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'Report on Najd Mission 1917-1918'

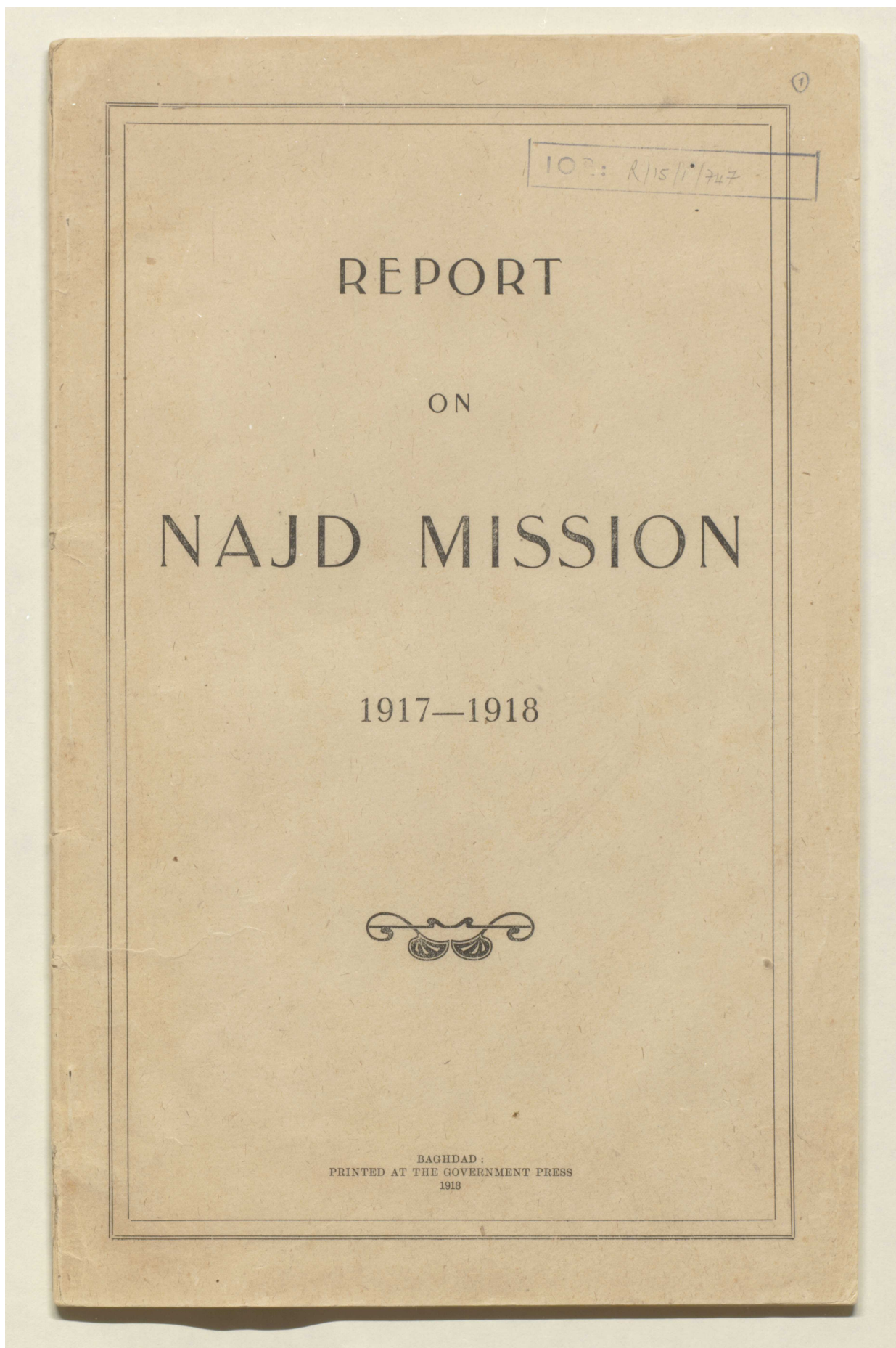
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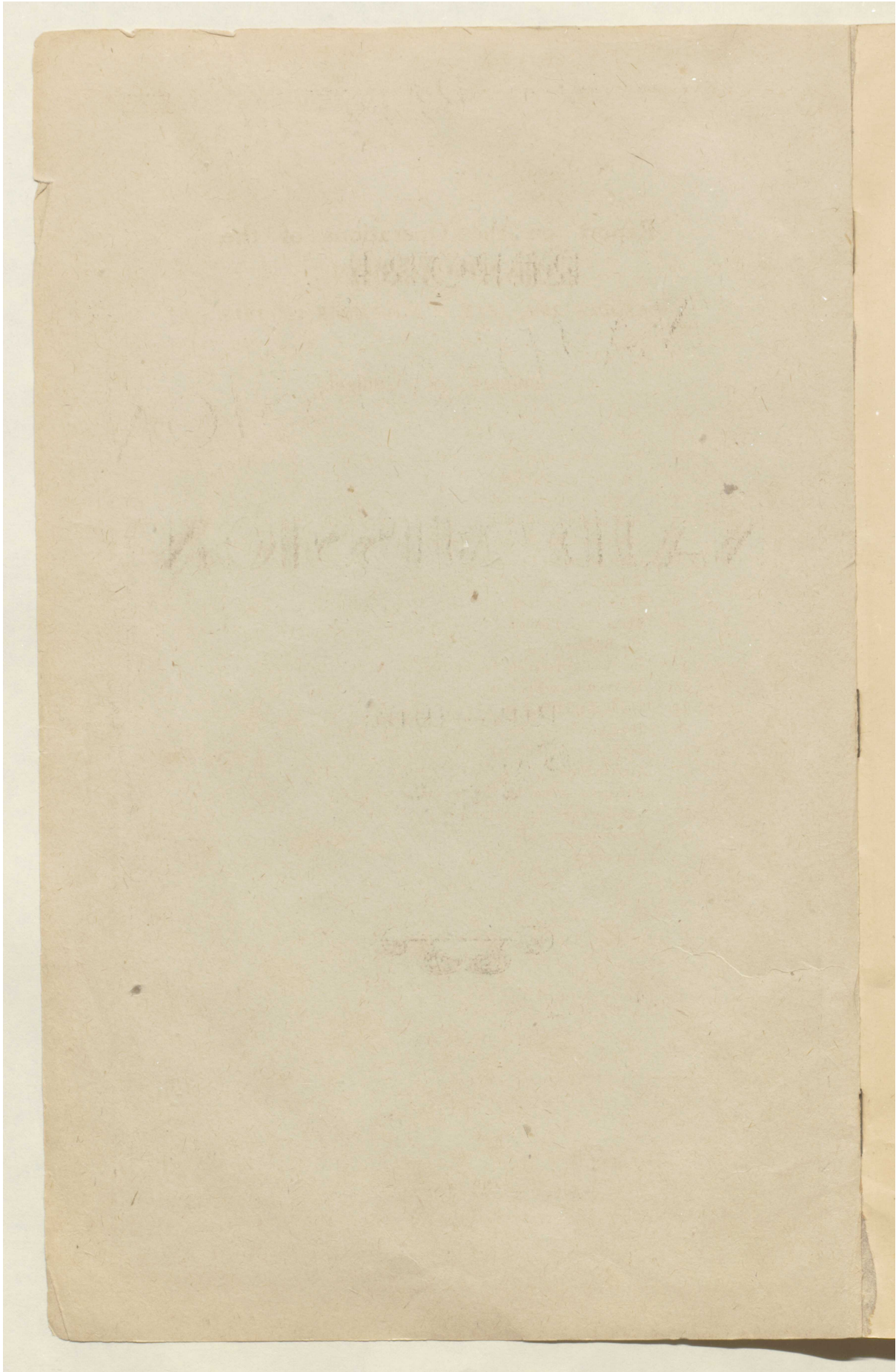
About this record

The volume is entitled *Report on Najd Mission, 1917-1918* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1918).

The report describes the mission headed by Harry St John Bridger Philby to Ibn Saud [ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz bin ʿAbd al-Raḥman bin Fayṣal Āl Saʿūd (Ibn Saʿūd)], ruler of Najd and Imam of the Wahhabi [Wahhabi] sect of Islam, 29 October 1917 - 1 November 1918. The report contains a section on the previous relations between Britain and Najd; describes the personnel, objects and itinerary of the mission; and includes sections on relations between Najd and Kuwait, the Ajman problem, Ibn Saud's operations against Hail [Ha'il], the Wahhabi revival, arms in Najd, and pilgrimage to the Shia Holy Places.



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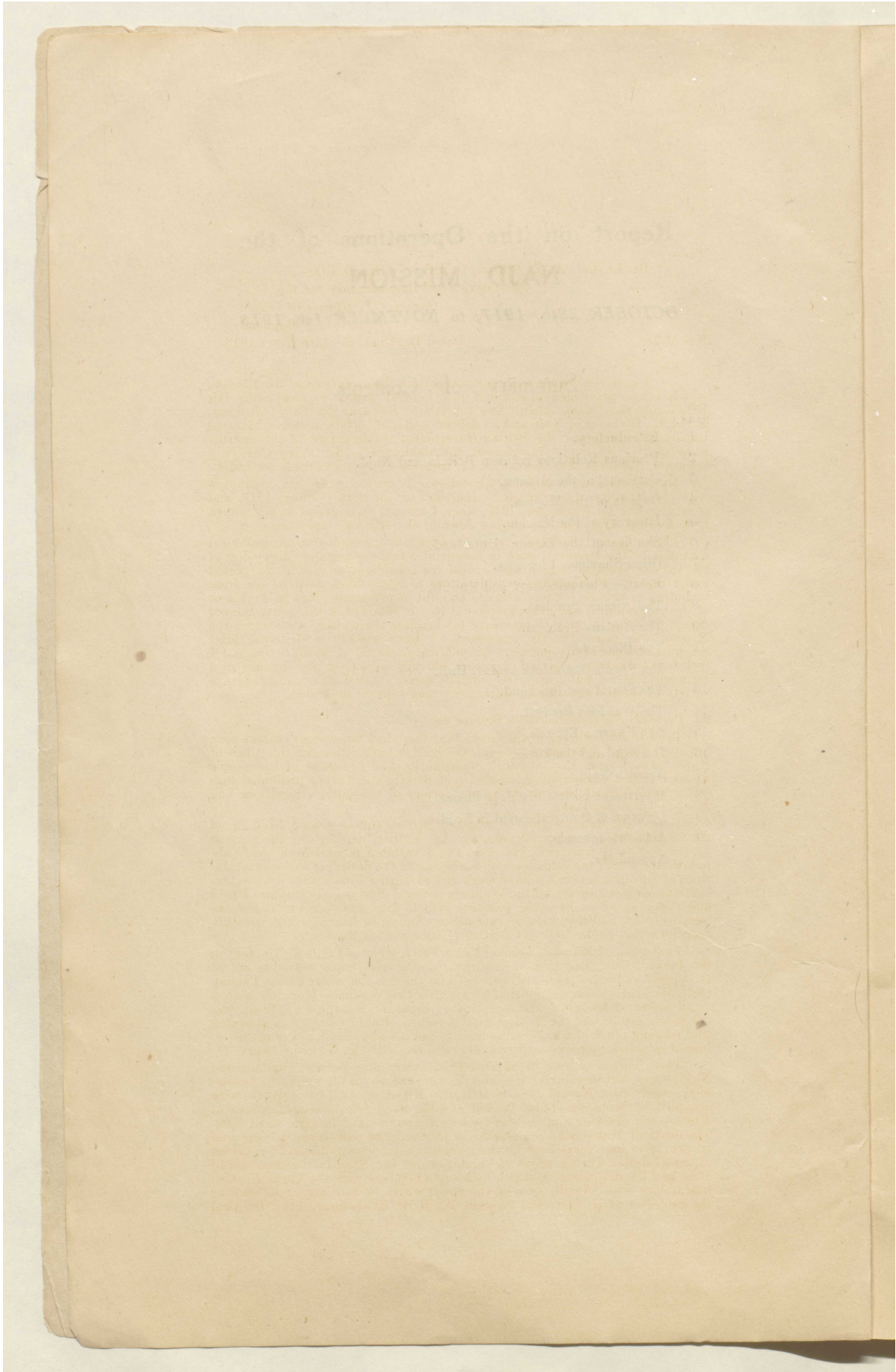
Report on the Operations of the
NAJD MISSION

OCTOBER 29th, 1917, to NOVEMBER 1st, 1918.

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To—
Bt. Lt.-Col. A. T. Wilson, C.M.G., C.I.E., D.S.O.,
*Officiating Civil Commissioner for the
Occupied Territories in Iraq,*
Baghdad.
No. M-218. Dated Baghdad, the 12th Nov.. 1918.

Sir,
I have the honour to submit a report on the operations of the Mission, which I was privileged to conduct into Central Arabia to treat with His Excellency the Imam, Abdul Aziz ibn Abdul Rahman ibn Faisal al Saud, K.C.I.E., the ruler of NAJD and its dependencies, of certain matters of mutual import to himself and the British Government in pursuance of the instructions of His Majesty's Government communicated to Sir Percy Cox in a telegram, dated the 20th October, 1917, from the Secretary of State for India.

My reports cover a period of almost exactly one calendar year, beginning with the Mission's departure from Baghdad on the 29th October, 1917, and ending on the 1st November, 1918, when I arrived at Baghdad on my return from Central Arabia on the closing down of the Mission's operations.

I have deemed it convenient to abandon any attempt at a chronological narrative of the Mission's work in favour of a full and separate discussion of the various problems which have called for consideration during the period under report. Furthermore considerations of space have deterred me from including in this review any detailed account of my journeyings in Arabia or of the geographical and other incidental results obtained in the course thereof except in so far as may be necessary to elucidate the matters with which the Mission was more directly concerned. I have already contributed brief accounts of some of my journeys for publication in the *Arab Bulletin*, and I look forward now to a period of leisure wherein to sort out and arrange in a form suitable for publication the copious notes which I have collected on a variety of interesting subjects during my long sojourn in Arabia.

2. *Previous Relations between Britain and Najd.*

Prior to the outbreak of the Great War there had for obvious reasons been but little official intercourse between the British authorities and the rulers of Najd. Apart from the fanatical inhospitality and aloofness of the people themselves the long-standing friendship of Britain and Turkey precluded anything like political recognition by the former of the latter's rebellious and independent dependency.

Indeed the first occasion on which a British Officer visited Najd in an official capacity was when 99 years ago Lt. Sadlier, deputed for the purpose by the Indian Government, traversed the devastated territories of the Wahhabi Empire with the sole object of conveying to the destroyer the congratulations of Government on his handiwork and of urging him to take drastic precautions against a revival of the Wahhabi power. Fortunately Ibrahim Pasha and those for whom he acted were not men to take good advice, and if the purpose of Lt. Sadlier's mission ever became known in Arabia it had certainly been forgotten before the next British Mission visited Riyadh.

That was in 1865 when Colonel Lewis Pelly, who, as Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, had been called upon to deal with matters arising out of the piracy and slave trade still practised on the Arabian shore of the Persian Gulf, decided on his own initiative to visit the Wahhabi Monarch with a small informed Mission. His reception by Fasal ibn Saud and his Wazir was not encouraging; and the British Mission returned to the coast being conscious that, though much had been learned, little had been accomplished in the direction of establishing permanent friendly relations with the Wahhabi Court.

