

# Das Staatsarchiv.

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Sammlung

der officiellen Actenstücke

zur

Geschichte der Gegenwart.

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Begründet

von

**Aegidi und Klauhold.**

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Herausgegeben

von

**H. v. Kremer-Auenrode und Ph. Hirsch.**

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Central-Asiatische Frage\*  
(Afghanistan.)

Nr. 6800.

**GROSSBRITANNIEN und AFGHANISTAN.** — Freundschaftsvertrag.

Treaty between the British Government and His Highness Ameer Dost Mohammed Khan, Walee of Cabul and of those countries of Afghanistan now in his possession, concluded on the part of the British Government by John Lawrence, Esquire, Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, in virtue of full powers vested in him by the Most Noble James Andrew, Marquis of Dalhousie, K. T., &c., Governor-General of India, and on the part of the Ameer of Cabool, Dost Mohammed Khan, by Sirdar Golam Hyder Khan, in virtue of full authority granted to him by His Highness.

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Gross-  
britannien  
und  
Afghanistan,  
30. März 1855.

Article I.

Between the Honourable East India Company and His Highness Ameer Dost Mohammed Khan, Walee of Cabul and of those countries now in his possession, and the heirs of the said Ameer, there shall be perpetual peace and friendship.

Article II.

The Honourable East India Company engages to respect those territories of Afghanistan now in His Highness's possession, and never to interfere therein.

Article III.

His Highness Ameer Dost Mohammed Khan, Walee of Cabul and of those countries of Afghanistan now in his possession, engages, on his own part and on the part of his heirs, to respect the territories of the Honourable East

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physically impossible for Russia, entrenched upon the Oxus, and wielding the resources of Bokhara, to exercise an influence on Afghanistan, as boldly asserted in a recent number of the "Invalide Russe," is simply false and fatuous. To apprehend, on the other hand, with the Indian alarmists, that, while Cabul still maintains its independence, we shall be subjected to the full inconvenience of Russian contiguity, is equally unreasonable. The truth lies between the two extremes; we are, no doubt, exposed to a certain danger from the advance of Russia to the Oxus, and that danger approaches us through Afghanistan; but the danger is *not* immediate, and it *is* evitable. || The close connexion which exists, and has for a long time past existed, between Bokhara and Cabul is not generally known in England, yet it is an important element in the consideration of the Central-Asian question; the most important element, indeed, since it is this circumstance alone which forces us into contact with Russia. The connexion between Bokhara and Cabul is both geographical and political. The two provinces march with each other for many hundred miles. The cities of Balkh, Khulúm and Kundúz, which for the last 30 years have been held by the Afghans, belong properly to Bokhara. Other districts, such as Mymeneh, Sir-i-Púl and Andkõi, are in dispute between the two States. Russia, in fact, in possessing herself of Bokhara, will inherit a multitude of Afghan grievances and embarrassments, from which she cannot shake herself free. The political relations, again, of the two countries are even more intimate than the geographical. For the last 30 years, Bokhara has largely influenced the fortunes of Cabul. When we drove Dost Mahomed Khan from power, in 1839, he took refuge with the Ameer, and it was from Bokhara that both he returned in 1841, and his son in 1842, to attack us in Cabul. In all the recent Afghan revolutions, also, Bokhara has played a prominent part. It was chiefly by means of an Uzbek contingent, that Abdur-Rahman Khan, who has married a daughter of the Ameer of Bokhara, expelled his uncle, Shir Ali Khan, from Cabul, in 1865, and, since that time, Bokhara has swarmed with Afghan refugees. It appears, indeed, that it was a body of these refugees, 500 or 600 in number, who, having transferred their allegiance to Russia, in consequence of oppressive treatment by the Uzbeks, led the Russian troops to the recent attack upon the Ameer's forces, and fought in line with them at the battle of Samarcand. || The implication of Russia in Afghan affairs is therefore no longer a matter of speculation. She has an Afghan contingent in her service, commanded by a grandson of Dost Mahomed Khan. She is the mistress of a country which, on more occasions than one, has been the arbiter of the destinies of Cabul. It will depend on her discretion, whether she interfere to the extent of regulating the succession and directing the Government, or whether she merely offer friendly counsel, and cultivate general relations of amity. || The next point, then, to consider is, in what shape danger can come upon us from this Russian connexion with Cabul. The idea of invasion from

