among three strong currents, all undermining the European prestige in the Orient. The Irak question, the Caliphate question, and the Persian question were all interesting upon each other. The Shia divines of Irak suspecting the British designs in Persia and Turkey, were arousing the Irakians and especially the Shiites among them, to antagonize the British. The leaders of the Moslem movement in India were fighting the European mandates over the lands of Islam. Then no wonder if the French were bewildered by the inconsistent policy of Great Britain, that was anything but definite.

The undecided policy of the London Government, was evidenced by the action of the military authorities, when the Bolsheviki landed forces, at last, on May 19, 1920. The British General withdrew the small force stationed in Enzeli and not only did not stop at Rasht, but retreated to the general line beyond Manjil.<sup>1</sup> The events in Mesopotamia, and the necessity of starting the civil administration as ordained by the mandate system, were calling Sir Percy Com, away from Teheran. And in June he left the country. The Bolsheviki invasion coupled with the incapacity of the British to check its advance, weakened strongly the position of that arch-friend of Great Britain, Vosouk-Uddowleh, the prime minister. He had depended wholly upon the support of the British, and now that it had failed to aid him at that critical moment, he could not withstand the anger of the Democrats and the Nationalists.<sup>2</sup>

On June 2, the young Shah arrived at his Capital, from his European trip. Three weeks later Vosouk-Uddowleh submitted his resignation, and left immediately for Europe, to escape from popular discontent. The Bolsheviki had meantime pillaged Rasht, and

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1. A village some fifty miles north of Kezvin.

2. Contended by Emile Leseur.

continuing their march along the coast had reached Mazendaran. By the beginnings of July, the new cabinet was formed ~~in~~ under the presidency of Mushir-Uddowleh,<sup>1</sup> a moderate Nationalist, respected by all the sections of the populace. His cabinet was decidedly anti-British, since it contained opponents of the agreement, the chief among them Mokhber-Ussaltaneh, and Mostawfi-Ulmamalek. The first act of the new government was to name Colonel Storroselski, the head of the Cossack Brigade, as the commander-in-chief of all the forces, and send him to check the Bolsheviks and the insurrectionists of the Caspian provinces.

What were the aims of the Bolsheviks? Apparently they had come to reclaim the boats of General Denekin, interned in Enzeli, and ask the surrender of the White Russian refugees. But it is altogether a mistake to think of the invaders as purely the commissioned armies of the Soviet Government, since they were mostly composed of Caucasian revolutionists and adventurers, Persian extremists and chance-seekers, and I am afraid a good many lawless elements and brigands. There were Russian troops undoubtedly, but they were not in a majority, and naturally enough, were unable to command the situation effectively. Kuchik Khan, already mentioned before, had profited from the occasion, daring to proclaim a republic in the Gilan province. Strangely enough Sa'id-Uddowleh, a son of the aged Sipahsalar, (the Sipahdar of the early days of the constitution) had joined hands with the insurgents of Mazendaran. Sa'id-Uddowleh was himself a wealthy landowner, and his alliance with the Bolsheviks, meant that the whole game was not one started on a principle, but rather an attempt at anarchy, and breaking down the barriers of law and order.

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1. Formerly Mushir-Ulmuluk, son of the late Mushir-Uddowleh, and the gentleman alluded to in the note of Sir Cecil Spring-Tice to the Persian Foreign Minister, dated Sept. 1907.



The position of the British troops was now precarious. The Mesopotamian revolt had by then, assumed a dangerous aspect, and in the communications with Baghdad were cut off. The British government involved in troubles here and there, decided to evacuate Persia, as soon as the situation permitted an honourable retreat. The forces in Manjil and Kazvin were counting days, and since it was evident that the authorities meant to avoid a clash with the Bolsheviks, the troops had remained inactive, living in uncertainty. On July 28, a vanguard of the Bolsheviks appeared at Manjil, and the move of the British commander was quite surprising. He left the important post occupied by his men, and drew back. When the news reached Teheran, it aroused a fresh manifestation of disgust against the British, both in the press, and the public circles. People thought that the Englishmen had betrayed them to the Bolsheviks whom they dreaded, and had decided to open to the invaders the road to Teheran, and thus expose the capital to the fate of Rasht. There was talk of the removal of the Government to a city further south, and the Shah terribly upset by the ill-omened news, was insistent upon that point. But soon came the intelligence of the victories achieved by Colonel Storroselski.

The Russian Commander-in-chief of the Persian forces, had succeeded in defeating the Bolsheviks at Mazandaran, and had pushed towards Rasht, driving the enemy to the sea. On August 24, the Persian forces were in Rasht, and by sheer folly they advanced on Enzeli, only to meet the firing of the boats. The unexpected check broke down the morale of the army, and according to Mr. Balfour, they dispersed ~~the Persian~~ in disorder. Back at Rasht, once more the Bolsheviks wrecked their vengeance upon the unfortunate inhabitants who had given a lending hand to the Persian army. The Northern provinces given up to pillage, all of the food available there

imported to Russia, the plundered population pouring in flocks into the capital, the morale of the Cossack brigade destroyed, and the British attitude undefined, were indeed much for the Teheran government that had to count on the mercy of the British Treasury.

The fate of the agreement, was still in the air. The cabinet had subjected the question to the approval of the parliament which was not likely to meet. As a matter of fact the National Cabinet was hostile to the elections which had taken place under the auspices of the late Anglo-phile government. And now the British resolved to bring the matter to the fore. In September the situation had improved. The Cossacks had once more occupied Rasht, to surrender it again. The Mesopotamian tension was relieved, and General Ironside took over the command of the forces in Northern Persia, from General Champain in October. As it indicated the British had decided to abandon their weak stand, and present a stronger front to the lawless elements in the North. However their first action was to warn the stubborn cabinet of Mushir-Uddowleh, with a note handed in the latter part of October.

The British minister had demanded the dismissal of the Russian officers in service of the Persian Government, the meeting of the parliament to vote for the fate of the agreement, and a reorganization of the Persian forces to cope with the Russian Bolsheviks, since the departure of the British troops was drawing near. And there was the implied threat that if the Russian officers were not relieved of their task, the British subsidies would stop to direct the clogged machinery of the state. Mushir-Uddowleh, true to his principles, instantly resigned. He could accept neither of the two alternatives. When a member asked the under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs, in the House of Commons, as to whether the fall of the

Persian Cabinet was due to the intervention of the British minister, he answered that it was because of the Cabinet's failure to enforce the decision of the Shah, to send home the Russian officers.<sup>2</sup> In other words the Foreign office was trying to wash its hands of the affair.

The action of the British against the Cossack officers, is an enigma to me. Many accusations were brought against them, including extravagance, favouritism, and laxity of discipline. But since no trial took place, and Colonel Storroselski was hurried out of the country without giving him time to afford an explanation, we can not depend much upon the imputations brought forth to discredit them. However I believe that the British had a double purpose. They meant to appeal to the national sentiments of the people by uprooting a foreign institution that was resentful due to the bitter memories of the past. And then they were anxious to carry out a clause of the agreement, and put British officers in the place of the Russians. How far they were wise in assuming such a policy, I can not make a conjecture. No matter what the case might have been, the situation was ironical. The nationalists got more embittered by the interference of the British, and took sides with their former foes, the Russian officers. For a short while there was the possibility of revolt on the part of the dismissed officers relying upon popular support.

The new premier was once a member of Vosouk-Uddowleh's Cabinet, and had left it at the time of the signing of the agreement. He was not against the British, and not also a great friend of theirs. As M. Leseur puts it, he was a simple man desirous of pleasing everybody. Accepting the proposals of the British minister, he cancelled the services of Colonel Storroselski and his colleagues, and

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1. Hansard 1920, Vol., 134, p. 1519.

tried to call the parliament. Quite wisely a Persian officer, Sardar Homayoun was put at the head of the Cossack force, but some British officers were also attached to the Brigade, in an advisory capacity. With the help of the British officers the Persian force was once more in Rasht, in the early days of November.

As is the usual case, dissensions had appeared in the ranks of Bolsheviks and the insurgents of the North. Kuchik Khan getting disgusted with the communists, had offered help to the government troops, and the leaders of the Persian Bolsheviks were quarreling with each other over power. The Soviet Government were playing fast and loose. When they had their chances in Europe, to profit by the British, they would renounce their agents in Northern Persia, but secretly would try to strengthen their position in the province of Gilan. By the month of December, the Soviet policy had got a new Orientation. Watching closely the success of the Turkish Nationalists, the growing tide of anti-British feeling in Persia and Afghanistan, and the vacillating policy of Great Britain, the Moscow Government had began to dream of an alliance with the World of Islam. And thus it was that in December, they entered into peace negotiations with the Persian government. The reconciliation with Russia, will be discussed elsewhere. Here it is sufficing to say that in December, Persia was slowly drifting out of the alliance with the British.