There ensued a long break in official intercourse between Britain and Najd, whose fortunes during the interval were rudely shaken by the aggression of the newly risen Rashid dynasty at Hail. Riyadh and all its provinces were occupied by Muhammad ibn Rashid and the Saud family sought refuge at Kuwait and elsewhere on the coast where they remained in exile until 1902. The death of Muhammad ibn Rashid in 1898 and the recovery of Riyadh and its provinces four years later by their present ruler were followed by a period of consolidation during which the ambitions of Ibn Saud in the direction of Hasa and the difficulties in which he became involved with the Turks disposed him to look with friendly eyes on the power which he had learned to know as the protector of Kuwait, and Captain W. H. C. Shakespear, I.A., Political

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Agent at Kuwait, had little difficulty in establishing friendly personal relations with the ruler of Najd by a series of visits to his territories culminating in his journey *via* Riyadh and the Qasim across Arabia to Suez in the early months of 1914. When the War broke out, therefore, the ground was already prepared for a resumption of official relations between the British authorities and Ibn Saud and Captain Shakespear was accredited to the Wahhabi Court. The history of his operations and the sequel thereto has, however, already been sketched in sufficient detail up to the close of the year 1916 in the "Precis regarding the relations of the British Government and Ibn Saud" forwarded to Government with Sir P. Cox' Memorandum No. 2, dated the 12th January, 1917, and it is necessary for me in this place to do more than add my personal testimony, regarding the great loss sustained by the British Government in Captain Shakespear's death. His name is remembered and held in high honour in Arabia by all with whom he came into contact, and I make no doubt that, had he lived, Hail would have fallen long since and Ibn Saud, assisted by us on a more lavish scale than was in fashion during the early days of the War, would have taken a more prominent part in operations against the enemy than it has been possible or indeed necessary for him to do.

A reference to the Memorandum above quoted will show that the death of Captain Shakespear in January, 1915, on the battlefield of Jarrab, where the forces of Ibn Saud were arrayed in our cause against those of Ibn Rashid who had declared for Turkey and where the day went ill for our ally, was followed by a long period of military inactivity on the part of Ibn Saud. This interval had, however, been profitably spent in cementing our alliance with him and had resulted in a treaty highly satisfactory to both parties, in a meeting of rulers at Kuwait at which Sir P. Cox invested Ibn Saud with the insignia of a Knight Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire and finally in a visit by Ibn Saud to Basrah, during which he not only had every opportunity of seeing for himself the paraphernalia of modern warfare and the results of the British occupation of Basrah, but was himself provided with a welcome addition to his armament and a regular monthly subsidy to enable him to renew active operations against his and our enemy, Ibn Rashid.

The year 1917 thus dawned with bright hope for the future. The necessity of sending an Officer to represent him in Najd was already engaging Sir P. Cox' serious attention, but it was not until May, that an opportunity presented itself of giving effect to his plans in this direction. Mr. (now Colonel) R. Storrs, C.M.G., had arrived at Baghdad on a visit on behalf of the High Commissioner for Egypt, and with the latter's ready consent it was decided that he should return to Egypt across Arabia, visiting Ibn Saud in the Qasim *en route* in order to place Sir P. Cox in possession of such first hand information regarding Ibn Saud's strength and prospects as was necessary to enable him to decide on the course to be adopted with a view to making the operations in Central Arabia a substantial contribution to the general activities of our Military forces in the Turkish theatre of War. Incidentally Mr. Storrs was to endeavour to effect such improvement as was possible in the relations of the King of the Hijaz and the Wahhabi ruler, whose mutual suspicions and distrust were growing increasingly apparent.

The necessary preliminary preparations having been made, Mr. Storrs left Kuwait on the 9th June, 1918, with a zilfi caravan, but four days later he was back at Kuwait, having fallen a victim to the sun on the third day of his journey. It was out of the question for him to think of venturing again into the desert at such a season and he returned to Egypt by sea.

It was now obviously impracticable to renew the attempt to link up with Ibn Saud until the climate moderated and the hot weather dragged on with Ibn Saud making a somewhat half-hearted pretence of threatening Hail from the Qasim until Ramdhan, when he left Turki, his eldest son, in command of such forces as had not dispersed and returned to Riyadh too fast. Meanwhile the position in Central Arabia was becoming increasingly obscure, Madina showed no signs of falling to the forces of the Sharif, the Turks held on to the Hijaz railway, repairing breaches therein as they occurred, while the relations of our two chief Arab allies, the Sharif and Ibn Saud, were rapidly becoming strained and difficult, the inactivity of the latter giving the former pretexts for accusing him of lukewarmness in our cause and even of tacit neutrality of a benevolent nature towards Ibn Rashid and the Turks.

It was in these circumstances that at the end of September, 1917, Sir P. Cox renewed the project of sending a mission to Ibn Saud and, as it was generally agreed that a serious effort should be made to eliminate or neutralise Ibn Rashid in order that the Sharif's operations might be facilitated and the ground of the existing friction between him and Ibn Saud removed, His Majesty's Government sanctioned the despatch of a Mission of more ambitious proportions than had been considered feasible during the previous hot weather. In fact it was contemplated that the Mission should be sufficiently representative of all interests to be able to dispose of the political differences and jealousies of our various Arab allies and that it should at the same time partake of a semi-military character in order that such proposals as it might make

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regarding the military assistance required by Ibn Saud should carry due weight and that it might, in the event of action being decided upon and undertaken, assume the role of adviser to the Wahhabi leaders.

The despatch of the Mission was sanctioned by His Majesty's Government in a telegram, dated the 20th October, 1917, and the Mission set forth from Baghdad, nine days later.

3. *Personnel of the Mission.*

The proposals originally made by Sir Percy Cox to His Majesty's Government contemplated a more ambitious and representative composition of the Mission than was eventually realised. It was hoped that the High Commissioner for Egypt and His Highness the King of the Hijaz would be able to send representatives to take part in its deliberations; it was contemplated that Lt.-Colonel R. E. A. Hamilton, C.I.E., Political Agent at Kuwait, who was at the time on his way into Najd in another connection, would be able to serve on the Mission to represent the interests of Shaikh Salim of Kuwait; further it was hoped that a Medical Officer would be available; and, finally, the object of the Mission being primarily of a military character, it was understood that a responsible military officer would be deputed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force to examine and report on the military situation in Central Arabia. Finally it was held to be essential, in order to assist and expedite the work of the Mission, that a small Wireless Telegraph detachment should be attached to it if available.

This somewhat ambitious scheme of things was, as already noted, not realised. Lt.-Colonel F. Cunliffe Owen, C.M.G., R.F.A., was deputed to represent the Commander-in-Chief and accompanied me from Baghdad to Riyadh, where, during my somewhat prolonged absence at Jidda and Cairo, he remained in charge of the Mission's local work until February, 1918, when he returned to the coast and departed on short leave prior to resuming his military duties. Lt.-Colonel R. E. A. Hamilton, who was at Riyadh on the arrival of the Mission, was kind enough to remain for several days to give me the benefit of his views and advice before returning to his work at Kuwait.

With these two exceptions the personnel of the Najd Mission throughout the period under report comprised only myself.

Looking back now over that period, I am inclined to think that the scale of personnel originally contemplated was too ambitious. Useful as a wireless installation would have been, the presence of a considerable number of British operators in this inhospitable and fanatical country would have been a constant source of anxiety. A doctor would certainly have been a most valuable asset in assisting to allay the fanatical attitude of the people towards all things foreign except food supplies, piece-goods, arms and medicine, and I recently suggested for your consideration the desirability of filling this undoubted gap. This question, though now of but academic interest so far as the Mission itself is concerned, should certainly be taken seriously into consideration in the event of a permanent political representative being accredited to the Wahhabi court hereafter; in view, however, of the fact that it was at one time contemplated that a medical representative of the American Mission in the Persian Gulf might be induced to fill up the gap, to say nothing of a certain unmistakable tendency in the direction of the extension of Missionary activity in Arabia on the part of the Mission authorities, I deem it necessary to warn Government that a medical officer drawn from that source would not be acceptable to Ibn Saud and his subjects, and that every effort should be made to discourage medical practice in his territories by the personnel of the American Mission. It is due in fairness to Ibn Saud to explain that he extended a most cordial invitation to Dr. Harrison of that Mission to visit Riyadh for medical work in the summer of 1917, and that it was entirely his own fault that his work terminated abruptly. It can never be absolutely necessary to wrap up pills and powders in Christian tracts.

Finally in view of the Sharif's attitude towards Ibn Saud, I do not think that any good purpose would have been served by the deputation of a Sharifian envoy to co-operate with the Mission, but no words can adequately express my regret that circumstances deprived me of the collaboration of a representative of the High Commissioner for Egypt—and more particularly of that of Mr. (now Colonel) R. Storrs, C.M.G., than whom no person could have been more acceptable to Ibn Saud in view of his projected visit to Najd earlier in the year as the representative of Sir Percy Cox. To this point I attach great importance, and it must be realised that, *from Ibn Saud's point of view*, I went to Egypt as the advocate of his cause and came back defeated by the advocates of the Sharif. We should describe the position somewhat differently, but the result was the same to Ibn Saud and to us.

4. *Objects of the Mission.*

Summing up the position as regards the affairs of Ibn Saud in his telegram No. 4035, dated the 23rd September, 1917, Sir P. Cox noted that it had been his "hope that the projected Mission of Mr. Storrs in the previous June and his passage to the Sharif accompanied by an envoy from Ibn Saud would have

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the effect both of dispelling the atmosphere of distrust prevailing in Sharifian circles and of enabling us to decide if there were any means by which we could make Ibn Saud more actively useful."

At the end of the same telegram, while expressing his view that, if more military use were to be made of Ibn Saud, "we must really approach the subject seriously and lend him an Indian or Egyptian battery," Sir P. Cox questioned the value of such an experiment unless it was desired by the Egyptian authorities, but suggested that in any case a mixed Mission representing the Commander-in-Chief, the High Commissioner and himself should visit Najd to "make proposals in accordance with practical possibilities."

In communicating the news of the proposed Mission to the King of the Hijaz the High Commissioner for Egypt "purposely emphasised the military character of the Mission and its role of advising Ibn Saud regarding measures to be taken against the Turks and Ibn Rashid." At the same time while noting the "somewhat uncompromising state of mind" of King Husain and deprecating any premature attempt to settle the larger political questions at issue between him and Ibn Saud he expressed the hope that "time and the successful completion of the Mission, resulting, it is hoped, in active aggression against the enemy on the part of Ibn Saud, would prove to the King the folly of his present policy of suspicion and the wisdom of effecting a reconciliation with his nearest powerful neighbour."

Finally, following upon exhaustive verbal discussions of the Arabian situation in relation to the proposed work of the Mission, Sir P. Cox summed up his instructions to me in a written memorandum, dated the 31st October, 1917, the gist of which is briefly as follows, namely:—

1. "The primary and principal object" of the Mission is to discuss fully with Ibn Saud and form an opinion as to whether any, and, if so, what further action Ibn Saud can usefully take to further the common cause against the enemy;
2. "To endeavour to clear the atmosphere pervading Ibn Saud's relations with the Sharif and the Shaikh of Kuwait";
3. "To find a permanent or temporary solution of the Ajman question";
4. "To discuss with Ibn Saud his recent application for permission to issue a copper coinage for Najd"; and
5. "To discuss the question of the permanent appointment of a British Political Agent for Najd.

In addition to the above matters Sir P. Cox asked me to discuss such matters as the restriction of trade owing to the exigencies of the war; the impossibility of granting shipping facilities for the Hasa ports during the war; and the restriction of pilgrim traffic.

Such were the letter and spirit of the instructions under which the Mission sailed to its task. For my part I never lost sight of the fact that its primary and principal object was to further the common cause against the enemy by successful action against Ibn Rashid.

5. *Itinerary of the Mission.*

Leaving Baghdad on the afternoon of the 29th October, 1917, the Mission proceeded by launch to Basrah, where it arrived at midnight of the 2nd November, 1917. Eight days were spent at Basrah collecting supplies and equipment, and during this period I took advantage of the presence at Zubair of a number of chiefs of the neighbouring desert tribes to make myself acquainted with their affairs in a series of personal interviews with them.

By the morning of the 11th November, all was ready for a start and the Mission embarked on H.M.S. *Lawrence*, which had been placed at its disposal by the courtesy of Rear Admiral C. St. Wake, C.B., commanding the Naval Forces in the Persian Gulf and Mesopotamia.

On the 13th November, we arrived at Bahrain, where we found that the Political Agent, Captain P. G. Loch, I.A., had kindly made arrangements for the further progress of the Mission to Uqair by dhow.

At 9 a.m. on the following morning the Mission embarked on a dhow flying the flag of Ibn Saud and, Captain Crozier of H.M.S. *Lawrence* having very kindly placed his steam cutter at our disposal to tow us some part of the way as there was no wind, we made good progress to the mouth of the Straits of Bahrain.

The journey from Bahrain to Uqair normally takes seven or eight hours by dhow but, after parting company with the steam cutter, we drifted becalmed for the rest of that day and the next day's sun was setting as we eventually drew alongside the pier at Uqair on the 15th November, 1917.

From Uqair, where we were received on behalf of Ibn Saud by the local Amir, Abdul Rahman ibn Khairulla, we proceeded to Hasa, reaching Hufuf on the 19th November. Hospitably entertained here on behalf of Ibn Saud by Abdulla ibn Jiluwi, the Governor of Hasa, we left Hufuf on the 22nd

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November, for the interior and arrived at Riyadh about mid-day on the 30th November.

At Riyadh as already noted we were met by Lieut.-Colonel R. E. A. Hamilton, Political Agent at Kuwait, and most cordially received by His Excellency, Abdul Aziz ibn Saud, and his father, the Imam Abdul Rahman ibn Faisal.

During the following days the Mission was very fully occupied in discussing with Ibn Saud the objects of its visit. In him I found an indefatigable worker and, in spite of a tendency to be carried away from the point of his argument by the waves of his Quradic eloquence, a man of good business capacity, moderately well versed in the affairs of the world, fully conversant with but by no means a disinterested spectator of the intricacies of Arab politics and above all genuinely convinced of the necessity of the British alliance as the only secure safeguard of the interests of his country and people both now and hereafter.

By midnight of the 5th December having spent no less than 34 out of 132 hours since my arrival in interviews with Ibn Saud, to say nothing of subsidiary interviews with his cousin Ahmad ibn Thunaiyan, who appeared to be in his full confidence and was often sent to prepare the way for delicate subjects likely to arise in the course of subsequent interviews,—I felt that I was sufficiently cognisant of the main facts of the situation to formulate definite proposals for the consideration of Government.

In the meantime it was becoming increasingly evident that the King of the Hijaz was doing his utmost to thwart the consummation of the Mission's work by obstructing the Mission of an envoy from the High Commissioner for Egypt to Najd. Ibn Saud and I were fully agreed that the presence of such an envoy to see the conditions of this country for himself was essential in the interests of all concerned, and, accordingly, when I received the news that the King had definitely refused a safe-conduct to Mr. Storrs on the ground that the roads from the Hijaz to Hail—perhaps he meant Buraida—were unsafe, I decided with Ibn Saud's ready approval to secure a reconsideration of the verdict by proving that the alleged danger existed only in the imagination of the King.

Accordingly on the 9th December, leaving Lieut.-Colonel Cunliffe Owen in charge of the current business of the Mission, and confident that no definite orders could be passed on my main proposals and communicated to Riyadh much before my return, I set out for Taif.

Arriving at my destination late in the afternoon of Christmas Day, I was somewhat dismayed to find not only that Mr. Storrs was not there to meet me, but that no warning of my expected arrival had been communicated to the King. This was certainly extremely disconcerting. That the King assumed my unannounced arrival to be the result of a plot to break down his opposition to our negotiations with Ibn Saud I have no doubt whatever; whether he has since been persuaded that the unfortunate omission to inform him was a pure accident I do not know. I do not know myself whether it was an accident.

However that may be, I was hospitably entertained by Sharif Humad, the acting Amir of Taif, until the 28th December, when in answer to a courteous invitation from the Sharif I set out for Jidda—taking however the precaution to leave half my caravan and all my heavy luggage behind at Taif.