such a quarter, which used to be brandished before us "*in terrorem*," may be dismissed as almost chimerical. If a foreign army every does descend upon the Indian frontier, it will be by way of Herat and Candahar, where the roads are open and traverse districts, that have been called "the granary of Asia," and not through the sterile and difficult passes between Cabul and Peshawer. But it is not invasion from any quarter, or in any form, that we have at present to guard against. The presence of Russia will make itself felt in a less obtrusive, though perhaps in a not less effective, way. If she establish a mission at Cabul,—and she can hardly do less, should we fail to preoccupy the ground,—the effect of such an establishment will be at once perceptible in India. The intrusion, indeed, of a foreign European element within the restricted circle of our Indian relations will of itself exert a disturbing influence through the country of a most mischievous and even dangerous tendency. Already the Maharaja of Cashmere, taking offence at our efforts to promote trade by insisting on a reduction of the transit duties in his dominions, has been negotiating with the authorities of Tashkend, and urging them to appoint Commercial Agents at Yarkend on the immediate frontier of Thibet, and if the Russians were more accessible, his example would be followed by scores of others. There can, indeed, be no doubt that, if Russia once assumes a position which, in virtue either of imposing military forces on the Oxus, or of a dominant political influence in Afghanistan, entitles her, in native estimation, to challenge our Asiatic supremacy, the disquieting effect will be prodigious. Every Chief throughout Northern India, who either has,—or fancies he has,—a grievance, or who is even cramped or incommoded by our orderly Government, will at once commence intriguing in the hopes of relieving himself from our oppressive shadow. It is not, that the natives of India, whether Mahomedans or Hindoos, have any particular affection for the Russians, or believe, that their rule would be more kindly and beneficial than our own. On the contrary, the followers of the Prophet everywhere regard the Russians as more incorrigible infidels than the English, from their uncleanly habits and their supposed worship of pictures; but, on the other hand, the approach of a rival European Power betokens change, and to the active, gambling, reckless spirit of Asiatics change is always exciting and agreeable. There is, however, a still more important point of view from which the subject must be regarded. Hitherto, the argument has proceeded on the assumption, that Russia is friendly to England, and has not contemplated the acquisition of any direct advantage over us from her career of Asiatic conquest. She must, of course, be conscious, that her new position gives her a means of political leverage against us which she did not before possess; and that she is thus relatively so much stronger than she was at the time of the Crimean war; but it would be unfair to impute this result to her as the motive of her recent aggressions. Supposing, however, that owing to complications in Turkey it should be the policy of Russia to weaken and embarrass