The prime minister, Sipahdari &'zam, instead of convoking the parliament at once, asked the Shah to call a meeting of the notables, deputies, ex-deputies, and ex-ministers, to consider the situation. The Grand Council, as it was termed, ended in an anti-British demonstration, and a subsequent declaration signed by forty of the deputies, disparaging the agreement of 1919. Even the parliamentarians elected under the influence of Vosouk-Uddowleh, were averse

to the ratification of the proposed treaty of alliance. Apparently the agreement had no chance of survival.

The British had already begun to evacuate the Eastern provinces, and the last contingents left Khorasan, on Sept. 16. M. Lesueur mentions that there occurred at the time, an uprising against the British brutality(!) in the South. To the best of my knowledge, this report is devoid of any truth. And if there is anything to the credit of the British troops in the South, it is their fair treatment of the population. Here I have to touch upon a subject which is also discussed by Mr. Balfour in his book. The French Legation and the other foreign Legations in Teheran, were decidedly hostile to the British supremacy in ~~Teheran~~ Persia, at this period. The French had gone to the extreme of encouraging anti-British feelings among the populace, trying to destroy the agreement of 1919. Perhaps they were angry because the agreement had not been presented to the League of Nations, and because they were thinking that the rise of British influence would prove detrimental to their meagre interests in Persia. Indeed M. Lesueur speaks of the French interests being imperilled.

In January 1921, the British Legation resorted to another stroke of diplomacy. An announcement was made to the European Colony in Teheran, that since the British troops would leave the country in spring, and the lives of the Europeans would be in danger, consequent to the Bolshevik menace, the British authorities had decided to help the Europeans quit the Persian territory in safety. A program for their journey with some conditions inserted, was drawn up, and handed to the Foreign Legations. The first to turn down the proposal, was the French Colony, on the instigation of our friend, M. Lesueur who was dearly attached to his students in the Faculty of Law. The answer to the British Legation, was that the

Europeans would not start out of the country before the British. Quite unfortunately, the Imperial Bank was also making matters hard, adding to the hatred of the people.

M. Lesueur believes that this move of the British, entailed an unscrupolous design. They wished to send all the Europeans out, deprive Persia of her friends, and then seize upon the officexs and jobs left vacant by the departure of their European occupants. An intimation hard to accept. But it is probably true that the British wished to create panic, and bring down the recalcitrant Persian government to their knees. Negotiations were meantime going on with Moscow Government, and fresh proposals had come in by January, which had been consented to by another Grand Council held for the purpose, with the exception of the clause giving freedom of propa- ganda to the Communist emissaries.

Hostility to the British was on increase, the winter was hard and bitterly cold, the army was unclad, and poorly-equipped with its morals shattered by misery, and the insurgents of Gilan, who had by then practically got out of the control of the Soviet agents, were preparing for an assault after the winter time. The British troops were decidedly to evacuate the country in the early spring, the parliament had no chance of meeting, and the prime minister had lost both his decision and will. In January and February Sipahdar formed five cabinets one after the other, none being able to organize the state. Undoubtedly new men were needed. The nobility had proved itself unworthy of the task entrusted to it since the beginnings of the Constitution.

The parliament was at last convoked to meet on February 21. But it never did. It was the unexpected, and the inevitable that came to pass.



### XIII. The Coup d'Etat of 1921

February 1921 stands prominent in the annals of the modern history of Persia, as a milestone. It marks the end of a period, and the beginning of another. Persia, outraged, downtrodden, betrayed, and chaotic evidenced once more signs of life, vitality and regeneration. Perhaps in the last one hundred years, Persia's case was never as helpless as it looked in the first days of February 1921. In the last chapter we traced the unexpected turn of events from the inception of the treaty of 1919, down to the days when it became known that the British troops would evacuate the country in the spring, and consequently British subsidies would stop. The sham cabinets of Siphahdar, and his game of cabinet making, indicated the incapacity of the bureaucracy to cope with the enormous difficulties facing the shattered state. The Bolshevik menace temporarily checked by the presence of General Ironside's troops, was eminent in February, since it had been announced by official quarters that the British army would withdraw in a short time. The treasury was empty, the morals of the cossack brigade had broken down<sup>1</sup> the chieftains and the grandees all over the country, refused to pay their taxes, and no stable Government was possible in the anarchic situation of the time. Only a master-stroke, and the unexpected would save the day. That the cleverest in the capital, were anticipating a sudden and radical change, is proved by the fact that as soon as the news of the Cossacks' march reached Teheran, a few who were sure of an unpleasant fate, either disappeared from the scene, or took refuge in Foreign Legations. Among them were Siphahsalar A'zam<sup>2</sup>, and Hadji Moin-Uttujjar, the latter one of the

1. Evidenced by the declaration of the present Majesty, Riza Shah Pahlavi, then the commander in Gilan, after the coup d'etat.

2. The old Siphahdar of the early days of Constitution.

six exiled in the days of Vosouk-Uddowleh, because of their antipathy towards the agreement of 1919.

How the coup d'etat was organized, and who were the first men suggesting the bold action, are still unanswered. Much speculation is made on the subject, but very meagre information is available to substantiate the various pictures presented of the Noble Plot. I call the plot noble, not from any sentimental motive, but because it served some purpose, and achieved a solution for the intricate problems confronting the country. There was a strong tendency in Persia, after the downfall of the ~~amrxf~~ coup d'etat cabinet, to label the scheme as British-made. A journalist, communistic in his views, and suspected of being in pay of the Bolsheviks, made a strong attack, on Lord Curzon,<sup>1</sup> in a poem, and thus referred to the coup d'etat:

"We grasped your Marling's temper,<sup>2</sup>

"And tested Cox,<sup>3</sup> when he came to act.

"We watched how Norman<sup>4</sup> effected a coup d'etat,

"And we turned back, all the way we had gone."

The nobility and the functionaries who had suffered under the coup d'etat government, would naturally foster this opinion, and give it a wide circulation. I can not allege the falsity of this view, because there is certain evidence however filmy, that favours it, nor can I also verify the statement due to the lack of sufficient proof.

On the other hand, Mr. Balfour denies totally that the British had a share in the business, and even claims that the Legation had no information regarding the matter. That too, seems hard to believe. How could the Persian Cossacks march off the battle field, and pass

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1. In the summer of 1921. 2. Sir Charles Marling. 3. Sir Percy Cox. 4. Mr. Norman H.B.M.'s ambassador, at the time of coup d'etat.



the British Contingents, without arousing the suspicion of the general in command? I think that the safest way at present, is to put aside any discussion regarding the origins of the coup d'etat.

Two personalities occupy the scene, when we speak of the events of February. One is now the occupant of the Persian throne, His Imperial Majesty Reza Shah Pahlavi, and the other, a fugitive in Switzerland, Seyed Zia-Uddin Tabatabai.<sup>1</sup> The former was commanding a body of Cossacks, in the Gilan front, and the latter was the editor of a well-known paper in the capital, prior to the coup d'etat. Two officers deserve special mention, since they are supposed to have been mediators between the military commander, and the journalist of the capital. Major Mas'ud Khan, is now a teacher of geography and history in a secondary school at Teheran, and his compatriot Lieutenant Colonel Kazem Khan has been in exile with Seyed Ziauddin. Of his recent wanderings, I know nothing. This second officer had cultivated the acquaintance of Seyed Ziauddin, sometime earlier, while both of them had gone on a mission to the Republic of Azarbayjan.<sup>2</sup> We do not know how the plot started. But the presumption seems certain that there were very few people involved in making out the design. The composition of the ministry under Seyed Ziauddin, testifies the claim. Practically most of the ministers to whom the different departments of the state were confided knew nothing of the scheme, beforehand. Modir-Ulmamalek who was put at the foreign office, was the treasurer-general under the former ~~affairs~~ cabinet, and after the occupation of Teheran, he took refuge in the French Legation, for some days. Muwwakkar-Uddowleh,<sup>3</sup> appointed Minister of public works, was wholly ignorant of the business, and when the prime minister sent

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1. Seyed Tabatabai rose to fame, when he attended the Moslem congress in Jerusalem, last December. His eloquence and energy transported the audience, and he was elected the vice-president of the

after him to impose upon, rather than assign him, a portfolio, he thought that it was to prison that he was called. Nayyer-Ulmulk, the new Minister of Education, was a man so good-natured that had no interest in the politics of the day, and had chosen the seclusion of his house in preference to the beal-mell of the outside world. Adl-Ulmulk, the Minister of Interior, was a functionary under the old governments, and was actually occupying a high post, on the very eve of the coup d'etat.

Moreover in the interval between the capture of Teheran, and the formation of the cabinet, there were only four or five men directing the affairs. Nobody else appeared to be of any considerable importance in those days. Let us end here a discussion which is speculative in the most part, and turn to the events.