On the last day of the year I rode into Jidda, where Lieut.-Colonel Basset and the Officers of the British Military Mission very kindly accommodated and entertained me during the following fortnight. A few days later, Commander D. G. Hogarth, C.M.G., R.N.V.R., arrived at Jidda to preside as the special representative of the High Commissioner at certain conferences with the King which Colonel Basset was endeavouring to arrange. The King after leaving it long in doubt whether he would come down or not, eventually arrived at Jidda about two days after Commander Hogarth, and during the following days I was present at a series of conversations, in which the relations of Ibn Saud and the King were the main theme of discussion. Suffice it here to say that as soon as it became apparent that no useful purpose would be served by further discussion of this subject, in view of the King's unrelenting attitude of hostility, I decided, with the approval of Commander Hogarth and Colonel Basset, to take my leave of His Highness. Certain indications had already prepared me for what followed, namely, the point-blank refusal of the King to allow me to return overland. Such pressure as Commander Hogarth and Colonel Basset were able to bring to bear on the King was exerted in vain and nothing remained but for me to return to my work by sea.

With Sir P. Cox' approval I availed myself of the High Commissioner's kind invitation to visit Cairo *en route* and accordingly accompanied Commander Hogarth on his return in H.M.S. *Hardinge*, which left Jidda on the 14th January, 1918, and visiting Yanba, Wajh and Aqaba on the way arrived at Suez on the 20th January. The same evening I arrived at Cairo where, with a brief interlude, during which I accompanied Commander Hogarth on a visit to Palestine and Jerusalem, I remained till

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the 16th February, discussing Arab affairs in relation to the work of the Mission with the High Commissioner and the Officers in charge of the Arab Bureau.

On the 16th February, matters now being in a fair way towards final settlement, I left Cairo on my return journey to Basrah *via* Suez, Karachi and Bombay and on the 24th March, 1918, arrived at my destination.

By this time Sir P. Cox had departed on his way to Egypt and England and I decided to remain at Basrah until the orders of His Majesty's Government on the final proposals made in his telegram, No. B-29, dated the 9th March, 1918, from Maskat, were received.

On the 26th March, I received a telegram from you informing me that Sir P. Cox' proposals had received the sanction of His Majesty's Government, and I was thus free to return to Ibn Saud to communicate the result of my negotiations.

My original plan was to return to Ibn Saud, who was then said to be in Hasa, *via* Kuwait, but the arrival of messengers from Dhari ibn Tawala, then residing at Hafar in accordance with my previous instructions, decided me to travel up the Batin to Dhari's Camp and thence down to Ibn Saud.

Accordingly on the 28th March, 1918, I travelled by rail to Zubair, and on the following morning struck into the interior. Arriving at Dhari's camp near Hafar on the 2nd April I rested there the two following days discussing the affairs of the desert, and on the 5th April, accompanied by Dhari himself, I resumed my march southward to Ibn Saud.

Arriving at Shaib Shauki on the Arma plateau on the 11th April, I found that Ibn Saud had arrived there the same day from Hasa. Here I accordingly remained till the 16th April discussing matters with Ibn Saud and then accompanied him to Riyadh which we reached on the 19th April.

The result of my discussions with Ibn Saud had been an undertaking on his part to mobilize for action against Ibn Rashid in the coming Ramdhan (June-July) and to spend the intervening period in laying in necessary provisions and making other preparations for his operations.

The prospect of sitting idle at Riyadh till the middle of July was far from attractive, and I was fortunate enough to obtain Ibn Saud's somewhat half-hearted consent to my spending at least some part of this interval in a tour to the southern limits of Najd. Accordingly on May 6th I set out from Riyadh *via* Hair, Kharj, Aflaj and Sulaiyyil to Wadi Dawasir, whence, travelling *via* the plateau of Tuwaiq and visiting Haddar, Hamar, Sitara, Ghail and Hauta, I returned to Riyadh on the 24th June after an absence of exactly 50 days.

On the 5th August, 1918 (Ibn Saud's eldest son, Turki, having already made an unsuccessful attempt to open the offensive against the Shammar) all was ready for the beginning of the main campaign, and I accompanied Ibn Saud from Riyadh, *via* Wadi Hanifa, Washm, Sirr, Mudhuib and Anaiza, to Buraida, where we arrived on the 25th August, 1918.

Here some further delay ensued while the various contingents of Ibn Saud's striking force collected, and it was not till the 9th September, 1918, that Ibn Saud himself, refusing for reasons to be explained later to allow me to accompany him, launched out against Hail. I spent the period of his absence at Anaiza and rejoined him at Qusaiba after his return from Hail on the 28th September, 1918.

An immediate repetition of his attack on Hail not being practicable, we returned with the whole force of some 5,000 men to Tarafiya and thence to Buraida, where on the 4th October I received the somewhat disconcerting instructions of H. M.'s Government to close down operations, and in this connection decided to go down to the coast, which I reached at Kuwait, *via* Shamasiya, Zilfi, Dijani and Qaraa on the 16th October.

In all I spent some nine months of the period under report actually on Arabian soil and during that time covered some 2,600 miles* in travel. The greater part of my journey from Riyadh to Taif and the whole† of my journey from Riyadh to Wadi Dawasir and back was through a country hitherto, I believe, never visited by Europeans, while the circumstances of my travel enabled me, even in better known tracts such as Washm, Sirr and the Qasim itself, to visit villages lying off the beaten track of previous travellers. My map sketches have been in part compiled by Lieut.-Colonel C. Ryder, C.I.E., D.S.O., Director of Surveys, Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force.

6. *Shaikhs of the Zubair Hinterland.*

On the arrival of the Mission at Basrah, where a short delay was necessary for the purpose of collecting stores and equipment, I found that invitations

*According to my dead reckoning calculations which were for the most part at 3 miles per hour over good ground and 2½ to 2¾ miles per hour over rough or heavy going.

†Excepting the District of Kharj which was visited by Lieut.-Colonel Cunliffe Owen in January, 1918, during my absence from Riyadh.

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had been issued to the friendly *Shaikhs* of the Zubair hinterland to attend a race-meeting, arranged to take place at Basrah, during the first week of November.

The occasion seemed suitable for discussing with them the affairs of the nearer desert and its tribes as a preliminary to such operations as the Mission might be called upon to undertake in the interior, more especially as for some time past correspondence between Basrah and Baghdad had indicated the necessity of taking stock of the merits of the various professedly friendly leaders of the Shammar and Dhafir who had long enjoyed our bounty and made no adequate return in the direction of action against our common enemies.

The Chief of the *Shaikhs* in question was Saud ibn Salih al Subhan, who, some twelve months previously, had deserted Ibn Rashid and come in to us, being cordially welcomed as an ally and provided with a substantial subsidy of Rs. 5,000 per mensem, together with arms, ammunition and supplies in the hope that he would prove actively useful in cutting off caravans bound for Hail and other enemy destinations. For some time it had been whispered that he was playing us false and it was beyond question that he had so far done nothing to deserve his subsidy, which was reduced to Rs. 3,000 p.m. shortly before the Mission left Baghdad.

Next to Saud al Salih in order of importance stood *Dhari ibn Tawala* of the Aslam Shammar, whose subsidy was Rs. 1,000 p.m. He had rapidly been displacing Saud in the estimation of those Officers, who had dealings with the desert, and it had only recently been reported that his generosity towards his followers had resulted in his having at his call a far larger and more reliable following than his rival.

The third of the trio of local *Shaikhs* was Hamud ibn Suwait of the Dhafir, who was also in receipt of a Government allowance and to whom was assigned the task of watching the Basrah-Nasiriyah railway from the desert side and of preventing egress therefrom by smugglers and access thereto by enemies.

On the 5th November, I accompanied a party organised by Mr. (now Lt.-Col.) E. B. Howell, C.I.E., Deputy Civil Commissioner, Basrah, to Zubair where we were entertained by *Shaikh Ibrahim* and I was introduced to *Dhari ibn Tawala*, *Hamud ibn Suwait* and *Muhammad ibn Subhan*, the younger brother of *Saud al Salih*, who, perhaps conscious of his past shortcomings, had sent to excuse himself from personal attendance at the races on the score of illness. With these *Shaikhs* I had some preliminary conversation on topics of mutual interest and arranged that they should come in to Basrah for a more prolonged discussion some day in the near future; at the same time I begged *Muhammad* to send a special messenger to his brother to impress upon him the advisability of his appearing in person.

On November 7th, *Dhari Hamud* and *Muhammad* arrived at Basrah in company with *Shaikh Ibrahim* of Zubair and I had prolonged interviews with each of them in turn except *Muhammad*, whom I informed that I would reserve all discussion of his brother's affairs until he appeared in person. As a matter of fact *Saud al Salih* never appeared.

Shaikh Ibrahim was most useful to me in discussing confidentially the merits of the various personalities I had to deal with. He was enthusiastic as regards *Dhari* and the prospects of his being usefully employed to further the interests of the British Government; he was no less adverse to *Saud al Salih*, whom he described as an imposter with no desire to serve anyone honestly but himself, while as regards *Hamud* he maintained an attitude of indifference, the present head of the Dhafir being personally insignificant and an indifferent successor to a line of Chiefs, who had made the name of *Ibn Suwait* respected and feared in the past.

After full and free discussion with *Ibrahim*, *Dhari* and *Hamud* and in consultation with Mr. Howell, I came to the following conclusions, namely:—

(1) that *Saud al Salih* was unlikely to be of any practical service to us and that the allowance, which we were wasting on him, should be discontinued or reduced to a small personal allowance payable on the condition of his residence at some place in the sphere of our effective control;

(2) that the Dhafir, being fixed by immemorial tradition to the desert tract now traversed by the railway, *Hamud ibn Suwait* and his tribesmen would be most profitably employed in their home range and could not with advantage be brought into any operations in the interior; and

(3) that *Dhari*, of whom on my short acquaintance with him I had formed a high opinion, might profitably be employed in connection with the activities of the Najd Mission.

I accordingly telegraphed on November 8th, in the sense of the above conclusion proposing:—

(1) that *Saud's* allowance should be reduced to Rs. 500 per mensem. the arms formerly given to him be withdrawn and he himself directed to reside at Zubair, Basrah or Muhammara;

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(2) that Hamud should be left undisturbed at the task on which he was then employed; and

(3) that Dhari's allowance should be increased from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 3,000 p.m. and that his services henceforth should be placed at the disposal of the Najd Mission—the rifles withdrawn from Saud being handed over to him.

In view of the possibility of hostile action by Ajaimi against the Samawa-Khamisiya line and of the fact that Saud al Salih was still regarded by the enemy as a considerable asset on our side, Sir P. Cox was unable to accept my recommendations regarding him and decided to defer consideration of the matter to a more convenient season.

My other proposals were however approved and, before the Mission left Basrah, I had several long interviews with Dhari ibn Tawala, with whom I finally arranged that he should move down with his following in about a month's time to the neighbourhood of Hafar al Batin, whence he should send a messenger to me, either at Riyadh or Buraida, to get further orders. In issuing these instructions I was actuated by the desire that Dhari and his tribesmen should be within easy reach of my headquarters in case it proved feasible after full discussion with Ibn Saud to bring them into any general scheme of action, which might be decided on. In the meantime he was to cut off all communication between Hail and the East and to raid any caravan that might try to slip through.

The subsequent course of events prevented my keeping touch with Dhari during the winter months but, on reaching Basrah again in March, 1918, I found two messengers from him arrived* in search of me and the arrears of Dhari's monthly allowance. Accompanying them back to Dhari's camp I found that the latter had duly carried out my orders in so far that he and, so far as I could see, a very considerable following of the Shammar had for some months past been encamped in the neighbourhood of the wells of Hafar. I was unable to judge whether his blank record in the matter of captured or raided caravans was due to want of reasonable opportunity or want of will. I fear the latter, though up to this date (the beginning of April) he is entitled to receive the benefit of any doubt there may be in the absence of evidence of any treachery on his part.

Indeed the favourable opinion I had already formed of him on first acquaintance was enhanced by my short stay in his camp and during the subsequent journey to Shaib Shauki, on which he accompanied me and during which I had every opportunity of intimacy with him. I was a trifle disappointed to find that he was not less avaricious than others of his kind, but I thought to turn this failing to advantage.

Having paid him the arrears of some five months' allowances due to him I consented to pay him in advance for the following three months on his undertaking to remain at Hafar and to institute a vigorous campaign against blockade running. In addition to this I distributed liberal presents to Dhari himself, the various Chiefs of sections resident in his camp and to all members of the unnecessarily large escort, with which he thought necessary to accompany me.

Arrived at Shaib Shauki I consulted Ibn Saud regarding the employment of Dhari to further the common cause and, though somewhat sceptical of his good faith, he agreed that the experiment was worth a trial and that Hafar would be the most favourable base of operations for him to work from. During the few days that Dhari remained at Ibn Saud's camp I took every opportunity to impress upon him that the continuance of Government's generous treatment of him depended entirely on his own efforts to further our common cause and Ibn Saud himself confided to him something of his plans for descending upon the hostile Shammar in Ramdhan, in which case Dhari would be expected to cut off the retreat of the enemy. Thus generously treated and carefully instructed in the *role* he was to play, Dhari returned to Hafar loudly protesting his gratitude and his intention of abiding loyally by the arrangement arrived at.

Within a month of his arriving at Hafar he abandoned his post and moved down to Safwan, where he was apparently received with open arms and without question. Shortly afterwards, on a report by the Political Agent at Kuwait that I was out of touch with him, he was removed from my jurisdiction without reference to me and, in due course, some 500 camels, loaded with goods from Zubair or Kuwait and franked through by Dhari, arrived at Hail—of this the evidence in my possession leaves no room for doubt.

Nor was this all, for, when Ibn Saud's son, Turki, descended on the Shammar in the neighbourhood of the wells of Ajibba according to the pre-arranged programme, the enemy withdrew unmolested to wells further afield, the wells of Hafar being at the time occupied ostensibly on behalf of Dhari, by the Wahab sub-section of the Shammar, who were at enmity with Ibn Saud and offered no opposition to their retreating brethren.

It is perfectly clear that Dhari, now knowing that a conflict with his Shammar brethren would be forced upon him by Ibn Saud's contemplated

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offensive, decided to remove himself from the danger zone without delay. His offence is unpardonable and exemplifies the futility of putting any trust in the Shammar, whose tribal solidarity is notorious everywhere in Arabia.

On what grounds the Political Agent at Kuwait reported that I was out of touch with Dhari I do not know and why, coming as he did without anything to shew that he came by my permission, he was permitted to settle at Safwan and admitted to the markets of Zubair and Kuwait I cannot understand. Be that as it may, having forfeited my confidence by an act of treachery he found no difficulty in establishing himself in the confidence of the authorities at Basrah and from that time onwards, safely based on Safwan, he proceeded in conjunction with the Ajman, similarly based at Kuwaibda under British protection and thus immune to direct attack by Ibn Saud, to make himself a nuisance to the people of Najd, his brother, Satam ibn Tawala, becoming prominent as the leader of several Shammar-Ajman raids into Ibn Saud's territories during the months that followed.

My representations in the matter failed to effect any reconsideration of the orders passed but resulted in the reduction of Dhari's salary from Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 1,000 *per mensem*; some months later he had the impudence to write to me protesting against the reduction of his allowance and requesting me to intervene. He received no reply. This matter like many others is now of academic importance, but I have considered it necessary to deal with it in some detail in view of the very unfavourable effect it had on public opinion in Najd at a time when false rumours, sedulously fabricated at Kuwait, were creating doubts as to the ultimate issue of the war. It was freely said that we were afraid of taking strong action against potential enemies and ready to placate them at all costs. The moral was obvious; Ibn Saud's policy of patient endurance of affronts and even assaults was freely criticised and disapproved.

Our dealings with the Shammar have certainly not raised us in the estimation of the people of Najd. They may have been necessitated by military considerations, but that in itself was a confession of weakness dangerous to make before an ignorant and generally hostile people.

"The British Government", said the Imam Abdul Rahman himself—and his words were endorsed by the Wahhabi High Priest—"either can and wont help us or else they would but cannot—in either case we should be prepared to help ourselves."

7. *Other Shammar Elements.*

In the last section I have dealt in detail with Dhari ibn Tawala, who, with Saud al Salih al Subhan, had collected a considerable gathering of Shammar elements in the neighbourhood of Zubair and Safwan, where they constituted a standing menace to Ibn Saud and in all probability a source of precarious supply to their fellow tribesmen at and around Hail. Nevertheless, from the point of view of Ibn Saud's contemplated offensive against Hail, they neutralised a considerable number of possible adherents to the cause of Ibn Rashid.