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us to find, indeed, such employment for our armies in the East as should prevent our active interference in Europe,—let us consider, under this altered aspect of affairs, how her position at Bokhara and her relations with Cabul would affect us. Now, in order to appreciate the danger which might thus beset us, it is necessary to look our position in India fairly in the face, and for this purpose we cannot have a better or more authentic guide than the series of Reports recently presented to Parliament under the title of “(East India) Systems of Government.” Here amid much, that is satisfactory, amid a mass of evidence of the highest character, which tends to show, that the agricultural populations of India are in general contented and prosperous, and that with these classes our administration is popular, there is also much of a very different complexion, much that furnishes abundant food for reflection and uneasiness. || There is unfortunately, at the present time in the Afghan territory a machinery of agitation singularly well adapted for acting on what has been called the “seething, fermenting, festering mass” of Mahommedan hostility in India. The fanatics of Sittana, who gave us so much trouble a few years back, are now showing signs of renewed vitality. They have been joined by the notorious Feroze Shah, who, as the last representative of the throne of Delhi, assumes the title of “King of Hindustan,” and proclaims himself our implacable enemy, and they are known to be in active communication with the Wahabis and other Mahommedan malcontents in Upper-India. It is certain, then, that, if Russia desired to embarrass us, and were sufficiently strong at Cabul to require the Governor of that city to set in motion against us the Sittana confederacy, directing and encouraging the movement through the Akhond of Swat and other Afghan spiritual chiefs, and supporting it by inroads and forays of the mountain tribes along the whole line of frontier, we might be placed in a position of very considerable difficulty, of such difficulty, indeed, as to require extensive reinforcements from England, and thus to fulfil the very object which Russia had in view from the commencement. || With this prospect before us, with the knowledge, that we present a vulnerable front, and that, if Russia were so disposed she might, in the natural course of events, be enabled severely to injure us, are we justified in maintaining what has been sarcastically, though perhaps unfairly, called Sir John Lawrence’s policy of “masterly inactivity”? Are we justified in allowing Russia to work her way on to Cabul unopposed, and there to establish herself as a friendly power, prepared to protect the Afghans against the English? It has been said by the advocates of inaction, that in competing for the good will of the Afghans, the power which appears last in the field will be the most successful, that the first armies will be naturally regarded as enemies and those who follow as deliverers; but this leaves out of sight the fact, that there is already a national feud between the English and the Afghans, which has been rather deepened of late years by our withdrawal of the subsidy, and our persistent refusal to mingle in their internecine quar-

rels; while, on the other hand, the Russians, having never exerted any military pressure on the country, or otherwise offended the pride of the mountaineers, are regarded by them, if not with friendly feelings, at any rate without animosity or fear. The main argument, however, against interference of any sort in the affairs of Afghanistan, has hitherto been, that the country is a hotbed of anarchy and disorder, that in supporting one candidate we provoke the enmity of his rivals, and throw them into the arms of Russia, whose appearance on the scene would be thus accelerated rather than retarded; but this is hardly a fair representation of the case. If we do nothing, Russia is sure in due course of time to secure a political footing at Cabul, as a necessary consequence of her occupation of Bokhara. By some, indeed, it is suspected, that the pending revolution in Afghanistan is due to her instigation, Shir Ali Khan having been launched from Herat as a sort of pilot balloon, preparatory to her own advance on Bokhara; and, if this be true, it may be difficult, in the event of Shir Ali's success, which seems now almost certain, to prevent a very rapid development of her plans; but if, as is more probable, she is at present merely watching the progress of affairs, nursing her little nucleus of Afghan refugees, and expecting by their means to establish her influence at Cabul, then it would seem to be our bounden duty at once to step forward and forestall her. No one, probably, will dispute, that Lord Auckland's famous doctrine of „establishing a strong and friendly power on our North-West frontier," has always been the true policy for India, though of late years too often neglected, and once fatally mismanaged in execution. No one will question but, that this policy would be advantageous at present, if it could be carried out without any considerable risk or expense. And why should there be any serious risk? Is it true, that our intervention in Afghanistan would lead to „confusion worse confounded?" Is it borne out by experience, that disorder is the normal condition of the country? Is it not notorious, on the contrary, that from the time of our evacuation of Cabul in 1842 to the year 1863, a period of more than 20 years, Afghanistan was perfectly tranquil and contented under the strong and friendly rule of Dost Mahommed Khan? This chief, having a firm belief in our power and a scrupulous regard to his own engagements, repressed on all occasions the turbulence and unfriendliness of his subjects, and, in fact, conducted himself towards us, throughout his long career, with such perfectly good faith and orderly procedure, as to make us doubt whether the revolution and counter-revolution which have distracted the country ever since his decease, to the injury of trade and the constant disturbance of our own frontier, may not be owing, as much to our persistent non-interference, as to the incompetence of the old chief's successors, or the natural indocility of the Afghans. It is asserted by many authorities, fully competent to form an opinion, that, if, in deference to Dost Mahommed's nomination, we had acknowledged and assisted Shir Ali Khan from the commencement, continuing to him the same subsidy