I will follow in part the narration of Mr. Balfour, and touch upon the opinion of M. Emile Lesueur. It has been customary to keep a contingent of the Cossack Division in Teheran to garrison the Capital. Sometime at the beginning of February, it was deemed necessary to replace those stationed in Teheran, with a new body drawn from the front. This opportunity was seized by the officers in Kezvin who were planning a blow upon the government. On February 19, news reached Teheran, that a force 2500 strong, were marching upon the Capital, under the command of General Riza Khan. I can not explain the subsequent action of the government, if I would not uphold the view that the authorities in Teheran were fully aware of their inherent weakness, and were expecting the inevitable. Sardar Homayoon, the commander-in-chief of the Cossack division, set out to meet the rebellious troops. He knew well that he could

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(cont.) Congress.

2. Stated on the authority of Mr. Balfour.

3. The writer's father.

not stop the army in its march, and that is evidenced by his mild attitude. He suffered himself to sleep, while the Cossacks passed his lodgings, and then he turned back towards the capital by another route. Next, the government sent one of the ministers accompanied by two representatives from the British Legation, one of whom I believe was Mr. Smart, later the Consul at Damascus, and the other Colonel Haig. Why did the British officials go on a mission to the insurgents? I can not comprehend, that pushes aside the argument that the Legation had some hands in the affair.

Mr. Balfour states that for the first time, Seyed Zia-Uddin made his appearance and came to receive the government's delegates. He told them that the army was loyal to the Shah, devoted to the best interests of the Fatherland, faithful to the Nation, and friendly to the British. Their purpose was to overthrow the rule of the irresolute and the corrupted, and direct the destinies of the state, at the perilous situation of the time. The Cossacks arrived at their destination, by the midnight of February 20, and soon they were masters of the city. A feeble resistance was afforded by the police, entailing a few casualties on both sides. The garrison in the city, joined their brother-troops, leaving the Swedish Commander of the police, to think over his problem.

The morning of February 21, saw the army in power. Martial Law was declared, and General Riza Khan took over the supreme command of all the forces. Lieutenant-Colonel Kazim Khan was given the post of military governor of Teheran. Seyed Zia-Uddin was however busy adding names to the list of the grandees, ex-ministers, men of politics, and self-made leaders who had to go to prison. The Seyed did not draw a line of distinction between his captives. Conservatives, liberals, radicals, democrats, Anglophiles, Anglophobes, none escaped his wrath. Prince Firuz, the author of the

agreement of 1919, and his father, the old Prince Farman-Farma, both life-long allies of the British, were among the detained. The people of Teheran were scared, and dared not breathe a word of opposition. Prince Firuz deserves a passing attention. Many people thought that his recent return from London, after having concluded the notorious agreement, and being honoured by a G.C.M.G., was in anticipation of the premiership. It was less than a month that the intriguing Prince had come home, when the coup d'etat sent him to jail, and the British took no step to rescue their trusted ally. His cordial and intimate reception at London, and his hurried return, if it meant anything, was but rising to the position of the first minister, and carrying to the letter, the treaty of 1919. His imprisonment was surely a sudden shock to him.

The declaration of the supreme commander of the forces, General Riza Khan, a few days after the coup, explains the motives underlying the tremendous effort of February 1921. The future Imperial Majesty thus addressed the Nation:

"Fellow-Countrymen: The sacred duties of sacrifice towards the King and the Fatherland, sent us to the frightful battlefield of Gilan----Those sanguine and death-omening fields that the enemy's army with greater numbers, and more efficient weapons, had formed, for the purpose of intimidating the capital, and occupying Persia. The brave Cossacks welcomed with heart and soul, this sacred duty, because the only magnificent force of Persians that could shoulder the obligation of Fatherland's defence, was this force and these individuals who, devoid of proper clothing, foot-gear, food, and sufficient arms, made their bodies and chests, targets of the fire-breathing guns, proved the zeal and courage of the Persian, and drove the massive bands of the assailants from the gates of Kezvin

to the coast. If the sacrifice and the perilous services of the ~~the~~ Cossack force, did not achieve the desired end, and we succeeded ~~we~~ not in rescuing the hallowed soil of the Fatherland, and the integrity of our Gilani/ brethren, from the enemy's hands, we should not be blamed. It was the treason of the officers and those to whom our care and direction, was entrusted, that caused the abortion of the results of our service. Yet we take pride in the fact that the blood of the gallant Cossacks, could take the metropolis of our sacred Fatherland, from enemy's domination. The foreign traitors were able to wreck the consequences of the sacrifices of Persia's children, and that was because the internal traitors were making us their playthings, and using us as tools for their and others' vices.

"When we were retreating from the marshes of Gilan, under the enemy's fire, we felt that the source, the primalpoint of all the misfortunes of Persia, and the army's wretchedness, and debaseness, was none but internal traitors. At the time we were shedding our blood, at the feet of the oncoming enemy, we swore by the dignity of those very pure and holy drops to shed more of them at the first opportunity, for the purpose of uprooting the selfish, and self-conceited internal traitors, and setting free the Persian Nation from the servile bonds of a handful of thieves and evil-mongers."

Then he proceeds to enumerate the qualifications of the government that the army has undertaken to support. In shortx they are, honesty in Finances, fair play with the Nation, consideration for the army, independence of foreign tutelage, strictnrss towards the nobility, and determination to reform the administration. In plain words, the commander had renounced any intention to destroy the Crown, and impose a military dictatorship over the Country.

The next step was to make the Shah recognize the new order.

And that was effectively obtained by the appointment of Seyed Zia-Uddin to the post of prime minister. Not content with that, the boy-Shah was compelled to sanction the very existence of the coup d'etat, and approve of its aims. In a decree cabled to the governors of the provinces and the districts, Sultan Ahmad Shah thus justifies the premiership of Seyed Zia-Uddin, a man relatively unknown before the overthrow of the government of the nobility. "As a result of the carelessness and impertinence of the administrators of the past days, that had caused a general uncertainty and had shaken security and peace in the country, making us and all the people sorrowful because of the lack of a stable government, we decided to install a worthy and earnest man who would provide for the felicity of the state, and put an end to the dragging crisis of the time." And he follows by naming Seyed Zia-Uddin as the man deserving his nomination.

The prime minister instantly drew up a long and rather chauvinistic declaration, and posted it over the walls of the capital, wiring it at the same time, to all parts of the country. To understand the coup d'etat of February 1921, it is essential to get acquainted with this challenging and inspiring proclamation of Seyed Zia-Uddin. In it he gives a brief review of the situation after the constitution, lays the whole blame at the doors of the worthies playing with the destinies of the nation in that period of fifteen years, denounces their rule, proposes reforms, designates the Shah as responsible for his appointment, glorifies the army, and finally goes on to deal with Foreign Relations. Herein I stop because it is more becoming to hear that, from his own words.

"But our Foreign Policy. Here too a fundamental change is necessitated. It is urging that an honourable policy should govern

our relations with foreign states. In these days no country can ~~xx~~ live without keeping in touch with the community of Nations. Since the Great War, the basis of the modern world organizations, have been laid upon principles of amity and cooperation. Those precepts are adoptable in our peace-seeking Fatherland, more than anywhere else. Our nation is humanitarian. It is kind, sympathetic and sincere towards all the foreign Nations. Our nation is the inheritor of the commands and admonitions of successive centuries and ages-- Commands that ordain peaceful international relations.

"But it is evident that our friendship should not become a ~~xxx~~ means for illegal profiteering of the foreigners, and vitiate our independence and honor, in the concert of Nations. Our dealings with any of the foreign states, should not deter our good relations and friendship with the others. Thus it is in the name of this ~~z~~ friendship that I will abrogate the capitulations that are contradictory to a nation's independence." To succeed in this purpose, and enable the foreign citizens to enjoy full justice, so as to defend rightly their causes, special laws and regulations with proper courts will be set up, so that the foreigners may possess any kind of guarantee."

"It is in accordance with the above-mentioned principles, that I announce a thorough revision of some concessions granted formerly to the foreigners. We should look as friends to all the neighbours, have amicable relations with all, and strengthen our bonds of commerce and comradeship with them.

"In these our reforms we shall be at liberty to avail ourselves of the help of all the states, no matter in what form the aid may be, be it in way of providing us with advisors, or supplying us with capital; and no nation however strong and powerful shall restrict this freedom of ours. We are free, we shall remain free.

"It is in the name of these basic notions, and for the sake of these basic notions, that I declare as null and void the Anglo-Persian agreement of August 1919-- . The agreement, at the time of ~~xxx~~ which, the world issues were confused, and the causes compelling us to cling to which benefits, exists no more.