Other Shammar elements, *e.g.*, the Abda and Tuman sections, with whom I had no direct dealings, occupied a similar position in the Euphratean marches further north, where they came under the control of Bt. Lt.-Col. G. E. Leachman, C.I.E., Political Officer of the Desert.

Ibn Saud from time to time expressed the fear that these elements, while profiting by admission to the markets of Iraq, were in reality only biding their time to join Ibn Rashid as soon as his own offensive developed, and I found it somewhat difficult to justify our policy in the matter to him. While, therefore, explaining to him the immediate and obvious advantages of neutralising Ibn Ajil and his Abda following by allowing them access to our markets on a strictly limited scale, I urged him to strike while they were far away hoping that Colonel Leachman would be able to restrict their activities in the event of the opening of the offensive.

In the meantime Ibn Saud himself was coquetting with the Sinjara section under Adwan and Ghadhban Ibn Rimal, who shewed tentative signs of accepting his offer of an asylum in the desert between Kuwait and the Dahana.

Altogether during the last few months of the period under report the Shammar situation remained obscure and complicated, and it was never possible to form an estimate of the numbers of tribesmen likely to flock to the defence of Hail in the event of Ibn Saud's offensive being opened and maintained.

In the altered circumstances it is idle now to speculate as to what might have happened—all we can say for certain is that, when Ibn Saud eventually did strike his first blow against Ibn Rashid, he found the field empty of hostile elements and that the further prosecution of the campaign had become unnecessary before it could be known what reply the Shammar elements on the borders of Iraq would make to Ibn Rashid's general call to arms for the defence of the tribal stronghold.

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8. *Relations between Najd and Kuwait.*

As I have already remarked Lieut.-Col. R. E. A. Hamilton, Political Agent at Kuwait, had been at Riyadh for some three weeks prior to the arrival of the Mission. He had left Kuwait about the beginning of October in pursuit of a large Shammar caravan, which had obtained supplies and set out for Hail during his temporary absence at Baghdad. The caravan escaped and Colonel Hamilton passed on into the Qasim, where Ibn Saud's eldest son, Turki, a lad of about 19, was commanding the Najd forces, threatening Jabal Shammar, and thence travelled to Riyadh.

On the arrival of the Mission at Riyadh, Colonel Hamilton and I had many opportunities of discussing all questions, which formed a bone of contention between Ibn Saud and Shaikh Salim of Kuwait, and, at my request, he remained at Riyadh to give the Mission the benefit of his experience and advice until a definite settlement of the outstanding difficulties between the two rulers was arrived at, namely, till December 5th, when he returned to Kuwait.

It was indeed clear from the first that one of these questions—the Ajman problem—was of primary importance and that, both on military and on political grounds, the Mission could scarcely hope for success in its main task of inducing Ibn Saud to undertake serious military operations against Ibn Rashid and Jabal Shammar, unless and until this problem was satisfactorily disposed of. At the same time it was satisfactory to note in the course of our constant and lengthy interviews with Ibn Saud that he was disposed to come more than half way to meet us in the settlement of the minor questions,—namely the establishment of an effectual blockade of Hail and the right of taxing the Awazim tribe,—if we could settle the major problem to his satisfaction. This was the easier for us inasmuch as—assuming the hostility of the Ajman tribe towards Ibn Saud to be as virulent and uncompromising as his towards them—military considerations alone rendered it imperative to remove the tribe from any position, from which they might be able to threaten his flank or communications in the event of his mobilising for hostilities against Hail.

Before proceeding to a discussion of these various problems it will not be out of place to attempt a brief sketch of the relations existing between the houses of Ibn Saud and Ibn Subah up to this point.

During the last two decades of the 19th Century, when the Wahhabi dominions bowed to the rule of Ibn Rashid, the scattered remnants of the Saud dynasty sojourned in exile in the various ports of the Persian Gulf Coast. Abdul Rahman, the youngest son of the great Faisal Ibn Saud, after an abortive attempt to re-establish himself in the land of his fathers, sought and was readily granted refuge and hospitality in the town of Kuwait, where he and his family of growing sons lived under the protection, first of Muhammad and then of Mubarak Ibn Subah, awaiting the turn of fortune, which would surely come. Mubarak, ascending the throne of Kuwait by the murder of his brother, soon came to be recognised as a power to be reckoned with in Arabia. An astute politician and diplomat, he was the equal of the great Sadun and less powerful only than Muhammad Ibn Rashid, then ruler of the whole of Central Arabia. The rivalry of these three resulted naturally in constant fighting, and Mubarak's wise statesmanship saw in the exiled family of Saud a prospective source of strength in his contests with his rivals and especially with Ibn Rashid.

At the beginning of the present Century, *i.e.*, in the Spring of 1901, Mubarak, having entered into alliance with Sadun and accompanied by a Najdi force under the Imam Abdul Rahman Ibn Saud, went forth to fight out the issue with Abdul Aziz Ibn Rashid, who had but recently ascended the throne left vacant by the death of the great Muhammad. Simultaneously Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, the present ruler of Najd, marched with a force of 1,500 men to lay siege to Riyadh.

Mubarak and his allies encamped at Tarafiya, while the Shammar lay at Sarif. The battle of Sarif, so-called though fought at Tarafiya, was one of the decisive battles of Badawin history. Mubarak, defeated after a bloody struggle, fled with the remnants of his force and Abdul Aziz, hastily raising the siege of Riyadh, hastened back to Kuwait, but Abdul Aziz Ibn Rashid sealed his own fate by the use he made of his victory, which he followed up by ferocious visitations on the towns and villages of Sudair and other parts of Najd.

The following year Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, with a following of only 15 men, recovered Riyadh by a characteristically daring *coup de main* and, in a few years, the old frontiers of the Wahhabi dominions in Central Arabia were restored. Abdul Aziz Ibn Rashid met his end in battle with Ibn Saud at Raudhat al Muhanna in 1908 and the positions of Ibn Rashid and Ibn Saud in Central Arabia were reversed.

This sudden reversal of fortune and the vigorous and rapid establishment of a stable government in Najd by its young ruler could not have been altogether palatable to Mubarak, who doubtless hoped to increase his own power

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by breaking that of Ibn Rashid, whereas, in effect, a fourth factor was added to the former Arabian trio and the fourth member soon shewed that he was as strong and as firmly established as any of his rivals.

Nevertheless the outward semblance of friendship between Najd and Kuwait appears to have been preserved well enough during Mubarak's lifetime, while Ibn Saud has told me of more than one occasion, on which he sought the benefit of Mubarak's ripe experience and advice, particularly in reference to the line he should adopt towards the British and Turkish governments, and has related, only as of historical interest and with no feeling of hostility, the attempts occasionally made by Mubarak to draw away to himself the allegiance of Najd tribes by the practice of political intrigue, in which he was a past master.

When Jabir succeeded Mubarak, the relations to Najd and Kuwait bade fair to follow in the channel marked out in the past. Both rulers were firm in their friendship to the British Government—an additional inducement to them to maintain cordial relations with each other—but it was well known that Jabir's brother, Salim, heir-presumptive to the Shaikhship, was not only inimical towards the new ruler of Kuwait but had strong leanings towards the Turks, while his tendency to orthodox bigotry marked out Ibn Saud and the Wahhabis as his particular enemies.

It was therefore an evil moment for all concerned when Jabir died suddenly and was succeeded at Kuwait by Salim. The latter, indeed, made public profession of his loyalty to the British and of his firm intention to work for the common cause, but his conduct from the beginning has been at variance with his professions.

Kuwait, which had always—to a certain extent unavoidably—been an outlet for smuggling of goods to enemy destinations, rapidly became notorious as the enemy's main source of supply, and it must be admitted that, in all probability, much of the stuff so exported passed through the Qasim to Hail to the profit of the merchants of the former district. Remonstrances by the British authorities to Shaikh Salim were met by the ready reply that Ibn Saud and not he was responsible for the regrettable state of affairs, while representations to Ibn Saud provoked the answer that the evil should be stopped at its source, namely Kuwait.

Thus the clashing of political—not to say financial—interests lighted the train prepared by religious antipathy, and the traditional friendship of the houses of Saud and Subah gave place to enmity, none the less real for being veiled in deference to the dictates of a power greater than either and allied to both.

Mutual recriminations over the blockade soon gave way to acts of covert political hostility. The Ajman tribe, fleeing from Ibn Saud's vengeance, had sought and obtained refuge in Kuwait territory before Salim's accession to the Shaikhship by an arrangement of the British Government, to which Ibn Saud and Jabir were parties and of which an essential condition was that the tribe should behave itself and that those of its leaders, who had sought refuge at Hail or with Ajami Ibn Sadun, should not be allowed into Kuwait territory. Nevertheless Salim, seeing in this problem a means of plaguing Ibn Saud, made unnecessarily ostentatious parade of his protection of the tribe and welcomed back the proscribed leaders. Ibn Saud retaliated by taxing the Awazim tribe, over which Ibn Subah claims sole jurisdiction, when it crossed his frontiers in search of grazing.

In short, when the Mission arrived at Riyadh, the relations of our two allies were about as strained as they well could be—Salim being in somewhat the stronger position for the time being owing to the natural reluctance of the British authorities to increase the number of their enemies by insisting on the expulsion of the Ajman from Kuwait territory to their only possible resort—the enemy territory of Hail and the desert between it and the Euphrates.

9. *The Ajman Problem.*

To understand properly the attitude of Ibn Saud to the Ajman tribe and the bearing of the problem on the politics of Najd, it is necessary to go back to the sixties and seventies of last century, when the death of Faisal Ibn Saud was followed by a prolonged and sanguinary struggle for the throne between his two eldest sons, Abdulla and Saud, which ended disastrously not only for Saud, who fell in battle, but also for the Saud dynasty itself, whose surviving remnants passed into exile on the usurpation of their dominions by Muhammad Ibn Rashid, the nominal protector and actual master of Abdulla.

Palgrave has left on record the impression made on him, during his visit to Riyadh in 1862, by the undisguised antipathy existing between the two brothers, while Faisal was still alive to keep them apart. Abdulla, as the eldest son, succeeded his father, but Saud did not delay long to raise the standard of revolt, while his personality, more pleasing than that of his brother, soon attracted a large following, the nucleus and most important part of which was supplied by his mother's tribe, the Ajman.

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It is unnecessary here to follow the varying fortunes of the struggle, which ended as already indicated, though not before Saud had succeeded in wresting the crown from Abdulla to enjoy it for a brief space—a circumstance of capital importance in the politics of Najd, in that on this temporary occupation of the throne by their ancestor not less than on the fact that the line of Saud is the senior surviving branch of the dynasty—Abdulla having died childless—the descendants of Saud base a claim to be the rightful rulers of Najd, a claim, which has been actually asserted by open but unsuccessful rebellion against the present ruler on more than one occasion.

The pretenders have invariably been those members of the Saud branch, who boast unbroken Ajman descent on the mother's side,—a fact, which enables them to count on the loyal support of this vigorous and warlike tribe in every venture upon which they embark against the present ruling branch, whose title to rule rests on the merit of having recovered its ancestral dominions from the foreign usurper rather than on seniority of descent, Abdul Rahman, the father of the present ruler, being the fourth of Faisal's sons.

The most serious attempt of the pretending line to recover the throne occurred about the year 1910, when Ibn Saud, surrounded by enemies, dealt with a delicate situation in masterly style. He was, needless to say, engaged at the time in war with Ibn Rashid, who successfully invited the co-operation of the Sharif of Mecca. The latter advanced into the hills round Quai and, surprising a small Wahhabi force under Saud, brother of Ibn Saud, had him a prisoner before the latter could come to the rescue. Ibn Rashid simultaneously threatened the Qasim on the north and news soon arrived that the southern districts had declared for the Araif* pretenders, who had thought the moment opportune for a bold stroke.

At a disadvantage with the Sharif owing to the fact that the latter held his favourite brother, Saad, a prisoner, Ibn Saud consented to the unfavourable terms and, obtaining the release of his brother, marched off to meet Ibn Rashid. Here again negotiations, resulting in a truce, relieved Ibn Saud of all immediate danger and set him free for a brief campaign in the southern districts, in the course of which he defeated the pretenders and wreaked a terrible vengeance on the towns, which had helped them.

Again at the beginning of 1915, when Ibn Saud, accompanied by Captain Shakespear and acting as our ally, met Ibn Rashid at the battle of Jarrab, it was, according to his account, entirely or largely due to the treacherous desertion of the Ajman contingent at a moment, when their continued support would in all probability have given him a decisive victory, that he had to be content with a drawn battle, in which the honours undoubtedly rested with Ibn Rashid, though he was unable to take any practical advantage of them.

This brings us to the final act in the Ajman tragedy, which was played in 1916 in the Hasa, whither Ibn Saud led his forces to avenge himself on the tribe for its perfidious desertion of him at Jarrab and other hostile acts. The Ajman, finding themselves outnumbered, sued for an armistice, to which Ibn Saud, generously enough, agreed on the condition that the contending parties should meet on the morrow to consider arrangements for a permanent peace. Ibn Saud's brother, Saad, was absent when the armistice was agreed to and, on his return the same evening, found to his mortification that hostilities had been suspended. Furious at the lenience of his brother he propounded a scheme for a sudden attack on the unsuspecting tribesmen and Ibn Saud in a weak moment yielded to his vehement pressure.

The Ajman, surprised and outnumbered, fought like wild beasts at bay and not only were Ibn Saud's best troops worsted in the encounter but Saad was counted among the dead and Ibn Saud himself was wounded, while the victorious tribesmen lost no time in seeking refuge within the borders of Kuwait territory from the vengeance, which was sure to pursue them.

Hinc illae lachrymae! but there can be no doubt that the Ajman, who had appeared up to the last act as the villains of the play, had right on their side in the final *denouement* and that Saad, by his advocacy of a shameless act of treachery, richly deserved the fate which overtook him.

Nevertheless Ibn Saud can scarcely be expected to accept the last arbitration of fortune as final nor has he any intention of doing so, if one may judge from the way in which, on anything like a public occasion, he parades the orphaned children of his favourite brother before the public gaze and delivers himself of stirring homilies on the necessity of avenging the wrong done not only to them and himself, but to the honour of his house,—ignoring, with that feminine want of logic so characteristic of the Badawin Arab, the cardinal consideration that the whole responsibility for the tragedy rests on nobody but himself.

*The descendants of Saud Ibn Faisal are known by this nickname owing to the fact that after the battle of Raudhat al Muhanna (1908), in which Abdul Aziz Ibn Rashid was defeated and killed by Ibn Saud, the exiled scions of that line were found among the booty captured in the abandoned camp. The term *Arija* or *Arafa* is commonly used to designate livestock, especially camels, lost to and recaptured from an enemy.

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However that may be, the arrival of the Ajman as refugees from the wrath of Ibn Saud within the limits of Kuwait territory was a serious matter, which the British authorities could not afford to ignore. The unconditional admission of the rebels—for such they were—to the benefit of British protection could not fail to affect our relations with an important Arab ally, while the dictates both of common justice and indeed of Arab custom demanded that the suppliants should be admitted to sanctuary, at any rate temporarily, pending fuller consideration of the merits of the case and of the interests involved.

The question was accordingly discussed by Sir P. Cox with Ibn Saud and the Shaikh of Kuwait on the occasion of the Kuwait Durbar of November, 1916, and, in view of the greater interests involved in the newly ratified alliance of the Arab rulers with the British Government for the vigorous prosecution of the war against the common enemy, a compromise was framed and agreed to by all concerned, whereby Ibn Saud undertook not to molest the Ajman in their new quarters provided that they in their turn refrained from molesting the tribes of Najd and declined any intercourse with such sections as had betaken themselves to enemy protection.

This agreement was intended to remain in force until the end of the war, and it was hoped that the Ajman would be content with the security thus obtained under the protection of the British Government and would on their part faithfully observe the conditions imposed on them.