"Solid decision to enforce internal reform, and determination to aggrandize, and fortify the army, make us independent of agreements enforced upon us, rising out of the changed face of the world.

"I declare the abrogation of the Anglo-Persian agreement, so that it may not have any evil-boding on our outlook, since all along the last hundred years, in the darkest and most trying ~~years~~ moments of our history, England has forwarded, time after time, her friendly hands, in aid to Persia. On the other hand Persia has, time after time, proved her loyalty and truthfulness, to England. Therefore such a historical friendship should not be profaned by the convention of an agreement.

"The repudiation of the agreement, will dispel any kind of misunderstanding lingering between the British and the Persian Nations, and designs a new foundation for our sincere relations with all the states.

"The evacuation of Persia's soil by the foreign army is the most important problem that will strengthen our ties with the neighbouring powers. We expect that after the ratification of the agreement reached with the Moscow Government, by our representative, we will have concord and amity with Russia, and get relieved of the anxiety of the delay of foreign troops, by evacuation of both parties."

Then the fiery premier proceeds to invite the people to co-operation, ask for constructive suggestion, and warn in unmistakable



terms any dissident. "Even if my brother would oppose the efforts to save the country from the present inflictions, I shall not have pity upon him."

Now shall we make an analysis of the position taken by the prime minister of the coup d'etat government? He shows himself a firm man with strong international mind. But his appreciation of British friendship is striking enough, if we remember the course of the previous years, and the wave of hatred surging against Great Britain and her ally from the days of Anglo-Russian conciliation, in 1907. One is apt to accept that Seyed Zia-Uddin was reclining on British support, and was favoured by the British Legation. And that conviction gets the stronger, when we see Mr. Balfour making his utmost to justify Zia-Uddin, and M. Lessueur doing his best to stain and libel his work and reputation. Then there is Seyed Zia-Uddin's previous record. While leading the life of a journalist, he was a defender of British intererests. His paper "Ra'ad" approved and praised the agreement of 1919, and was flourishing during the autocratic rule of Vosouk-Uddowleh, the prime minister who concluded the said treaty.

Then, there is the objection raised by Zia-Uddin's admirers that if he has been a tool in the British hands, why did he cancel the arrangements made by Vosouk-Uddowleh, Prince Firuz, Sir Percy Cox, and Lord Curzon, and proceed to befriend the Russian Bolsheviks. But if we try to study the question in the light of Mr. Lloyed George's policy in 1921, and the difficulties of Great Britain at the time, the answer can be easily found. In few words, it was impossible for England to stand by the treaty of 1919. As Seyed Zia-Uddin had explicitly mentioned in his declaration, the world conditions had changed. The expenses involved could not be maintained by Great Britain. Public opinion in England, as well as the

House of Commons, was calling for retrenchment. The war machinery had to be demolished, and a return to normal conditions was imperative. Great Britain had assumed new responsibilities in Irak and Palestine, countries turbulent with disorder and sedition. India was drifting into an open revolt, and that was naturally the first and greatest concern of the British Cabinet. There was a rejuvenated Turkey struggling for an independent life, unscrupulously encouraged by England's Allies, much to the chagrin of Mr. Lloyd George. May I say that the British Government had to work against odds in 1921, and naturally enough, they were deterred from keeping the promises they had given in 1919 when they were exultant over the favourable conclusion of a colossal undertaking. I refer to the World War.

And for the Russian question. That is quite plain. In 1921, Lloyd George had given up the trial of strength with the usurping Bolsheviks. He was anxious for a settlement with them. Was it not in the next year that he courted the Russians, in Cannes and Genoa? Therefore Persia's reconciliation with Russia, was by no means a threat to the British. On the other hand it had a double advantage for them. With the British troops leaving in the spring, it was urgent to check the forward move of the Red army, towards the Persian Gulf. It was to the welfare of the Indian Empire, that the Russians too would withdraw from the country and the Moscow people would be but too contented to know that England was not standing between them and Persia. Russia had made it a point to effect a hegemony with the three Moslem States--Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan, as was subsequently proved.

So much for the evidence counting on the side of those calling the new premier as the British agent. But it is not final. Whether a servant of the British or not, Seyyed Zia-Uddin had no other

direction to take, if he really meant to extricate the state from the ruin wrought by the incompetent governments of the past, and the foreign troops marching up and down the country. In the absence of documentary proofs one has to abstain from expressing an opinion, when the evidence is sought in the right conduct of the man, though one can not doubt his sympathies. I believe it is totally unfair to judge Seyyed Zia-Uddin, since he had no time to finish his task, except ~~to~~<sup>him</sup> give full credit for giving vent to an action, from which others had shrunk. He left up the veil of uncertainty. The agreement of 1919 had been nullified, and the Russian menace had passed, when Zia-Uddin chose to quit his country.

Why did he leave his job? I think it is easy to understand, and difficult to explain. Seyyed Zia-Uddin was an obstinate and an obdurate man.<sup>1</sup> He would not open his ears to people around him, to his ministers and above all to the man who had caused him to be put in the high position. I mean, the present Imperial Majesty. His strategies in seizing upon three of his opponents, governors in ~~the~~ three of the provinces, and influential men, one of whom was a cousin of ex-Shah, frightened the poor faculties of Sultan Ahmad. The nobility groaning in their prisons, had their agents-provocateurs to agitate and stir the populace. On the other hand Zia-Uddin ill-informed about finance had his day-dreams<sup>2</sup> which were impractical and wasteful. Trusting none, devolving every function upon himself, and arousing the suspicion of his colleagues, Zia-Uddin soon brought a sudden end to his career. How it came about, I do not know.

At first came a crisis in April. Major Mas'ud Khan who had hitherto occupied the war-office, was put out of the cabinet, and

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1. Speaking out of my father's experience.
  2. Quoted on the authority of Mr. Balfour.

General Riza Khan who was then known by the title Sardar Sipah, (commander-in-chief of the army) took up the post. By the beginning of May, it was certain that the government could not withstand the gathering storm. One of the ministers<sup>1</sup> was dead, and another, the good-hearted Wayyer-Ulmulk had to retire, because of a broken health. Meantime Seyyed Zia-Uddin was insisting upon the employment of British officers, in high capacities, a course to which General Riza Khan could not commit himself. The breach was widening, and the end came on 27th May, 1921. A body of the prisoners were released, and the next morning the dejected prime minister left the city with a person who has been termed his right-hand man, Epekian, the remarkable Armenian writer. This strange man who is now living in Beirut has been a great asset to Zia-Uddin's paper.

I have not outlined the internal reforms that Seyyed Zia-Uddin had launched upon, since they are irrelevant to our purpose. Enough to say that he suppressed the House of Justice as it stood, and intended to lay the foundations of modern courts with laws suitable to the foreign population, and thus renounce the capitulations. But his task was left undone, to be accomplished in the time spanning between years 1926 and 1928, by other hands.

Seyyed Zia-Uddin's administration had at least one point of superiority over its predecessors. It was free of corruption. Mr. Balfour concedes the claim. The coup d'etat of February 1921, as I said at the start of this chapter, was a turning point. Henceforth events took a sharp turn out of their much-the-same course. Perhaps the coup d'etat was a fitting tribute to the spirit of the age --that general <sup>dis</sup>satisfaction evidenced all over the Orient. Irak, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, India and China were all shaking with

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1. Muwakkar-Uddowleh, the writer's father.

unrest. The east wished, if I daresay, to consummate that one ~~great~~  
great desire which it had cherished since the time ~~of~~ the Nippons  
bullied the Russian bear--equality with the West.

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#### XIV. A New Chapter In Persian History

Now we are at the end of our task. We set to examine the turns and the reverses of the policy of a great Power in regard to a section of Asia, where rivalries were ripe and clashes were frequent, chiefly in a period of fifteen years. The year 1906 was our starting point, mainly because it heralded the birth of constitutional government in a dark region of the Orient, and further it marked cooperation and amity between two Empires that had vied with each other for so long, over the ruins of a once powerful Nations. And we continued our study down to the uncertain ~~ages~~ and changing circumstances of a great struggle, and the gloomy and bright days of the post-war period, to the year 1921. There we witnessed a stir and commotion among the people of the Eastern World, the final emergence of an anti-European Russia changed beyond recognition and the signs of a hegemony menacing a mighty victor of the war. In February and March 1921 Russia now anti-Imperialist, concluded treaties of friendship and coordination with Persia, Turkey and Afghanistan. Herein I do not intend to discuss in detail those agreements that cleverly represented Soviet Russia as the new apostle of justice and humanity. Only a few items from the treaty with Persia, suffices for our purpose which is to show the appearance now taken by the erstwhile crudest tyranny of the twentieth century.

Russia renounced all the ~~re~~ capitulatory privileges, concessions and rights forced out of the weak governments of Persia, and handed over all the institutions and establishments such as roads, ports, banks, and buildings that the Tsarist Russia had either constructed or usurped to herself. In other words after years of disdain, contempt and oppression, Russia came and condescended to

treat Persia, as an equal, an independent state. The Russian policy was now to unite with the nations of the East, in a common Cause, against the wrath and the persecution of the fiery capitalistic and Imperialistic governments of Europe. A hegemony as such was dangerous to the safety and peace of Indian Empire, a threat to those time-honoured fundamentals upon which the foundations of British power and prestige was laid. No time was to be lost in remedying a situation that had got out of control.

In England herself the mass of the people were deadly tired of war, its reminiscences, and outlook. Peace and reconstruction were the urgent need of the day. Britain could not challenge Russia, in the open field, could not hush up the juvenile movements of the Orient, could not carry on the policy of iron and blood. The only way out of the dilemma, was through conciliation, through a calm, undisturbed mind. Mesopotamia and Palestine were now secured, the Arab principalities of the Gulf, were pacific and friendly, and both Hejaz and Nejd were ruled by kings with pro-British sympathies. The appearance of a foreign naval unit in the Gulf was a myth in 1921, since Germany had been eliminated, Russia had given up old games, and no other naval Power had any ambition in those waters of central Asia. Passed were the days when European states in their mad rush for colonies and dependencies would attempt in vain to get a naval base in the Persian Gulf. True that stretch of sea was still important as a highway for commerce, and England had great hopes for the prosperity of Basrah. But England had never ~~barred~~ barred the way for the trade of the other nations. All that she did was to close the Gulf to political influence and predominance of the European aspirants. And in 1921, there was no single state left with those beautiful and catastrophic dreams of pre-war days.

Russia, the formidable enemy of the British Empire, in 1921, would no more move troops up and down a wretched bereft country, would no more try to get the masters of the Gulf by surprise, and land on a stronghold of defiance of its watchmen, would no more fight for power; no more. But one thing she would, and that was enough. She could and would sow seeds of sedition in ~~the country~~ the already rebelling hearts of His Majesty's loyal subjects in India. She would easily send her emissaries, the bearers of the message of deliverance and liberation across the plains of Turkistan, the deserts of Persia, and the mountains of Afghanistan into the "Land of Rupees." And thus England would have to defend herself against the ogre of propaganda. The logical conclusion was to withdraw from Persia both because the English people wanted it, and the needs of the time demanded that. Persia was to become strong, as well as Afghanistan so that they might stand as barriers between Russia and the Indian Empire. Was not it a policy of the early years of the twentieth century? Not exactly that, but much akin to it. No forward moves as in those days.

It was in accordance with the dictates of the day that Persia was evacuated, that the South Persia Rifles was disbanded, and that the subsidies granted in a period of six years, were not claimed and passed over. Persia was left to her destinies. She was abandoned for good, to solve her thousands of problems. Persians were given the chance to set their house in order, to look after their business, to deal with the ruins of the past years and the destruction of the world war. England too like Russia, admitted the right of Equality, that great cornerstone of sound and healthy international relations, to a country that had been refused that right, for well-nigh half a century.



The entrance of Persia into the League of Nations, and the right attitude taken by the neighbours, when she once more asked ~~the~~ America in 1922 to give her financial advisors, were indicative of the orientation now taken by the policies of the formerly uncompromising Powers. And in 1923, Persia was not deterred in her determination to wreck Canada's amendment to the Article 12 of the League Covenant. Her refusal to vote on the proposal that would make the guarantees of that article lose their force and weight, caused the default of unanimity, and left the Covenant intact. Lastly in 1928, Persia repudiated the blemish of capitulations, after having reformed her corrupt judicial organization. England did not repudiate <sup>to</sup> Persia's just claims, but negotiated a new arrangement, as an Equal. In that same year a non-permanent seat in the League Council, was accorded to Persia, which she retained till last year when it went to China.

The new chapter is one befitting the requirements of that era which ~~is~~ thoughtful among Mankind, hope for and aspire to, an age in which peace and concord should rule among the Nations and justice should be the sole arbiter. No superiority of one group over the other, to justify oppression and tyranny. Persia has broken the bonds that had kept her enslaved, England has nothing to fear in the Gulf, and the old anxieties have melted away.

That importance which the Gulf had for the safety of the Indian Empire, though not altogether obliterated, has become much less in degree. The development of air operations, the strong aerial base in Hunaidi of Baghdad, the termination of that policy of certain European Imperialist Powers, set to undermine the British Raj in India, by force and military strength, the new spirit filtered into the erstwhile immovable body of ~~the~~ India, and

lastly the consolidation of Persia and her renewed existence, all tend to minimize that supreme value attached to the Persian Gulf, by the British statesmen, in the past days. Perhaps the change was too sudden to make us realize fully the new face of the problem, or probably the friendship which Great Britain entertains and partakes with the Arab Sheykhs, chieftains and Amirs of the Gulf Littoral, may prevent us from getting the real picture of the present situation. But still the fact remains that we have entered on a New Chapter.

Let me end with the closing paragraph of that monumental work of Sykes on the History of my Country.

"To conclude, Persia is now ruled by a resolute and patriotic Shah, and her many friends will wish His Majesty a long life in which to continue his beneficent activities."

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THE APPENDIX

No. 312 of

British Residency and Consulate-General,  
Bushire, 25 October 1911.

To

His Excellency

The Governor of Bushire  
and Gulf Ports.

A.C.,

I have kept your Excellency posted in regard to such information as has reached me with reference to the arrival of certain re-inforcements for British Consular Guards, and you have been informed that two squadrons of Indian Cavalry are expected to arrive here tomorrow morning 26th instant. My representative also read over to you last evening the purport of a communication I had received from His Majesty's Minister to the effect that; "the Persian Government has been informed that these guards are being sent up to protect British Consulates and British lives and property in the towns where they are located and will not patrol the roads or make expeditions until the present scheme of the Persian Government has been put into execution.

When this scheme is in operation and should it prove effective, these guards will be withdrawn.

The Persian Government has been asked at the same time to afford the guards the usual Customs facilities and to telegraph to the governor of the Gulf Ports to give complete cooperation to His Majesty's Consul-General in connection with the landing of these men and the onward despatch of the men going to Shiraz and Isfahan. The Ala-ed-Dowleh has also been requested to send the

necessary instructions to the Khans on the roads to give all facilities and assistance.

In confirming the above and repeating that the troops will arrive and disembark tomorrow weather permitting, with the cooperation of His Majesty's ships in harbour I have the honour to request that your Excellency will be so good as to let me have a few lines in writing at once for the information of the Senior Naval Officer and myself to say whether you have received instructions from Higher Authority and, in any case, whether or not I may hope to receive Your Excellency's complete cooperation, in the direction indicated.

As the matter is urgent and I have yet received no sign from Your Excellency I beg that you will let me have a brief affirmative or negative reply within half an hour up to which time I will be waiting at the Residency to receive it.

P. Z. Cox

Lieut-Colonel.

Political Resident in the  
Persian Gulf.

The Declaration of The Tribal Chiefs. sent  
to Bushire.

In The Name of God. the Bounteous. the Merciful:

Declaration:

May it be known to all the people of Bandar Bushire and Districts, those who are faithful unto Islam and those who obey its rule; that since the oppression and tyranny of the British were daily on increase in this territory of Islam, and since we waited long for our government to take action and no sign did appear, we the citizens of Dashti, Tangistan, Chah-Kutah, and Dashtistan, decided to follow the commands of the Holy Proofs of the faith who have imposed "Jehad" and defence as a duty upon any Moslem. Thus we have stood up to spare our wealth and life, for the cause of defence. Now we are in the vicinity of Bushire with all our forces. We deemed it urgent to give the intelligence to the people of Bushire who had for long been waiting for such a day. We undertake by this declaration that our enterprize would not entail even a "Diary" of damage to Moslems and those non-Moslems who are either Persian Nationals or ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ non-combattants following a trade or keeping to a non-partizan way. If they would incur with any loss, we will compensate them ~~with~~ double-fold. Our purpose is only to oust the British and restore the Germans who have violated the government's neutrality and the Nation's honour,<sup>1</sup> release Haji Ali and his followers, and render them back their plundered property. Nothing but these. This attempt at the renunciation of our lives

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1. Apparently a mistake in style. This phrase should be read as such as to indicate that the British troops "who have violated.. ."

and properties is because of the infamy with which the British have treated all of the citizens in this territory especially the Bushiri brethren. We hope that the untainted sympathy of our Bushiri brothers, will be our partners in this undertaking.

Hosein of Chah-Kutah

Khader of Tangistan.

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A Declaration sent by a Tribal Chief to the People  
of Bushire.

In the name of God, the Bounteous, the Merciful, You are in  
Slumber. Get Awake.