The innate instability of the Arab character, however, soon rendered the hopes entertained of this agreement vain and Ibn Saud declares—with what degree of truth it is impossible to estimate—that a projected forward movement on his part against the Shammar forces during the summer of 1917 had to be abandoned owing to a sudden movement of the Ajman, which threatened his flank. There is no doubt that the Ajman did move in the direction indicated by Ibn Saud, though there is no reason to suppose that their action was caused by any other motive than the necessity of finding new pastures for their flocks and herds. Nevertheless the move constituted a breach of the agreement of November, 1916, and, if Ibn Saud did at the time contemplate an attack on the Shammar, the action of the Ajman was sufficient, on military grounds alone, to give him pause, while, finally, Shaikh Salim's failure to insist on the observance of the agreement by his guests involved the British Government in a charge of breach of faith.

Ibn Saud did not miss the opportunity of lodging a complaint regarding the manner in which the agreement had been observed by other signatories than himself, and another opportunity soon presented itself, on the eve of the departure of the Mission from Iraq, in the arrival at Kuwait of Dhaidan ibn Hiflain, one of the *Shaikhs* of the Ajman proscribed by the terms of the agreement.

It is true that his petition for sanctuary had been answered by Sir P. Cox to the effect that sanctuary could only be granted on the production of a letter of recommendation from Ibn Saud. Nevertheless Dhaidan and his following took up their residence in Kuwait territory without any such letter and with the consent of the Shaikh of Kuwait, and it was left to the Mission to see what arrangement could be arrived at in consultation with Ibn Saud.

Thus, when the Mission arrived at Riyadh, it found that, on moral grounds alone, Ibn Saud had an unassailable case, as he could point to two distinct breaches of an agreement, which the British Government had ratified but had made no effort to enforce, while he himself had scrupulously observed both its spirit and letter. Moreover the Mission, having as its main object to induce Ibn Saud to active aggression against the enemy, could not leave out of consideration the possible effect of the active or passive presence of a large and hostile force on the flank or rear of Ibn Saud's army, and we decided that, on military grounds alone, Ibn Saud could not move while the Ajman remained in Kuwait territory. Thirdly, on the less plausible ground of political expediency, we thought it advisable to placate Ibn Saud at the expense of a tribe, which, after all, had and has no claim whatever on our friendly consideration, when such placation promised substantial results in other directions. Nevertheless, having thus decided on moral military and political grounds that the Ajman must leave Kuwait territory, we used our best endeavours with Ibn Saud to obtain for them as favourable terms as possible; to this end we pointed out to him that on military grounds alone it would be unwise to increase the numbers of our active enemies, if this could possibly be avoided by securing the neutrality of those, who could not be our friends and had no desire to be our enemies.

To this Ibn Saud consented after much argument, and it was finally decided that the Ajman should be left to choose one of the following alternatives, all of which had the double merit of removing them from Kuwait territory and lessening by one the number of possible sources of friction between Ibn Saud and Ibn Subah, namely:—

(1) that the tribe should move *en masse* northwards and join Fahad ibn Hadhdhal, our Anaza (Amarat) ally, thereafter shewing their goodwill to Hadhdhal, our Anaza (Amarat) ally, thereafter shewing their good will to the allied cause by acting with him or remaining benevolently neutral; or

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(2) that the leading *Shaikhs* of the tribe should come in and make formal submission to Ibn Saud, who undertook to pardon their past offences on condition of their settling peacefully in such locality as he might appoint; or

(3) that, in the event of their declining both of the above alternatives, they must remove themselves forthwith from any British or Kuwait territory, in which they might be, thereafter to be treated as enemies wherever found.

This arrangement I communicated in my telegram No. M-4, dated the 2nd December, 1917, informing Sir P. Cox at the same time that, subject to his approval, Colonel Hamilton, on his return to Kuwait, would announce the terms imposed on it to the tribe.

I am not quite clear as to the subsequent course of Colonel Hamilton's dealings with the tribal leaders, but from a note on the tribe written in September, 1918, by Captain P. G. Loch, then Political Agent at Kuwait, it is clear that his negotiations broke down and that another attempt to find a solution of the difficulty was made in February, 1918, when an agreement was signed by Colonel Hamilton, Shaikh Salim and Dhaidan ibn Hitlain, the leading (hitherto proscribed) Ajman chief already referred to, whereby the tribe was given an asylum in the neighbourhood of Zubair on the following conditions, namely:—

(1) That the whole tribe should take up its residence within the Occupied Territories, *i.e.*, at Zubair or elsewhere as appointed; and

(2) that the tribe should on no account re-enter the limits of Kuwait territory. Moreover, though it was not expressly so stipulated in the agreement, it was clear that an obligation to refrain from all molestation of Ibn Saud's territory or tribes was imposed upon the Ajman by these terms—indeed they could not raid into Najd without passing through Kuwait territory and thus transgressing the second of the abovementioned conditions.

Thus once more the British Government entered into a pact with the Ajman tribe and from the beginning the arrangements seemed foredoomed to failure.

In the first place, after the signature of the agreement, the Ajman shewed themselves to be in no hurry to comply with the condition of taking up their residence at Zubair, and Shaikh Salim made no heroic efforts to enforce or hasten their departure from Kuwait territory; Ibn Saud made constant complaints regarding their continued presence in Kuwait and I made corresponding representations to the Political Agent.

In due course some show of evacuation of Kuwait territory was made by the tribe, which, however, had no sooner taken up its residence in its new quarters near Zubair, than it proceeded to make Kuwait territory a leaping-off ground for a series of raids into Najd, which took place at frequent intervals throughout the summer months. The first raids were against the Subai encampments in Hasa, the Mutair camps were also visited and, towards the end of the period under report, the raiders began to go as far afield as Hafar al Atsh, Mubayidh and other places not far distant from Ibn Saud's own capital.

It is unnecessary to deal in detail with these raids which met with but a modicum of substantial success and in due course provoked counter-raids by the Mutair, Subai and other elements until, towards the end of the period under report, the whole of the Summan area was in a ferment of unrest, through which I passed on my return to the coast, when I had a good opportunity of contrasting the security obtaining almost everywhere in Ibn Saud's own territories with the danger and excitement prevalent on the borderlands of Kuwait jurisdiction.

During the whole of these months Ibn Saud, who, by his agreement with us, was debarred from taking steps to deal with the Ajman nuisance, while I was pressing him to disregard all minor matters in favour of the vigorous prosecution of the offensive against Hail, maintained an attitude of constant and not altogether unjustified querulousness, on which I reported with faithful regularity but without success.

It was clear that the Deputy Civil Commissioner at Basrah, who was ultimately responsible for the enforcement of the solemn pact of the Ajman, was neither disposed to treat the matter (which he regarded as part of the regular game of tribal raid and counter-raid), seriously nor in a position to enforce such parts of the agreement as proved distasteful to the Ajman. In these circumstances matters rapidly reached an *impasse*, for which there seemed to be no reasonable solution.

Meanwhile Ibn Saud was preparing to open his offensive against Hail and I pressed that hostages should be taken from the Ajman to prevent any possible hostile movement on their part, but even this proved impracticable, and finally it was recognised that nothing could be done to enforce the observance by the Ajman of the conditions imposed on them. In these circumstances it was decided:

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Firstly, that the Ajman should be warned that, in the event of the continuance of raids, their subsidies would be stopped and their access to the local markets barred; and

Secondly, that Ibn Saud should be given a free hand to deal with the tribe provided that the safety of the railway was not thereby endangered.

It was with a feeling of considerable relief that I communicated these orders to Ibn Saud. I was aware that he would not immediately be in a position to take advantage of his newly won liberty in the matter, while the removal of a substantial grievance was to be welcomed at a time when the Sharifian situation threatened at any moment to become exceedingly delicate.

The Ajman problem has caused Government a great deal of unnecessary difficulty and anxiety, due to a perhaps mistaken desire to be lenient to a potentially hostile element; but it is, in the light of experience, difficult to resist the conclusion that much time, trouble and irritation might have been saved by the acceptance without further ado of the ultimatum propounded by the Mission so long ago as last December and its communication to the tribe. To that ultimatum Government had to return after ten months of futile search for a better alternative, during which its desire to serve the interests of an undeserving tribe resulted in the loss of much prestige in Central Arabia and in increasing quite unnecessarily the number of counts, on which Ibn Saud could indulge his querulousness with a fair show of reason.

10. *The Awazim Problem.*

Unlike the Ajman problem the affair of the Awazim was of transitory interest and presented no serious difficulty. The Awazim had long been recognised as one of the home tribes of the Kuwait jurisdiction and, in the old days when the friendship of Mubarak and Ibn Saud rendered the delimitation of the frontiers of Kuwait and Najd unnecessary, they were free to roam indifferently over the pastures on either side of the frontier while paying taxes to Kuwait alone.

The unfortunate differences between Shaikh Salim and Ibn Saud, however, and especially the protection accorded by the former to the rebel Ajman put an end to the old order of things, and Ibn Saud, by way of retaliation on the Shaikh of Kuwait for provocation offered, renewed and asserted in practice his long dormant claim to tax the Awazim graziers, whenever and wherever they entered his territory in search of pastures or, in other words, annually, because the narrow limits of Kuwait jurisdiction can never afford grazing sufficient for the needs of a Badawin tribe all the year through.

In enforcing this claim Ibn Saud was acting well within the rights conferred by sovereignty. At the same time he had no grudge against or desire to press unduly on the Awazim tribe, which was placed for no fault of its own in the unfortunate position of having to pay double taxes, and was perfectly ready to consent to any reasonable arrangement or indeed to forego altogether his right to tax the tribe—but on terms.

The settlement of the Ajman question by the effectual expulsion of the tribe from Kuwait territory was an essential preliminary to any such arrangement, while, for the rest, Ibn Saud, after a discussion with the Mission, undertook that, if Shaikh Salim wrote to him in suitable terms recalling the friendly arrangement, by which, in former times, the Awazim were exempted from the payment of taxes to the Najd treasury and requesting a reversion to the old policy, he would reciprocate by replying in similar terms and formally abjuring his claim to tax the tribe thereafter.

The proposed letters were, as a matter of fact, never exchanged and Shaikh Salim failed to reciprocate in the matter of the Ajman, while, on more than one occasion, elements of the Awazim tribe covered the movements of Ajman and Shammar raiders on their excursions into Hasa. Nevertheless the Awazim problem did solve itself—*ambulando*—and it is to Ibn Saud's credit that he discontinued taxing the tribal flocks and herds without obtaining anything in the nature of a *quid pro quo*.

11. *The Blockade.*

Though our enemies in this War have undoubtedly enjoyed certain tactical advantages over ourselves and our allies by reason of their geographical cohesion, the fact that they are situated within a ring fence almost completely surrounded by enemies has, in another direction, proved a serious disability, in that they have been cut off from the markets of the world and have had to rely on the goodwill of neutrals and the avarice of others to provide them with an always precarious supply of necessary commodities, which they are unable to produce in sufficient quantities in their own territories.

To make that supply more and more precarious and indeed to cut it off altogether has therefore naturally been one of the most important military objects of the allies, and the instrument used for the accomplishment of this end was the Blockade.

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In Mesopotamia the Blockade problem presented peculiar difficulties, in that it was always an important part of our policy to enlist the sympathy of the Arabs in our cause. It was therefore always considered important to extend to them all reasonable facilities for providing themselves with the necessaries of life, while ensuring that those necessaries should not reach the enemy, but the Arabs themselves, by failing to reciprocate in the spirit in which we met them, rendered it incumbent on the British authorities to devise measures for the strict enforcement of the blockade.

The difficulties experienced in the Occupied Territories of Iraq need not be considered here. Suffice it to say that in the light of experience a fairly effective scheme of blockade was evolved, the effect of which on the enemy became daily more apparent.

For the complete success of the Iraq scheme however—involving, as it did, a rigorous blockade of the northern part of the Arabian peninsula by the establishment of a cordon along the Euphrates line—it was essential that no leakage of supplies should occur through neighbouring neutral or friendly countries not under our control, and in this connection Eastern and Central Arabia with its inlets on the Persian Gulf coast had long been an object of anxious consideration.

It was obviously absurd to expect uncontrolled Arabs—whether Badawin or Hadhr—not to take advantage of the enormous profits to be made by meeting the enemy's demands for supplies. At the same time it was out of the question to adopt the simple expedient of blockading the Persian Gulf ports, as such a course would have involved our friends in the same fate as our enemies. The course adopted was to enlist the active co-operation of the Arab rulers allied to us, namely, Ibn Saud and the Shaikh of Kuwait, the one to prevent leakage of supplies across his frontier to the enemy and the other to refuse access to the Kuwait market to enemy purchasing agents. The arrangements by which these objects were to be achieved were left entirely to the discretion of the two rulers themselves in accordance with our consistent policy of refraining from interference in the internal arrangements of native states except when circumstances make it absolutely necessary to do so.

The experiment was, unfortunately, doomed to failure from the beginning and it failed—its only substantial result being to enhance the bitterness and antipathy already existing between Ibn Saud and Ibn Subah.

Indeed, some time before the departure of the Mission from Baghdad, information from prejudiced and unprejudiced sources made it abundantly clear that Kuwait had, in consequence of the tightening of the Iraq blockade, begun to enjoy a profitable monopoly as a source of enemy supply, while the Qasim was profiting by the enjoyment of corresponding advantages as a distributing centre. The climax was reached towards the end of September, 1917, when a caravan of 3,000 enemy camels came down to Kuwait through the Qasim with a passport signed by Ibn Saud's eldest son, Turki, who was at the time in command of the forces nominally engaged in preventing the leakage of supplies to the enemy. The *debacle* was completed by the clearance of the same caravan, loaded with supplies from Kuwait with the sanction or connivance of the Shaikh himself in spite of specific orders telegraphed from Baghdad that it should be detained pending further consideration.

Colonel Hamilton pursued the caravan without result and the enemy, doubtless, duly received a welcome addition to their stores, but matters were now seen to be really serious and our allies had shown themselves to be broken reeds. The Mission was accordingly directed to discuss the question of the blockade with *Ibn Saud* and to submit proposals for its stricter enforcement, while the question of the feasibility of establishing a proper blockade post on Iraq lines at Kuwait began to engage attention.

The incident of the Shammar caravan above referred to proved to be a blessing in disguise, in that it provided me with a solid and notorious fact, on which to base both a complaint as regards the past and an ultimatum in respect of the future. To do him justice, Ibn Saud made little serious attempt to defend his untenable position. As regards Turki's action, he explained that the passport given to the caravan was in no sense intended to give the Shammar export facilities from Kuwait—it was indeed merely a safe conduct through the Najd tribes on the road, but he could not explain the extension to enemy subjects of even such a concession as this. Doubtless Shaikh Salim's explanation of the clearance of the enemy caravan was equally convincing.

As regards the caravan itself, Ibn Saud admitted that it could only have gone to the enemy and, as regards enemy trade in general, he inveighed strongly against the Shaikh of Kuwait as being personally and deeply implicated in contraband business, out of which he made large profits. He asserted that the bulk of the traffic went direct from Kuwait to Hail or Damascus, giving his own frontiers a wide berth, but he admitted that the merchants of the Qasim were also to a certain extent involved. On my pointing out, however, that this was scarcely consistent with his own solemn undertakings:

he admitted the impeachment and merely pleaded that, so long as smuggling on a large scale was practised in Kuwait to the profit of the local merchants, it was scarcely reasonable to expect him to penalise the merchants of his own territories—indeed he could not do so without serious risk of alienating the Qasim.

Colonel Hamilton and I eventually proposed that a system of passes should be introduced, whereby facilities for export from Kuwait would be granted only to persons certified by the possession of such passes, signed by Ibn Saud or his local *Amirs*, to be Ibn Saud's subjects and reliable individuals, and on the condition that Ibn Saud himself should accept personal responsibility that goods, so exported, should not pass his frontier.