It is presented:

O people of Bushire. Know ye that according to the commands of the Ulema of Najaf,<sup>1</sup> this war between the British government and the government of Islam<sup>2</sup> is a Holy war. The reason is that the British army have come out of their land and territory, taking war to country of Islam.

O people of Bushire. This war is a Holy and national, and not a state war. Be sure that within two weeks, I will be able to tell you news about India and a revolution therein. Now, O Shiites, the entire ~~band~~<sup>number</sup> of this band of devotees who are going to sacrifice our beings for the concours of Islam, is round 2700 lives. Be sure; In this week we have sent a message through Othoman channels to the "Islamis" in India, and if God the glorified would wish, there will be revolution in India, within the next two weeks. Be sure. We

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1. A holy city of the Shiites in Irak.
  2. Perhaps meaning Turkey.

will inform you next week about the rest and the results of these words.

Ali

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The writer of this letter is either Haji Ali, the Alderman of Rishehr or Rais Ali of Delbar, a dangerous brave enemy of the British.

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The despatch of the Gov. of the Ports to Teheran announcing the arrival of British Forces.

Government of the Gulf

Ports and Islands

Bushire

No. 814

Zul-Ka'ada 4, 1332.

The Minister of the Interior:

On Thursday night, the third instnat, two hours after sunset, the British Consul-General sent me an official letter reading as following: (Text of the letter of H.B.M. the Consul)

I answered him immediately that I had no authority to act in any way regarding the 260 cavalry men that were arriving to guard the Shiraz, and the Isfahan Consulate, without specefic orders from higher sources. The boat that carries the ~~elephants~~ cavalrymen, has arrived at the harbour, this morning. I end with the remark that the Britishers themselves admit the fact that all of this Gulf Territory enjoys the utmost security. After the flight of Riza-Kuli Khan<sup>1</sup> and his supporters from Shiraz, the Bushire-Shiraz route, has also been safe and secure. Within these two days, 1300

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1. Nizam-Ussaltaneh, the stormy man of politics.



travellers, Hajis, and pilgrims have reached Bushire.

Sd. Ali Muhammad  
(Muwakkar-Uddowleh)

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The copy of the oration of one of the Ulema read by Mirza Ali Kazeruni, on Friday 25th Rabi II/33 (March 1915), in the New Mosque (Masjid-i-Naw) of Bushire.

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This account that I deliver is the outline of the grievances of the Ulema who are the leaders of the people of the Ports.

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In the name of God, the Bounteous, the Merciful.

According to the Holy path, if the non-believers would encroach upon the frontiers of Islam, Defence is obligatory. British subjects have ~~isixxx~~ suffered no loss of life or property in our city. Yet it is three years that the British have landed Indian troops, wishing to create unrest and seize upon an opportunity, but by the grace of the Mighty Lord, they have not succeeded in their designs. Today they are in war with a great Islamic State which is our neighbour. Although the proofs of the Faith have issued a command of ~~the~~ Defence, since our beloved king has adopted neutrality, we the spiritual leaders of this city have been unwilling to enforce the orders of the Proofs of Islam. A month ago they captured two German merchants in Mohammerah and Ahwaz, by the instrumentality of some ~~afixxx~~ traitors of the land. We said to ourselves this has not happened in our town, and kept silent.

Now it seems that they have taken our silence as a token of contentment since they have repeated the act in Bandar Rig, where without anybody's intelligence they have attacked two German travel-

lers by the assistance of that traitor-Haidar. They have seized one of them, together with a Persian young man whose guilt has been that he has been passing by the same route, as the Germans. The other who has been none but the German ex-consul in Bushire, has manly defended himself, managing to take to Borazjan. Yet they have shamelessly pursued him in a neutral territory. But thanks to the courage of Ghazanfar-Ussaltaneh and our valiant Gendarmes they could not capture the German official.

At the night of the 22nd they have surrounded the precincts of the German consulate, and the German merchant house, with a large number of troops, committing the deed of robbers and thieves. But bandits and thieves take property. They do not steal human kind. Strange to say our uncalled guests have ignored our hospitality and have robbed us of our invited guests. And yet if Rasuli would have done this act in Morrocco, the civilized nations of the world would have called him with every contemptible word existent in their dictionaries. But see what they do. They rush to the bedside of a man and a young woman of eighteen. They do not observe the respect of a lady innocent of any guilt or shortcoming. They do not let her dress up and make her run head and feet naked to the seashore, in the cold weather of midnight.

And this treatment they deem worthy and becoming of the soldiers and officers of a civilized government. They did not give the German consul enough time to put on his dress, and carried him out in pyjamas. Afterwards they saw that it would be a disgrace to them, before the eyes of the Indians, if they would carry him ashore in his nightgown. And they could not bear the loss to provide him with a suit of clothes. Yesterday they parcelled the consul's suits to him.

Well, they say that the German consul was circulating lies. Did any German or non-German make this reproach to them, all during this time? Who is there not knowing that the reporter's news are head-to-tail lies? What has happened to make us so dear to these gentlemen, that they translate a pack of falsehood everyday and despatch it to us? We are not war-mongers. We desire peace and conciliation. But we will not renounce our legal rights. Our government is neutral in the European War. Our land is sacred. Persia is hospitable and kind to her guests. They have trespassed our sacred land. They have violated our neutrality. They have stolen our harmless guests. We ask for the evacuation of our land. We want our guests. If they would render back the consul and the German merchant and his wife and take away their troops, so much the better, and if they ever martyr us, there are the people of Dashti and Dashtistan, the brave Kashghai and Khamsa tribes, and many other devotees of this sacred land who will fulfil their obligations towards Islam and Persia.

They were afraid lest the German consul would cause agitation among the populace, while he never did. Now that they have not kept the respect of our neutrality, we make public with positive proofs the command of "Djehad" (Holy war) issued by the leaders of the Faith. We make the real designs of our neighbours, clear to the people. We say that the primeal purpose of manoeuvring armies into Persia, and fighting with such a great Islamic state as Turkey, is annihilating the Islamic countries, annihilating the Islamic nations, annihilating the Koran, occupying Mecca and Medina, occupying the Holy shrines, occupying the Meshed of Riza.<sup>1</sup> If they would not withdraw their armies, and bring back our guests, we the learned of

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2. The eighth Imam buried in Meshed.

Islam will act upon our sacred religious duty and accomplish what they dreaded of the German consul, in other words opening the eyes and ears of the people to facts.

They should not think that by these words we agitate the people and give them a pretext. Nowadays the Persian nation and especially the people of the South, are wide-awake. We are not partisans of war. We are not agitators, seditionists and men of stupid and insane manners. We are acting upon our duty. We are informing our tribes and clans of the foreigner's designs, that they may know Islam is in danger, Koran is in danger, Holy places are in danger, and every Moslem should stand by the side of Duty. We beg the gentlemen present to leave the matter in the hands of the wise among the nation, and ask everyone to mind to his own business and occupation. We will not keep calm until we have vindicated our rights. "And those who take to injustice, shall know who does change things."<sup>1</sup>

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1. A well known verse from the Koran.

The Text Of The Telegram Of The Clergy Of Bushire To The  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

His Excellency Moawen-Uddowleh,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs,  
Teheran.

Copies to Naw Bahr, Shaura, Ra'ad, Asre Jadid, Aftab, Irshad and other papers.

Certainly the account of public unrest and the general commotion among the classes, the news of the armed threats of the Gulf chieftains against the illegal procedures of the British representatives and military officials in Bushire, and the intelligence of the latter's rough handling of the dear and harmless guests of our obeyed government, namely the Reverend Consul of the Exalted German State, the German merchant and his wife, whom they arrested in a nocturnal raid, on the night of Rabi. II. 22, have reached Your Excellency's distinguished hearing. We have telegraphed the whole story last week to the Ministry of the Interior, and the Parliament. Although we have neither received as yet the news of some timely action on the part of our government, nor got a convincing or unconvincing answer, we have been told that your Excellency have resigned Your post, since Your Excellency have been deeply touched as soon as Your Excellency have heard of this sad event the violation of Your government's neutrality.

Here, we seize upon an opportunity to offer Your Excellency, in the first place, the hearty gratitude which we feel towards Your Excellency's exhibition of patriotic motives for the upkeep of your Government's honour and esteem, and in the second place, our congratulations on Your Excellency's reacceptance of the portfolio

of Foreign Affairs. Yes, we can daresay that there are still great souls in this land, who give preference to the success of the Government's policy, and the eradication of the foreigners' influence up and over their personal gain and benefit.

Then we take the liberty to bring to Your Excellency's notice the fact that all of the classes in the South, except that traitor Haidar Khan,<sup>1</sup> are exasperated by the tyranny and the oppression of the British, be it in the days of Absolutism, or at the time of the Revolution. This last deed of theirs, at a moment when our neutrality is far and wide declared, is in direct conflict with our national honour, and state sovereignty; and has intensified public resentment, so that the tribes and the clans among whom there has been enmity, have made peace, standing at all risks to compensate this insult and to rub out this ignominious blot.

It is surprising that in order to cover up this vile act with some excuse, to allay the public commotion, the British have set forth a manifesto, having found justification for some illegal procedures, in some forged letters that they have drawn up with the aid of two dishonourable Persian fellows--their servants, which they claim to constitute the correspondence between the German Consul and Ali Delbari. If our present government would not avail themselves of our neighbours' difficulties, and put an end to their interventions, then when would they be able to carry out this urgent and final duty? If there would come a delay in first, improving the internal affairs, second, weakening the influence of the foreigners, and third, providing this important port with a small force to safeguard its interests, the danger is, that power

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1. The chieftain of Bandar Rig who arrested Wasmuss at the instigation of the British.

and authority would slip out from the hands of the Government officials.

The only and urgent remedy is to form a small force, and ask energetically the Crown in London or the Government in India, to render back the German Consul, all in a way that the present Cabinet thinks to be advisable. And we, the Nation in the South, swear by all sacred souls, that if our guests would be brought back, we will act according to the orders of our beloved king, and keep firmly to the neutral way of our obeyed government, during this European War.

Abdullah Al-Musavi Al-Beladi

Ali Al-Dashti

The signatories were two of the most influential of the Bushire Clergy.

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The Constitution of the Federation of the  
Tribe Chieftains---1915.

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In the name of God, the Bounteous, the Merciful.

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The Military constitution prescribed, as the obligations of  
this territory have ordained.

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First. A German gentleman arrived at this part of the Per-  
sian frontier. He was robbed and insulted and is asking now for  
justice.

Second. The British attack on Tangak. They have massacred ~~a~~  
and robbed the people, committing all sorts of infamy in this  
territory. In such a case, up to the commands of the great "Ulema"<sup>1</sup>  
defence is incumbent and by the grace of His Holiness the Guardian  
of the Age<sup>2</sup> on whom be Peace we are undertaking war.

Second.<sup>3</sup> Anyone who would make financial contributions by a  
motive of godliness, and a zeal of kinship, belongs to the victori-  
ous faction. And anyone who would come in, coveting fortunes,  
achieve no end, and gains no benefit.

Third. The treasurer is not allowed to pay anybody a single  
dinar<sup>4</sup> without a check bearing the signature of commander-in-chief.

Fourth. The self-respecting nation of Dashti are of two  
groupings whose leaders are the Headman Abdul-Hosein, and Fakih

- 
1. "Ulema" means the learned, signifying the clergy.
  2. The expected twelfth Imam of the Shiites.
  3. A funny repetition.
  4. A monetary unit used in the olden days. Now of no value.



Zein-Uddin conditioned that these two chieftain would assure each other that the Dashti riflemen from Kolol to Dayyer would be under their discipline and disposition, held responsible for the upkeep of order. And if one of the two chieftains would be present, and so would be the band of the absent chieftain, the people of the absentee should support the chieftain present who should support the Commander-in-chief.

Fifth. When the war starts, those localities that are on the frontier being danger spots and reaching the sea, as well as Hoseinaki, Ahmadi and Shif would be guarded and watched over by a military garrison.

Sixth. A worthy and brave body would be elected to supervise the discipline of the army, and carry out the orders of the commander-in-chief. They would punish only those members of the army who break the discipline and do rioting, passing a death sentence or committing to prison, depending upon the gravity of the misdemeanor. Even if the Zabit<sup>1</sup> of Tangistan would break the discipline and cannot be imprisoned he should be reduced by force.

Seventh. His Excellency the German Consul is willing to give an account, signed by the Hujjat-ul-Islam<sup>2</sup> of Ahrom, of the expenditures and the money presented to the members of the army and the chieftains except the men of Learning<sup>3</sup> from the day he has arrived at this land; so that in the future the chieftains of this territory would not become subjects of accusation.

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1. Administrator
  2. An ■ ■ élite in the hierarchy of the Shiite religion clergy.
  3. The clergy.

Eighth. Sheykh Hosein Khan and Zaer Khader Khan have prescribed that their expenses and that of their staffs, should be borne by themselves. In addition to that they have undertaken to make a donation of 20,000 toumans which they would arrange with His Excellency the respected German Consul; if necessitated.

Ninth. The pay of the army, rewards to the loyal, fines, booties and all arrangements and duties, are under the direction of the commander-in-chief. Whoever handles them without an order, is held responsible.

Tenth. It is ordained that each body of twenty men would have an officer, and five of such bodies would have a commander. Such is the rule that wherever is a garrison, the contingents should present themselves before the superior officer, every evening.

Eleventh. Wherever the army gains a victory, the first job~~is~~ is to disarm the prisoners. After yielding their arms, they should be treated kindly. The lives and the properties of the neutral people who are not participating in the war, should not be encroached upon.

Twelfth. Ending with the number of the Imams on whom be Peace. The army arriving at any town or village, passing by or being stationed in them, should treat the inhabitants well. They should be sheer bounty, inflict no harm, have regard for all and cause no damage. Any requisition should be made with the consent of the population. If done otherwise, the offenders will be dealt with severely by the commander-in-chief.

Dated 24 Sha'aban-AL-Mu'azam 1333 (July 1915)

Submitted to the community of the Moslems

Circulate this declaration among all of the Moslems individuals. If you conceal it, you will meet with God's anger and the Curse of His Holiness the Prophet.

Signed by the  
Commander-in-chief

Hosein of Chah-Kutah.

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Issued by H.B.M.'s consulate at  
Bushire.

About the removal of the German Consul and the German agent from Bushire, and action against Wasmuss.

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Since it is known that a good many of the Bushire people complain that the initiative of the British officials in removing the German Consul and the German agent, and dealing with Wasmuss and his friend, constitute violation of Persia's neutrality, and tyranny towards innocent people, it is deemed necessary to explain the reasons for such an action. Then certainly the intelligent and sane people will acknowledge the fact that the British officials have been well-justified in what they have done.

During this six months that the European War has been on, no one has done any harm to the Germans resident in the Gulf. If they would observe Persia's neutrality, it would not have been their job to agitate the people and encourage riot and disturbance. The best evidences to this fact, are a series of documents that have come to light one by one, and all show that the German consuls and agents have been inciting the people against the British, thus violating the neutrality of the country, in which they have been residing. It was because of this fact that they were necessarily ~~removed~~ removed, one after the other. The German merchant living in Ahwaz, known as Helmich has been corresponding with Sheikh Ghazban the chieftain of the tribe, Benilam, who has been enlisted in the Othoman ranks, and is now raiding the Persian territory. The German agent in Bahrein, has written that a band of Tangistanis/ have decided to attack and conquer Bahrein, with the aid of the German Consul in Bushire. The same man writes that the German Consul in Bushire is involved in the suspected plot of the

Omman insurgents against Mascat.

The following are the exact ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ reproduction of the German letters with their faithful translations into Persian. They contain the arrangements between the German Embassy at Teheran, the German Consul in Bushire, and Rais Ali Delbari, for an attack upon all of the British resident in Bushire, at this spring.

Telegraph No. 35      Secret: From Listmanne to the German Embassy  
at Teheran.

Dated: Feb. 19 (Rabi II. 4, 1333) (Deciphered)  
No. 25.

Rais Ali is insistent upon getting my assent for an attack upon the British here. I will encourage him to keep calm at present.

Sd. Listmanne

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Telegraph No. 38.      Secret: From Teheran to Listmann.

Feb. 21 (Rabi II. 6, 1333)

Entered No. 28. in answer to Tel. No. 25.

Rais Ali's enterprise is far from realization, and since it is single-handed with no backing, it is altogether unwise. But tell him to keep hands right now, and give him assurance privately that action will be taken in the spring. If you think he is trustworthy and consider any move yonderfitting the course of the affairs, it is advisable to agree upon a plan, in private with him, so to accord with the action starting here, which has already began in secret. The measure should be the same for whole Persia, and envelop it all. I will send you as soon as possible the necessary details about that secret action. Perhaps Rais Ali would be useful for looking after your personal safety.

Sd. Kordorff  
(The German Ambassador)

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Telegram in decipher

To Teheran

Feb. 22, 1915 (Rabi.II. 7, 1333)

No. 28 in answer to No. 28, Feb. 22.

Rais Ali can not be trusted for the business you have referred to. I will only answer him, that the time is not as yet ripe. I do not think it is opportune to ask him for guards, because his ~~xxx~~ letters and his men will give a pretence to the British to resort to strong action, and discover our relations before time.  
Sd. Listmann.