He demurred slightly at an arrangement so novel to Arab ideas and offered us an alternative to undertake the policing of the Kuwait frontier. Such an arrangement, however, amounting as it did to a request for free permission to vex and harass the Shaikh of Kuwait and his people, could not for a moment be entertained; and for want of any other suitable alternative we pressed for the acceptance of our original proposals, to which Ibn Saud—by this time assured of a satisfactory settlement of the Ajman question—eventually assented on the understanding that the British Government would take serious steps to prevent all direct smuggling from Kuwait itself to the enemy.

It was accordingly arranged as follows:—namely,

- (1) that Ibn Saud should undertake the vigorous blockade of enemy territory, accepting full personal responsibility that no supplies, which entered his territories, should leave them for an enemy destination;
- (2) that the British Government should arrange for an effective blockade system at Kuwait;
- (3) that permission to export from Kuwait would not be conceded to anyone not provided with a pass signed by the *Amir* of his place of residence;
- (4) that such permission would on no account be granted even to friendly Shammar elements unless they were accompanied by a responsible representative of Ibn Saud himself; and,
- (5) that a form of pass, evolved in the course of our discussions, should be introduced without delay and distributed to the local *Amirs* for use—the bearer of the pass would be required to present it to the British authorities at Kuwait, to be endorsed by them with the quantity of each article to be exported and, on his arrival at his destination, he would appear before the local *Amir*, who would endorse on the pass the quantities of each article duly brought to the intended destination, the document being eventually returned, so endorsed and signed, to the British authorities at Kuwait for record.

Not content with the consummation of this agreement, we lost no opportunity of impressing on Ibn Saud that his interests, no less than those of the British Government, were at stake and that the importance of preventing supplies reaching the enemy could not be exaggerated. He accordingly despatched letters to his *Amirs*, and particularly to those of the Qasim, explaining the urgent necessity of implicit obedience to and strict enforcement of his orders—adding incidentally that he had entered into a solemn undertaking with the British Government in this respect, the advantages of which to his own subjects would become apparent in due course.

Colonel Hamilton returned to Kuwait to make arrangements to give effect to the policy thus agreed on and some little delay occurred in working out the necessary details and removing the difficulties incidental to the establishment of a blockade post at Kuwait; but, in due course, a blockade Officer was appointed to that post and everything was ready for the inception of a scheme, destined, it was hoped, to complete the cordon shutting out the enemy from all access to the markets of the outer world.

This was the position when I returned to Ibn Saud in April, 1918. According to custom large caravans from the interior had taken advantage of the spring season to go down to the coast to bring up supplies for the summer. Towards the end of the month, disturbing reports began to come through to the effect that all the caravans had been turned away empty in circumstances calculated to cause alarm. It is not too much to say that the whole of Najd, suddenly faced with the prospect of spending the summer without supplies, was in a ferment. The military precautions, including the placing of machine guns on the roof of the Political Agent's residence at Shuwaikh and the landing of a detachment of troops, taken to obviate the occurrence of trouble in connection with the turning away of the caravans, were commonly interpreted as an act of hostility towards the people of Najd, and Ibn Saud's policy of friendship with the British Government came in for a good deal of unfavourable criticism.

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The authorities at Kuwait had failed to realise this aspect of the matter or the necessity of keeping me informed of their action, with the result that, while complaints poured in to Ibn Saud and were duly passed on to me, I was not in a position to afford an explanation of the action taken or of the reasons therefor.

It was clear to me, however, that some mistake had occurred and, in view of the risk of disturbance inherent in delay, I felt that no course was open to me but to give certain guarantees regarding the future on behalf of the Kuwait authorities.

I accordingly arranged with Ibn Saud that all Najd caravans should be accompanied by special envoys on his behalf, that his Kuwait Agent, Abdulla al Nafisi, should be appointed his special representative in respect of tribal parties, who were not in a position to come in to procure special envoys, *e.g.*, the eastern tribes such as Mutair and Subai, and, finally, that all regular town caravans should carry passes signed by the local *Amirs*. These arrangements I at once communicated to the Political Agent at Kuwait, assuring Ibn Saud, at the same time, that the caravans already turned away could now return to bring up supplies, which would not be refused provided the arrangements as regards passes and envoys were duly observed. At the same time I pointed out to the Political Agent, firstly, that it was not altogether reasonable to restrict exports into the interior from Kuwait on the basis of pre-war trade, because, in those days, the interior used to draw supplies from Mecca, Damascus and Basrah among other places, whereas, under existing conditions and with the restriction of shipping to the Hasa ports, Kuwait had come to be the sole source of supply to Najd and, secondly, that, in view of the arrangements made by the Mission with Ibn Saud in consultation with Colonel Hamilton, the responsibility of the Kuwait authorities was restricted to the prevention of illicit and unauthorised export only, while Ibn Saud was responsible that no goods, exported to Najd under proper authority, should leave his territories for an enemy destination.

Suffice it here to say that the arrangements now proposed by me were promptly accepted, and the due clearance of the Najd caravans previously turned away created a satisfactory revulsion of feeling throughout Ibn Saud's territories, and an episode, which had caused so much ill feeling, served very well to remind the people of Najd of what the British Government could and would do in the event of their abusing the privileges extended to them.

While on this subject, I should mention that the Kuwait *debauch* was universally attributed in Najd to the machinations of Shaikh Salim, who was, at the time, undoubtedly piqued by the establishment of effective British control of the blockade and could not have found a better weapon, wherewith to oppose it, than to make the arrangements weigh heavily on the people of Najd, who could be trusted not to remain silent under such provocation. The proclamation issued by him—apparently at the request of the British authorities—and the unsympathetic manner, in which it was enforced, lent colour to the accusations made by the Najdis.

Be that as it may, the acceptance of my proposals restored confidence in Najd, Ibn Saud promptly set to work to ensure the effective stoppage of smuggling from the Qasim—one of his first acts was the summary dismissal of the Amir of Zilfi, who was notorious for complicity in the smuggling business and by a strange coincidence, of which Shaikh Salim was not unaware, had been the only person privileged to export supplies from Kuwait, when the rest of the Najd caravans were turned away—and everything bade fair at last for the establishment of an effective blockade all round.

The only person, who was not satisfied, was Shaikh Salim, regarding whose machinations for the reversal of the arrangements above described this is not the place to speak. On the 28th June I was able to report that Ibn Saud was completely satisfied that the interests of his people in the matter of the blockade were being duly safeguarded and, at the same time, I expressed the hope that the official blockade would be maintained as affording the only hope of cutting off supplies from enemy elements. In short, everything seemed to be in a fair way to a sufficiently satisfactory solution of the blockade problem when, about the middle of July, I received the news that Government had decided once more to place their trust in Shaikh Salim and to leave the prosecution of the blockade entirely in his hands, on the condition of his accepting the services of a British Officer to assist his own blockade staff. At the same time it was decided that imports into Kuwait from India and elsewhere should be regulated on the basis of the reasonable monthly requirements of Kuwait and its dependent tribes. The Political Agent at Kuwait had, on July 4th, addressed a letter to Shaikh Salim on behalf of H.M.'s Government communicating the sanction of the Government to these arrangements.

The news of this development of the situation was naturally extremely unpalatable to Ibn Saud, who saw Shaikh Salim once more given a free hand to promote smuggling to the enemy and to make the blockade, such as it remained, irksome to the people of Najd. I reported that at the very moment, when these arrangements were being made, certain enemy caravans were actually present

in Kuwait and, at the same time, in view of Ibn Saud's disclaimer of responsibility for the leakage of supplies, I foresaw the recommencement of friction between the two rulers, as the first persons to take advantage of the new *regime* would be people of Najd, the enforcement against whom of the new restrictions could not fail to give rise to endless complaint and correspondence. I criticised the scheme in detail and suggested that, if the importance of maintaining good relations with the Shaikh of Kuwait rendered persistence in the scheme inevitable, the markets of Kuwait should be definitely closed to all Najdis, and arrangements for the supply of the needs of the interior made through the Hasa ports, over which Ibn Saud had firm and undivided control.

In making these proposals, I was under the misapprehension that the pass system had been suspended, which was not the case. Nevertheless the objection remained that Najd caravans would have to apply for passes, not as heretofore to the British Officer in charge of the Blockade, but to Shaikh Salim's representative. It seemed to me obvious that endless possibilities of friction remained and, in view of the growing delicacy of the Sharifian situation, I was anxious to remove all possible minor sources of dissatisfaction in order to have a free hand to deal with bigger issues, when they arose.

It must be remembered that at this time, while the Khurma affair was seriously threatening the peace of Arabia and I was endeavouring to divert Ibn Saud's attention from it to the campaign against Hail, I was faced on all sides by a series of petty difficulties of an exceedingly irksome nature, which were making Ibn Saud and his people querulous against the general policy of the British Government towards Najdean susceptibilities. Our policy towards the Shammar was causing much dissatisfaction and laying us open to the charge, that we were not serious in our desire for their elimination; our undertakings in regard to the Ajman were rapidly breaking down with the inevitable result of unrest and nervousness in Najd and now, once more, the commercial interests of Najd were placed at the mercy of Shaikh Salim, while evidence was rapidly accumulating that the Shammar smugglers were enjoying a new lease of life.

The force of my general contention was recognized, firstly, by the Political Agent himself, who, however, urged that, the new arrangements with the Shaikh being based on a policy of trust, he should be given another chance of shewing his loyal adherence to British policy and that, if that failed, resort might be had to the diversion of Najd commerce to the Hasa ports as proposed by me; and, secondly, by Sir P. Cox, who on his arrival at Kuwait in August, 1918, on his return from England, arranged, in consultation with the local authorities and Shaikh Salim, that passes for Najd should, as before, be issued by the Blockade Officer and that the Shaikh's blockade operations should be confined to other elements only.

This last arrangement was in fact a reversion to the arrangement evolved on the basis of my representations in the previous May and, on the 4th September, 1918, I was able to report that Ibn Saud had expressed himself once more completely satisfied with the revised scheme.

From this point to the end of the period under report, when, in consequence of the C.-in-C.'s peace proclamation at Baghdad, the blockade was for all practical purposes suspended, the blockade problem remained quiet, though I was able to report a number of cases of smuggling from Kuwait which took place in September after the acceptance of responsibility for the new arrangements by Shaikh Salim, who, to the end, kept up the double game of pretending to enforce the blockade and actually assisting the enemy smugglers.

Summing up the results of the year, I find it difficult to resist the conclusion that, on the whole, Ibn Saud exerted himself honestly and energetically to close his territories to the operations of enemy purchasing agents with the result that, except for one petty case of smuggling reported by me in July, no definite case came to my notice. On the other hand numerous instances of the passage of caravans from Kuwait to Hail were reported from time to time, evidence was forthcoming of the accumulation of stocks at the latter place and their eventual clearance by a caravan of 1,000 camels to Damascus, while, finally, there seemed to be good ground to suppose that Nuri Ibn Shalan, who had access to Aqaba, was making use of his position to profit by the contraband trade.

If, as regards Kuwait, it is possible to suggest what would have been an effective remedy for an intolerable situation, I venture to think it would have been found in the diversion of Najd commerce to the Hasa ports as I proposed; but, doubtless, the scarcity of shipping militated against the acceptance of the proposal at the time when it was made. This matter has, however, another and more permanent aspect which merits a few words of explanation before I pass from this subject.

It must be remembered that, since Ibn Saud re-established himself in his ancestral territories in 1902, he has been so busily engaged in the task of political consolidation, culminating in the capture of Hasa from the Turks in the spring of 1914, that he has had little leisure to consider the question

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of the commercial development of his country. When at last, in 1914, he found himself in a position to turn his attention to this subject and his financial needs made it imperative for him to cast about for ways and means of improving his revenues, his eyes turned to the Hasa ports, the development of which, as the normal avenues of Najdean commerce, became his immediate ambition.

At this point, the outbreak of the war and the consequent restriction of shipping dashed his hopes to the ground and, with a good enough grace, he has recognized that the British Government was unable, for the time being, to forward his plans by the provision of shipping.

Nevertheless, he has never lost sight of the matter and, when blockade difficulties arose at Kuwait, he saw in them a good reason for pressing his claims for the recognition of his own ports. Meanwhile he was suffering a loss of customs revenue, which he could ill afford. Goods, arriving at Bahrain for through export to Najd, are liable to customs duty at that port without rebate or refund on proof of re-export and, though Ibn Saud collects customs duty at 8 per cent on goods landed at the Hasa ports, the double tax constitutes a serious deterrent against the use of the Bahrain route. At Kuwait matters are still worse, so far as Ibn Saud is concerned, in that, while all goods landed at that port, whether for transit to the interior or not, pay customs dues to the Shaikh of Kuwait, it is impossible under present conditions or indeed under any conditions for Ibn Saud to arrange a customs cordon on the land side for the collection of dues—he thus collects nothing on goods imported into his territories *via* Kuwait and, such goods being subject to a single tariff, the port of Kuwait enjoys extraordinary advantages over the Hasa ports in respect of inland trade.

It is obvious that, after the war, Ibn Saud, who has now firmly established his rule through the length and breadth of Najd, including the Qasim, will not continue to suffer the loss of so much revenue with equanimity; and the alternatives open to him will be either to offer lower rates and other facilities in respect of imports direct to the Hasa ports, whose revenues would flow entirely into his coffers, or to enter into mutually satisfactory tariff arrangements with the Shaikhs of Bahrain and Kuwait, whereby a reasonable percentage of the customs revenue of those ports would be paid to himself.

In view of the very rapid growth of the standard of living in Central Arabia in recent years, during which money has poured into the country, more particularly from the west, and of the heavy demands for piece-goods, foodstuffs and other commodities likely to ensue during the coming era of peace, this question of the trade of Najd and the reasonable division of profits arising therefrom is one, which deserves the serious attention of H.M.'s Government. In this place it is not possible to do more than to state the problem in its simplest aspect.

12. *Ibn Saud's Operations against Hail.*

At the end of October, 1917, the military situation in Central Arabia was extremely obscure. Since the death of Captain Shakespear at the battle of Jarrab in January, 1915, Ibn Saud, left to his own resources, had failed to continue the campaign then interrupted at its inception. The impetus given to his flagging zeal by the conversations of 1916, backed by the grant of a regular subsidy and a substantial addition to his armament, was spent without any substantial result. Ibn Rashid was known to have left his capital and to be with the Turks at Al Hajar, near Madain Salih, on the Hijaz railway, while his confidential agent, Ibn Laila, had gone to Damascus presumably to consult the Turkish High Command regarding his master's affairs. Hail was left to the care of its garrison under the command of a trusted slave. Finally, Ibn Saud, according to his own account, had been maintaining pressure on Jabal Shammar, watching for an opportunity to strike, until the beginning of Ramdhan, when he resigned the command of the forces in the Qasim to his son, Turki, and returned to his capital. Turki had effected nothing and was not likely to do so.

Meanwhile the Sharif's denunciations of Ibn Saud's lukewarmness in the allied cause were becoming more frequent and uncompromising, as well as more difficult to refute on behalf of our ally, and the High Commissioner for Egypt voiced the opinion of all authorities concerned, when he expressed the hope that "time and the successful completion of the Mission, resulting, it is hoped, in active aggression against the Turks on the part of Ibn Saud would prove to the King the folly of his present policy of suspicion and the wisdom of effecting a reconciliation with his nearest powerful neighbour."

The principal object of the Najd Mission was, therefore, to launch Ibn Saud into a campaign of active aggression against the Turks, which I interpreted, for all practical purposes, as meaning a campaign against Ibn Rashid with the capture of Hail as its chief objective, and it may be assumed that Government neither intended nor desired that Ibn Saud should be committed to such a venture with inadequate resources at his disposal. It was indeed to obviate such a contingency, that a responsible military officer was attached

to the Mission, to enable it to speak with authority on military matters and, if necessary, to estimate the amount of assistance required to make the resources of Ibn Saud adequate to the task in view.

It was consequently not a little disappointing to find that, when, at last, the train was laid and ready to fire, not only was the charge proposed considered excessive, but doubts had arisen regarding the value of the objective itself. It was, indeed, perfectly clear that the achievement of the proposed object by Ibn Saud would but confirm the King in his folly and make a reconciliation between him and his nearest powerful neighbour impossible and, that being so, the purely military advantages likely to accrue from the capture of Hail were not such as to warrant any serious effort on our part.

However that may be, the first efforts of the Mission were directed to the task of forming an estimate of the relative strength of the two Central Arabian chiefs in men and armament. As regards Ibn Saud, we knew, at the outset, that he had, some twelve months before, received from us four Turkish mountain guns, four Maxims and 3,000 rifles with corresponding quantities of ammunition, and that four of his men had been instructed at Basrah in the handling of machine guns.

At the very outset of our journey, namely, at Uqair, we were not a little surprised to find the whole of the local garrison—some 50 men—armed with modern rifles, and we were informed that the garrison at Qatif had also been armed out of the gift intended for another purpose; but a worst shock awaited us at Hufuf, where, after considerable reluctance on the part of the local governor, Abdulla ibn Jiluwi, we were permitted to inspect the military equipment stored in the fort. Here we found all the four maxims still in the cases in which they had arrived a year before, two of the mountain guns and a considerable stock of rifles* and ammunition. To add to our disappointment, we were informed that three of the four men, who had been instructed in the use of machine guns at Basrah, were dead, while the fourth, who was present, made it quite clear, by a practical demonstration, before us that he had forgotten all he had learned.†

The information gleaned at Hufuf was not a little disconcerting and seemed to indicate that Ibn Saud was economising his military resources to meet postwar developments; but I think, on the whole, that this view was a little unjust to Ibn Saud, regarding the internal state of whose territories we then knew next to nothing. For instance, it soon became quite clear that Hasa could not be left unprotected, while the Ajman continued to threaten its northern boundaries. Nevertheless, Ibn Saud's dispositions were justly open to the criticism that, whatever his policy might be, he had not taken full advantage of the addition to his armament, which he had received from us; it was clear that the making of such gifts to him with no guarantee of their effective utilisation constituted a waste of resources.

I did not lose the opportunity of taxing Ibn Saud with his neglect of the resources placed at his disposal for the purpose, I said, of enabling him to prosecute an offensive against the common enemy. He replied that our gift of the previous year had not been accompanied by any such condition—and, so far as I have since been able to ascertain, he was right on this point—but he admitted the general impeachment and accepted my suggestion that, at any rate, the machine guns would be more effective in active operations against the enemy than in their packing cases in the fortress of Hufuf. He accordingly agreed to send for them and they duly arrived at Riyadh and eventually accompanied Ibn Saud as far as Buraida, but no further.

As regards his armament generally, we ascertained by enquiry from Ibn Saud and others that, in addition to the machine guns already mentioned, there were 10 or 12 serviceable though, owing to lack of trained personnel, not very effective guns of the Turkish mountain-gun type (7-pounders), of which about six were in the Hasa or at Qatif. Of rifles, *i.e.*, modern weapons, Ibn Saud admitted to having about 6,000, inclusive of those received from us, with an adequate supply of ammunition, but I assumed his figures to be below the mark, as he obviously had everything to gain and nothing to lose by minimising his own and exaggerating his enemy's resources. I accordingly fixed my estimate at 8,000 modern rifles, to say nothing of less effective weapons, which would doubtless appear in considerable numbers in case of need.

Little reliable information was forthcoming with regard to Ibn Rashid's armament. It was known that the fortress of Hail contained a number of guns, while the information I was able to collect, supported by the intrinsic probabilities of the case, led me to reject reports—emanating, I think, from

*From such information as I could collect, I estimated the total number of modern rifles in the Hasa, Qatif and Uqair at between 600 or 700. I think it was probably nearer 1,000.

†He and a few others subsequently profited by Colonel Cunliffe Owen's instruction and became more or less competent to handle the machine guns.

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Egypt—that the defences of the town were in a dilapidated condition.* Ibn Saud himself credited Ibn Rashid with four or five Turkish Mountain guns and no less than 20,000 modern rifles. The latter figure seemed to be an obvious exaggeration, in view of the fact that Ibn Saud himself estimated the total manpower of Hail and its tribes at only 15,000, and I thought it safe to reduce the strength of the enemy to 12,000 men, armed with modern rifles and five guns.

On this basis it seemed to the Mission that, while Ibn Saud was, without question, able to command numbers of men far in excess of anything that the enemy could produce, he was considerably inferior to him in rifle equipment and about equal in guns, if allowance be made for the fact that he could not safely risk denuding the whole of his territory of its defences, while the whole strength and armament of the Shammar would be available to defend their capital, to say nothing of any accretion of strength, which Ibn Rashid might subsequently be able to extract from the Turks in face of a serious threat to his territory.

In the matter of men and armament, therefore, we came to the conclusion that, for the purpose of attacking Hail with a reasonable prospect of success or at any rate without serious risk of disaster in the event of failure, Ibn Saud should take the field with not less than 15,000 men and rather more artillery than he had. Colonel Cunliffe Owen, at my request, drew up an appreciation of the situation, in which, having arrayed the available evidence before us, he set forth what he considered to be the reasonable military requirements of Ibn Saud for the task expected of him.

The financial and other aspects of the situation had yet to be considered, as Ibn Saud made it quite clear from the beginning that, owing to shortage of shipping and the consequent depreciation in the price of dates, which constitute one of the few exportable commodities of Najd (chiefly Hasa), and other contributory causes, his existing financial resources, including the subsidy which he was receiving from Government, were not sufficient to enable him to keep anything like a large force in the field for any length of time. This point I readily appreciated, as it was known that, in wages alone, to say nothing of provisions, etc., the Sharif's troops were costing him £5 or £6 per man per month. At the same time, I noticed with satisfaction that his financial difficulties loomed larger in his eyes than his deficiencies in armament and were indeed of a serious and pressing nature, as the regal hospitality of the court, both at the capital and in camp, involving as it does the feeding of an average of probably not less than 1,000 souls twice daily was placing Ibn Saud under obligations to his creditors, about his ability to meet which he had good reason to feel uneasy. In addition to this, tribal subsidies constituted a heavy drain on his resources—the heavier for the competition he had recently been suffering from the Sharif.

So far as I could ascertain, the bulk of Ibn Saud's resources consists of income derived from three sources, namely,—

- (1) Customs duties at the ports of Jubail, Qatif and Uqair, amounting to about Rs. 4 lakhs per annum;
- (2) Land revenue on dates, wheat, rice, etc., in the Hasa and Qatif cases, amounting to about Rs. 6 lakhs per annum; and,
- (3) the British subsidy of £5,000 per month or Rs. 9 lakhs per annum.

In addition to these sources of revenue, he derives an income from land taxes in the Qasim, regarding which I was unable to ascertain the full details, while his own statement that the proceeds of the annual taxes, collected by him on camels and sheep, are more than counterbalanced by tribal subsidies, I accepted as substantially correct.

Before leaving Basrah, I had taken the precaution of providing myself with a substantial sum of money, the actual presence of which, stored partly at Uqair and partly at Riyadh itself, proved to be a strong factor in the subsequent negotiations with Ibn Saud, to whom, as an earnest of what he might expect in the event of his active co-operation with us in military operations, I lent a sum of £10,000 on the security of future instalments of his subsidy, before I left Riyadh on my journey to Taif.

If serious military operations were to be attempted, it was clear that the task of financing them would have to fall on the British Government, which was already bearing the Sharif's expenses on a lavish scale. In order, therefore, to form an estimate of the amount of money required I assumed that a certain sum would be requisite for the initial purchase of transport animals and provisions for, at any rate, the early stages of the campaign, and that a regular monthly allotment would be necessary to enable him to keep his forces in the field. The former I estimated at £20,000 to be expended half on the purchase of 1,000 transport camels at an average price of £10 a head and a half on the purchase of rice and other necessary foodstuffs; the monthly

*My view in this matter was justified in that, when Ibn Saud did eventually arrive at Hail, the fortifications proved too formidable to allow of any assault unsupported by artillery.

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allotment I calculated on the basis of a minimum force of 10,000 men, continuously in the field, at an all round rate of £5 per man per month to cover:—

- (1) Family allotments, without which the Arab will not take the field;
- (2) The pay of the troops; and
- (3) The cost of provisions, etc.

I had thus arrived at a fairly clear idea of what was really requisite in the matter of armament and funds for the proposed campaign, and it only remained to extract from Ibn Saud a definite undertaking that he would undertake hostilities if provision were made on the scale indicated. This scale fell, indeed, considerably short of Ibn Saud's own expectations, but I assured him that it would be idle to make more ambitious proposals, in view of the hopes entertained of the Sharif's operations and of our own offensive in Palestine, while I impressed upon him that vacillation on his part at that juncture might result in his getting nothing.

Suffice it to say that Ibn Saud, after the fullest consideration of the matter, finally agreed to undertake active operations; if his resources were increased on the scale, which we had worked out, and I was then in a position to submit my proposals for the consideration of Sir P. Cox. They were as follows, namely:—

- (1) that Ibn Saud should be supplied with two siege guns and two field guns with a sufficient amount of ammunition and such personnel, preferably Arab prisoners of war, as might be available;
- (2) that he should be supplied with 10,000 modern rifles with corresponding ammunition; and
- (3) that he should be given an initial grant of £20,000 for the purchase of transport animals and a monthly grant of £50,000 for three months—the period, which, I estimated, the actual campaign would last.

On my arrival at Jidda, I found the military situation materially altered by the break up of the Turkish forces at Gaza and the capture of Jerusalem, while the local political situation was complicated by the jealousy of the Sharif, who, anxious lest we should be the means of strengthening his rival, was doing his best to discredit Ibn Saud in the eyes of the British Government and to prevent the realization of the Mission's plans for an offensive against Hail.

Much time was spent in discussion between the various authorities concerned, while I remained at Cairo; it was indisputable that the offensive against Hail, which was in the forefront of the Mission's programme in November, had been rendered of less importance by the events in Palestine; moreover it was questioned whether the development of such an offensive would not result in an irreparable breach between Ibn Saud and the Sharif, in view of the uncompromising attitude of the latter. My view generally was that, while the elimination of Ibn Rashid by the capture of Hail was perhaps not an urgent military necessity, it would have distinct military advantages in further weakening the Turkish position on the Hijaz railway, and might develop into a big joint Arab movement against the Syrian frontier, if the situation at any time should demand an effort in that direction. Moreover, in view of the unmistakable and growing mutual incompatibility of the ambitions of the Sharif and Ibn Saud, I was sensible of the urgent necessity of finding active employment to distract the latter's mind from the Sharifian situation.

The High Commissioner was actuated by the fear of a possible Wahhabi rising to deprecate any action likely to strengthen Ibn Saud and H.M.'s Government were inclined towards the same view. Accordingly, after full discussion, it was decided that, it being neither necessary nor desirable to give Ibn Saud military assistance on the scale proposed by the Mission, Sir Percy Cox should be allowed full discretion to sanction the grant of doles, such as might serve to keep Ibn Saud in play, pending further developments of the military situation, and it was added that Sir Percy Cox would realise the importance of not allowing Ibn Saud or others to suspect that H.M.'s Government had grown lukewarm in its hostility to Ibn Rashid.

Representations made by Sir P. Cox for the reconsideration of this decision in the light of further information were met by a re-affirmation of the orders already passed, His Majesty's Government expressing the view that it should not be difficult to make clear to Ibn Saud that, while desirous of supporting him in all reasonable ways, we were not just then in a position to co-operate with him in undertaking military operations of an extensive nature.

I confess that I viewed with some distaste and no little apprehension the task thus laid upon me of explaining matters to Ibn Saud in the above sense. Though there was now no real military necessity of eliminating Ibn Rashid, there was at the same time no military objection to the capture of Hail by Ibn Rashid and it was difficult to resist the conclusion that the scale had been turned against the latter by considerations connected with the Sharifian situation—the fear, to my mind imaginary, of a militant Wahhabi revival and the

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anxiety of Government to avoid giving offence or ground of complaint to the Sharif. This, at any rate, was, to my mind, the view that Ibn Saud would take of the decision arrived at—on this point I was not mistaken—and I viewed with great anxiety the possible outcome of his discontent in the event of my being unable to keep him actively employed with the slender means placed at my disposal.

However the orders of Government were final and, knowing what I did of Ibn Saud's financial straits, I hoped for the best from a judicious manipulation of the financial discretion allowed me. I, accordingly, set out on my return to Ibn Saud to communicate the orders of Government which were as follows, namely:—

- (1) that H.M.'s Government were pleased to sanction the conversion into a gift of the sum of £10,000 advanced to Ibn Saud by myself as a loan before leaving Riyadh;
- (2) that, while unable to provide artillery, small arms and personnel on the scale proposed, H.M.'s Government were pleased to make Ibn Saud a present of 1,000 rifles and 100,000 rounds of ammunition; and
- (3) that, while recognising that operations on the scale originally contemplated would be clearly impossible, H.M.'s Government were anxious that Ibn Saud should maintain pressure on the Shammar and keep up a rigorous blockade and were, therefore, prepared to offer him a substantial lump sum of money—the amount actually stated by me to Ibn Saud was £50,000—and the doubling of his existing subsidy of £5,000 *per mensem*, in the event of his capturing Hail with the means at his disposal.

It is idle to pretend that Ibn Saud was anything but disgusted by this whittling down of the original programme. He attributed Government's change of views to the machinations of the Sharif, regarding whose attitude to himself my escort, returning from Jidda to Riyadh without me, had brought back lurid and extravagant tales. His main point, however, was that the state of his finances did not admit of his maintaining anything like active operations in the field against Ibn Rashid and that, consequently, the decision of Government was tantamount to the abandonment of its original plans for active co-operation with him against the enemy. The promise of handsome treatment in the event of his accomplishing a task, which he could not attempt, was of little practical advantage to him, and he made it clear that, if the communication I had made to him represented the final considered orders of Government, he could not but bow to their decision and regret his inability to be of further active assistance.

Ibn Saud's attitude did not surprise me, nevertheless, I was faced with the prospect of the termination of my Mission, conscious that to leave Ibn Saud to his own devices in a temper of dejection and dissatisfaction might involve serious consequences, in the event of his relations with the Sharif becoming acute. I determined, therefore, at all costs, to maintain my position, where I was, and, with this object in view, took the responsibility of offering Ibn Saud a loan of the money lying idle at Uqair—amounting to about £20,000—on the condition of his making preparations for mobilisation for a campaign against Ibn Rashid.

These arrangements tided over the first few months of the summer and placed me in a strong position, in that, while my right to remain with Ibn Saud could not be questioned so long as he was unable to repay the loan, I was able to oppose to his querulousness under provocation from the Sharif, the Ajman, etc., the objection that the remedy for his ills lay in the vigorous prosecution of the offensive against Hail, which I had placed in a position to undertake. The political situation grew steadily worse during the summer and the people of Najd grew restive under two attacks on their co-religionists at Khurma by the Sharif, constant Ajman raids, blockade difficulties, etc., but, being at the end of my resources, I could only preach the Hail offensive as a general panacea, and Ibn Saud realised that he must take action, if he wished to deserve further assistance. Meanwhile preparations for the offensive, into which he threw himself with much zeal and energy, served to divert his attention from the Sharif.

Turki, the eldest son of Ibn Saud, opened the offensive against the Shammar in July from the wells of Ajibba but was disappointed of his prey, the Shammar tribesmen withdrawing before his advance until they were beyond his reach. The defection of Dhari ibn Tawala had materially assisted the Shammar in their escape.

It was not till the 5th August that Ibn Saud was ready to start off with his main force and the first blow was struck at Hail towards the end of September, when Ibn Saud, the first of his line to reach the walls of Hail as an enemy, having missed by dilatory tactics a providential opportunity of capturing Ibn Rashid and his bodyguard in the open, raided the environs of the town and, unable to tackle Ibn Rashid in the hill-girt stronghold of Aaiwaj Baqaa, fell upon the Shammar herdsmen outside Hail and, having killed some 30 of them,

came away with a rich booty including 1,500 camels, 10,000 rounds of ammunition, many sheep and much camp furniture.