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A copy of the letter written by Rais Delbari to the German Consul, proposing an attack upon the British residing in Bushire. His Excellency the Consul,

of the Exalted German State,

Submitting to your perusal, in secret: I asked you before to give me permission to destroy the British army in the Malek House,<sup>1</sup> and you retorted that you did not want me to become an offender to my government. If you had allowed me, I would have killed all of their troops and officers, and carried away all of their guns and machines. It was not our destiny then. Now too is the time for sacrifice. To take the revenge of the merchant and the Consul in Mohammareh, from Shimr the Bastard<sup>2</sup>, I want to give my life for your government's honour. I have one thousand men ready. Otherwise I will send tomorrow a number of brave horsemen to guard the consulate and escort your Excellency. Eager for service.

Sd. Ali Khan Delbari.

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1. The Headquarters.

2. An allegorical reference. Shimr was the murderer of Hosein, the third Imam, and hence the most hated man.

And about Wasmuss. As it is apparent to us, he has never been the Consul resident in Shiraz. He was only a merchant whom no one had restrained or interfered with. Then what is the reason that in this clamour and resurrection of war, a German Consul loaded with a huge sum of money is sent to Shiraz, directly from Berlin? Is inciting the clergy and the inhabitants of Bahbahan to take up "Djehad", in the spirit of neutrality?

The following telegram from the German Ambassador in Teheran indicates that it has not been their intention to keep Wasmuss really as a Consul in Shiraz. But it was decided to send him thither where he could work out plans for revolution and uprising in Afghanistan, and arrange for a Germano-Turkish attack upon Afghanistan and India.

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Tel. No. 10. j. Confidential--In Decipher.

From the ambassador in Teheran, to Listmann in Bushire

No. 7. Very Confidential. Jan. 24 (Rabi I. 6, 1333)

Consul Wasmuss is shortly starting from Baghdad to ~~Bushire~~  
Shiraz.

There he will secretly take measures for the march on Afghanistan and the attack upon India.

Sd. Kordorff  
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Certainly these proofs and evidences suffice to point out to the people of Bushire that Germany was violating Persia's neutrality with her hellish designs, and had she succeeded to carry out her plans, the Persians would have also shared the losses inflicted upon the British.

Ask yourself whether then the Tangistanis and their German partners would have refrained from plundering the Bazar without

any exception. Why did Consul Listmann personally wire this cable on September 2 (Shawwal, 11, 1332)?

Following is its exact translation.

"Rais Ali can thus take revenge from the British seizing the opportunity, he can make a few plunders in and out of Bushire. He does these as an ally of the German state."

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Were the British to remain inactive, and sit down waiting to be killed, while they were aware of these treacherous designs? And did the Bushire people expect such a course, at a time when the German ambassador was sending letters and messages to Rais Ali Delavari telling him to wait for the spring?

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The original of the above-mentioned documents, are in the Consulate.

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## B I B L I O G R A P H Y

### A. Original sources:

The documents quoted are official papers and sundry materials in the possession of my father. Their authenticity is proved by their having been filed among government papers, <sup>and</sup> having the government's stamp.

My father's diaries which cover for the most part years before and after his governorship of the Gulf Ports have helped me in connecting the events touched upon by the narrative with preceding and subsequent years. Even more than his diaries, my father's private correspondents with his friends in responsible posts, copies of which had been kept by him, have enabled me to verify the accuracy of the documents and the diary.

Of course all of the above-mentioned material is in Persian, and the translation of the documents and the narrative can not be an exact reproduction into English, since Persian can not always be literally rendered into English.

1. "Englische Dokumente Zur Erdrosselung Persiens"  
(Persian translation)  
Der Neue Orient, Berlin, 1917.

Issued by the German Foreign office. Contains documents alleged to have been found in the H.B.M. Consulate in Shiraz.

2. "Revue du Monde Musulman" Vol. LIV Juin 1923  
"La Politique Orientale De L'Allemagne  
En Perse"
  - a. "L'activité Allemande en Pays  
Musulman"
  - b. "Les Allemande en Perse"

par George Ducrocq.

contains a large number of original documents concerning German intrigues in Persia.

B. Secondary Authorities:

I. Works by officials and other first hand witnesses in Persia.

1. Sykes, Brigadier-General Sir Percy

"A History of Persia" Vol. II.

London, 1930 (third edition)

A scholarly work on Persian history, written from the view-point of a British official, with a long record of service in Persia.

2. Shuster, W. Morgan, the ex-Treasurer-General of Persia (1911)

"The Strangling of Persia"

New York, 1920. (second edition)

An apologia directed against Russia and Great Britain. It provides a vivid description of the political scene of 1911.

3. Wilson Lt.-Col., Sir Arthur Arnold F.

"The Persian Gulf"

Oxford, 1928.

A scholarly and valuable treatise on the Persian Gulf, from "the earliest times to the beginning of the twentieth century". Facts are presented in full, with little discussion of them.

4. Wilson Lt.-Col., Sir Arnold F.

"Loyalties, Mesopotamia 1914-1917"

Oxford, 1930.

A rich and graphic account of the Mesopotamian Campaign, and wars in South-Western Persia. It presents the outlook of a high British official in active service, during the

days that the book accounts for.

5. Wilson Lt.-Col., Sir Arnold F.

"Mesopotamia 1917-1920. A clash of  
Loyalties"

Oxford, 1931.

Written in continuation of No. 4, it is as much detailed  
and even more representative of the outlook of a high  
British official.

6. Balfour, the Hon. J. Moncrieff, the ex-Assistant to the  
Treasurer-General of Persia, 1920-1921.

"Regent Happenings in Persia"

London, 1922.

An interesting description of the events of the period  
intervening between the years 1918 to 1922. It is on the  
whole full of hasty judgments and biased ~~general~~ genera-  
lizations.

7. Wratishlaw, A. C.

"A Consul in the East"

London, 1924.

8. Lesueur, Emile

"Les Anglais en Perse"

Paris, 1921.

Written by an ex-professor of the Faculty of Law of Teheran.  
It is a biased and thoroughly partial account of the  
post-war years.

II. Books directly dealing with Persian problems:

1. Curzon, the Rt. Hon. Marquess of Kedleston

"Persia and the Persian Question"

London, 1892.

B. II. 1. cont.

A masterly-written account of Persian life, manners and politics. It gives a somewhat partial description of the Russian policy, which is sound in the most part. The tone is severe and cutting at times.

2. Browne, Edward Granville,

"The Persian Revolution of 1905-1909"

★ Cambridge, 1910.

A sympathetic history of the Persian Revolution, obviously written in defence of the Persians. Very exacting towards the British and the Russians.

3. Browne, E.G.

"A Brief Narrative of the Recent Events in Persia"

London, 1909.

A pamphlet on the history of Persian Constitution, ~~written~~ written in haste to arouse public opinion in England, in favour of the Liberal Movement in Persia.

4. Browne, E.G.

"The Press and Poetry of Modern Persia"

Cambridge, 1914.

5. Brandes, George

"Das Verbrechen Englands Und Russlands in Persien" (Persian translation)

Berlin, 1918.

Originally, articles published in the paper "Politiken" of Copenhagen, towards the end of the summer of 1916.

6. Donohoe, Major M.H.

"With the Persian Expedition."

London, 1919.

B. II. 7. Dunsterville, Major-General L.C.

"The Adventures of Dunsterforce"

London, 1920.

An interesting and amusing account of the expedition to Western Persia and Caucasus in 1918.

III. Books dealing indirectly with Persia and Near Eastern problem:

1. Buchanan, Sir George

"My Mission to Russia and other Diplomatic Memories" Vol. I.

2. "The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, 1783-1919"

Vol. III. 1866-1919

Edited by Sir A.W. Ward Litt.D.

and G.P. Gooch Litt.D.

Cambridge University Press, 1923.

Contains chapters on the Persian Question, the Baghdad railway and the Entente with Russia, masterfully written, and relatively impartial.

3. Chirol, Sir Valentine

"The Middle Eastern Question"

London, 1903.

A discussion of the problems of Indian <sup>defence</sup>. Though useful in giving reliable information, it is often tinged with the peculiar view-point of British journalist-adherent of Imperialism.

4. Coke, Richard

"

"The Heart of the Middle East"

New York, 1926.

A brief account of the British supremacy in the Gulf,

B. III. 4.cont.

and the story of the Modern Irak.

5. Gibbons, Herbert Adams

"The New Map of Asia 1900-1919"

N. Y. 1921 (Third edition)

A vivid account of Imperialism in Asia, written with a strong denunciatory tone.

6. Hoskins, Halford Lancaster, Ph.D.

"British Routes to India"

Longmans, Green, 1928.

A discussion of the growth and development of the British policy of Indian defence.

7. Parnot, Maurice

"En Asie Musulmane"

Paris, 1927.

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