Ibn Saud had flatly refused to allow me to accompany this expedition on the ground of the fanaticism of his own force, practically entirely drawn from Akhwan elements, and partly, doubtless, owing to his own doubts, which he could not bring himself to admit, regarding the issue of the venture and his memory of the fate of Captain Shakespear on the last occasion when he tried conclusions with Ibn Rashid. I rejoined him, however, at Qusaiba on his return from Hail expedition on the 25th September and found him so confident, as the result of his expedition, that he readily waived all further objection to my remaining with him. Meanwhile I had obtained authorisation from you—in view of the necessity of keeping Ibn Saud actively employed—to keep him in funds to the extent of £10,000 monthly, and the communication to him of this news had so favourable an effect, that the arrival, almost at the same moment, of the news of a third unsuccessful attempt on Khurma by the Sharifian forces failed to damp his buoyancy. He was very confident of bringing Ibn Rashid to his knees by the efforts he intended to keep up at high pressure until that object was attained.

Little did he or I know of the disappointment in store for him. Even as we were on our way to Tarafiya to refit for the next blow at Hail, the military forces of the Turks were collapsing and, during the first days of October, I received, without explanation of the changes which had supervened, intimation that H. M.'s Government desired Ibn Saud to desist from his operations, and that, in the circumstances, they were not prepared to place at his disposal 1,000 rifles promised him in exchange for a similar number of inferior weapons previously supplied.

Coming as they did without explanation, these orders produced a sensation akin to consternation; Ibn Saud suspected the Sharif of having indulged in further successful machinations against himself and expressed himself bitterly disappointed at the treatment he had received from the British Government; the recent attack on Khurma began to appear to him in a different light, and finally letters arrived from Fakhri Pasha, the Commandant of the forces at Madina, congratulating him on the Akhwan victory over the Sharif and offering to supply him with arms, ammunition and funds to prosecute an anti-Sharifian campaign.

It must be admitted that the circumstances attending the receipt of these orders were most unfortunate and that the orders themselves looked extremely like a formal severance of relations with Ibn Saud, who was bitterly disappointed at the withholding of the arms promised to him and non-plussed by H.M.'s Government's change of plans regarding Hail. He delivered himself of what practically amounted to an ultimatum; "who," said he, "will trust you after this? The people of Najd, who have all along criticised my policy of alliance with you, are justified by the event. What shall I reply to them now? There are now but two alternatives acceptable to me—let the British Government choose between them; either let our active alliance against the enemy be re-affirmed and H.M.'s Government do its part in helping me with funds and material to prosecute it vigorously, or, if the British Government desires me to remain inactive, I am perfectly ready to fall in with their desires, on the condition that they guarantee me against aggression by my enemies, the Sharif, Ibn Rashid, the Shammar, the Ajman and the Shaikh of Kuwait."

I thought it inexpedient to allow Ibn Saud to reduce this ultimatum and the reasons, which inspired him in delivering it, to writing, as it was, in my opinion, advisable to prevent him committing himself to any irrevocable step before his people. Accordingly, after much discussion, it was agreed that I should go down to the coast at once to make representations to Government in the matter. At the same time Ibn Saud gave me to understand that the alternatives set forth above represented his minimum demands and that, if Government was unable to modify its decision, he would consider himself free to take action, as indicated by circumstances, to protect his own interests and that he would not expect me to return.

A year's work collapsed before my eyes; I had but little hope that Government would modify in any material degree a decision conveyed in terms so emphatic, and I assumed that they desired or were prepared for a rupture of relations with Ibn Saud as a *pis-aller* out of the Central Arabian dilemma. I foresaw the early outbreak of hostilities between the Wahhabi hordes irritated by long restraint and the Sharif's forces.

It was not until I arrived at Kuwait that I received the news of the remarkable change, which had so suddenly come over the war situation everywhere and especially in regard to Turkey. The orders of Government were now intelligible to me and the receipt of authorisation from you—issued in anticipation of the sanction of H.M.'s Government—to release the 1,000 rifles for despatch to Ibn Saud removed a fruitful source of irritation. I was able to write Ibn Saud a letter of assurance explaining matters, which in the interior had seemed to convey a meaning so different, and, above all, I was satis-

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fied that Ibn Saud would be the first to recognize that H.M.'s Government's Orders were the inevitable outcome of their victories over the enemy and in no way connoted any desire on their part for the termination of friendly relations with him.

13. *The Sharif and Ibn Saud.*

In the previous section I have had occasion to refer briefly to the mutual incompatibility of the ambitions of the Sharif and Ibn Saud. The subject was not only of first-rate importance in relation to the work of the Najd Mission during the period under report, but deserves very serious consideration in relation to the plans of H.M.'s Government for the future of the Arab world.

When I arrived at Riyadh in December, 1917, it became immediately evident that Ibn Saud was actuated by consuming jealousy of the Sharif and genuine apprehension in respect of the latter's unveiled pretension to be considered the overlord, if not the actual ruler, of all Arab countries by virtue of his position as *de facto* supreme spiritual head of Sunni Islam. Concrete expression had been given to his claims in this direction by the Sharif's assumption of the title of "King of the Arab countries" (Malik Diyar al Arab). Ibn Saud made no secret of his suspicion that the assumption of this title rested on some secret understanding with H.M.'s Government, of his unwillingness to accept the position involved in such a claim and of his anxiety lest H.M.'s Government's commitments towards himself, as expressed in the treaty signed by Sir P. Cox in 1916, should be prejudicially affected by their arrangements with the King. I made haste to assure Ibn Saud that H.M.'s Government had no intention whatever of departing in any way from their treaty obligations towards himself and that the Sharif's assumption of the title in question was unauthorised so far as H.M.'s Government was concerned. The fact that I was again able to reassure Ibn Saud on these points on my return from Egypt, where I had had ample opportunity of discussing the matter, militated largely in disposing him to accept with resignation the modification of H.M.'s Government's military proposals regarding which I had orders to inform him.

During the conversations with the Sharif, which took place at Jidda in January, 1918, I was impressed by the fact that Ibn Saud's jealousy and distrust of the Sharif was only equalled by the latter's uncompromising attitude towards Ibn Saud whom he regarded as the chief obstacle to the realization of his own ambition of supremacy in all Arabia. This in effect he was and is and always will be, but it is not without interest to speculate whether it would not have been possible in the earlier stages of the war for the Sharif to obtain at any rate a substantial recognition of his title by Ibn Saud by the adoption of a more conciliatory policy.

Ibn Saud was always in need of financial and material assistance, in return for which it is not inconceivable that he would have been ready to place his own resources at the disposal of the Sharif for the prosecution of his operations against the common enemy, as he did or tried to do later with us during the period of the Mission's activities; the Sharif, however, pursued the policy of keeping Ibn Saud bare of resources and undermining his power by supplying arms and money to tribesmen of Najd as a bribe to induce them to desert their allegiance to Ibn Saud. By this action he roused the jealousy and earned the undying hate of Ibn Saud, while at the same time adding enormously to his strength by arming people, who, once supplied and equipped, would naturally turn to Ibn Saud for further guidance.

Again Ibn Saud, who had spent the whole period of his reign in consolidating his authority in his own territories and had obtained from H.M.'s Government recognition of his integrity and absolute independence within those limits subject to subsequent delimitation of frontiers, was wise enough to recognize that he was not and could never be strong enough under modern conditions to extend his frontiers and had set himself to establish his rule firmly on the basis of the Wahhabi system within limits already sufficiently wide. The Sharif affected to find in this policy of consolidation a menace to the security of his own position—in reality it was no more at the worst than a safeguard against the menace to Wahhabi integrity involved in his own pretensions—and, instead of setting to work to kill the Wahhabi revival by kindness, he proceeded to fan the fanaticism of the people of Najd by the persecution of Wahhabi elements within his reach—cases in point are the Khurma episode, the exercise of tyranny towards Najdis settled in the Hijaz and the closing of the Hijaz markets to Najd commerce.

It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the Sharif, in spite of the great advantages he has enjoyed in virtue of his spiritual position and of the resources placed at his disposal by a Power disposed in every way to assist him in the realisation of the ideal of Arab Unity, has, in the conduct of his relations with his "nearest powerful neighbour", displayed a regrettable absence of that tact and address, which are the first attributes of royalty. In this connection and in view of the general trend of British policy in relation

to Arab affairs, so far as I am able to appreciate it, I cannot sum up the difficulties which seem to me to beset the path of H.M.'s Government in its future dealings with Arabia in words more pregnant or more prophetic than those, which appear on page 203 of Mr. G. Wyman Bury's "Arabia Infelix":—

"One of the first principles of state craft in dealing with Orientals is never to back one ruler in preference to others unless he is, by personal qualities, position and resources, fitted to wield paramount power. That is, if a chief cannot rule unassisted, it is very little use trying to support him with overt force among warlike races, for the mere fact of alien armed assistance will create enemies for him until he becomes a sort of lightning conductor for political storms and his suzerain gets the shock."

It is with some diffidence that I venture on an exposition of the Sharif's scheme of things as I am conscious of regarding him through Najdean spectacles as the embodiment of an unrealisable ideal, but I have had the advantage of hearing from his own lips his plans for the reconstruction of the Arab universe, his irreducible minimum of the requirements of the situation and something of the methods, by which he hopes to work out the salvation of the Arab race; at the same time I have seen him, from the other side of the curtain, raising up against himself, perhaps wilfully, perhaps on account of his own lack of administrative and political experience, an unsurmountable obstacle to the realisation of his aims. I may say at once that I do not share the view that he is actuated by a large-hearted and unselfish desire for the welfare of the Arab race and the faith of Islam rather than by motives of personal ambition for himself and his house. But that is a matter of little moment.

Discussing historically the origin of his revolt and the motives which inspired it, the Sharif talked freely of certain mysterious documents in his possession, of the contents of which I was never able to acquire any information from any other source,—the very existence or genuineness of which there appeared to be reason to doubt. Those documents, he declared, constituted his charter of rights; he would produce them at the psychological moment; he was convinced that the British Government would never go back on its plighted word.

By implication he suggested that these documents contained a recognition of his claim to be King of the Arab nations; to that claim effect would be given, when all the Arab nations were freed of the Turkish domination, which militated against the existence of Arab unity; the restricted title of "King of the Hijaz," to which alone the British Government had publicly committed itself, was a meaningless phantom, unacceptable to himself; he recognised that minor modifications of policy might supervene, were, indeed, inevitable, as in the case of Palestine newly conquered: nevertheless, he would not rest content with anything less than the substantial recognition of his main ambition and, in the event of his failure to secure that, he would prefer honourable retirement, under the aegis of the British Government, to a limited sovereignty. Meanwhile he pressed for two things—firstly, that, so far as possible, we should refrain from coquetting with other Arab elements than himself, any dealings with such independent Arab potentates, as the Idrisi and Ibn Saud, being calculated to render the fructification of his plans more difficult, in the assurance, that he had his scheme cut and dry for removing all obstacles from his and our paths, when the termination of the war with Turkey should leave him free to turn his attention elsewhere; and, secondly, that, it being necessary that the various Arab races should have some tangible ideal of unity, up to which to educate themselves and on which to concentrate their attention, formal recognition of the self-assumed title of "King of the Arab countries" should be accorded to him. The vicious circle, which, as Commander Hogarth aptly pointed out, was involved in this train of argument, left him cold,—it was, he thought, no more difficult to become King of the Arabs by being so addressed than to earn the right to such an address by becoming King of the Arabs.

Be that as it may, H.M.'s Government, in spite of repeated representations by the King, found themselves unable to give way on the question of title, though, so far as I know, they raised no formal objection to his continued use of the unauthorised designation in his official correspondence—the matter was of little import except that, whereas Ibn Saud might conceivably have brought himself to recognise the title of "King of the Hijaz," he made a special point, in spite of my representations on the subject, of replying to the Sharif of Mecca when addressed by the King of the Arab Countries. On the first point, however, H.M.'s Government's modification of their ideas in respect of the Hail operations substantially conceded the King's claim to be the sole recipient of Government's high consideration and largesse.

It was on the attempt to obtain recognition of his temporal position that the King for the most part concentrated his energies and, so far as I remember, little was said at the Jidda conversations on the subject of the Califate. That to him presented no difficulty; he would take it in his stride; his spiritual claim as the greatest of the living descendants of the Prophet was incontestable; in any case, the Califate would not be refused by the faithful to the successor of the Sultan of Turkey in the role of the greatest independent Islamic power—indeed the name of Husain ibn Ali was already beginning, in various parts of the world, to fill the gap once occupied by that of the Ottoman

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ruler in the formal *Khutba* of the Friday prayers. A word of caution seems, however, to be necessary on this subject, in so far as the Wahhabi element of Central Arabia is concerned. Sir Percy Cox, at a conference held at Cairo in March, 1918, of which I have recently seen the minutes, stated as his opinion that, while Ibn Saud would never recognise the Sharif as his temporal sovereign or suzerain, he would probably be prepared to admit his claim to the Caliphate. That is true but with an important reservation, which, with due deference to Sir P. Cox' views, I consider it necessary to state; Ibn Saud, while admitting that the Sharif's claims to be Calif of Sunni Islam is as good as, if not better than, that of anyone else, including the Sultan of Turkey, in virtue of his direct descent from the Prophet,—as a matter of fact, I doubt if he would now, in view of what has happened during the past year, even commit himself to this admission,—regards Sunni Islam itself as a perversion of the true doctrines of Muhammad, which are represented only by the Hanbali or Wahhabi school, and, while raising no objection to the Sharif or anybody else becoming Calif, would, on no account, admit his spiritual suzerainty over himself and his people.

Unless by the use of force, it seems to me as certain as anything human, that the Sharif will never attain to sovereignty or suzerainty over Najd. I have indicated above how the adoption of a different policy by him might have changed the history of that country in relation to himself, and I have, perhaps, said enough to shew that the last hope of Arab unity disappeared with the first Sharifian attack on Khurma, if not before.

In any case, I understand that the ideal of Arab unity under a single ruler, which came into prominence in the early stages of the negotiations with the Sharif, has definitely been abandoned by all serious students of the problem. Nevertheless, the necessity of finding some solution for the Arab problem remains—that is to say, if we are not definitely prepared to leave Arabia to its own devices with the prospect of continual strife and bloodshed—and recent correspondence indicates the revival of the old ideal in a modified form, embodied in the formula "Priority of King Husain without prejudice to the territorial rights of other Arabian Chiefs", which occurs in a telegram of the High Commissioner, dated the 12th August, 1918.

I am not sure whether this policy is intended to be synonymous with what is called the "suzerain policy" by the High Commissioner in a letter, written in May, with which a long note by Colonel C. E. Wilson, British Agent at Jidda, was forwarded for the consideration of H.M.'s Government, in which the idea of establishing King Husain as the suzerain of all Arab potentates and of educating the latter up to the acceptance of such a scheme was developed in detail.

The ideals of priority and suzerainty amount in effect to the same thing. Whatever happens, there can be no doubt that King Husain, by reason of his activities during the war, of the territories which presumably he will directly control, of the greater resources at his disposal and of his world-position in spiritual matters, will always be the most important unit in the Arab world. It is obvious, however, that something more than this is intended by the High Commissioner, as it is without doubt desired by King Husain—namely, that, by political or other pressure, his general suzerainty should be imposed upon all other potentates, whom we are in a position to influence.

I confess I regard this ideal as entirely Utopian—however desirable it may be from the point of view of King Husain and H.M.'s Government—and Mr. Bury's *dictum*, already quoted, should be sufficient warning against any attempt to force a solution of the problem on Arabia, if only, lest we raise up so great a volume of opposition to the Sharif himself, that his position will become untenable and the British Government find itself called upon to intervene to keep the peace—even to safeguard Mecca.

The Sharif has only himself to thank for the bitterness, which exists between himself and Ibn Saud. His attacks on Khurma will long rankle in the breasts of the people of Najd as an example of his methods of conciliation. Ibn Saud, recognizing his own interest in preserving friendly relations with the Sharif on account of his special position in our favour, has long withheld his hand in spite of provocation, he has even held out the olive branch in the shape of a friendly letter written, at my suggestion, against his better judgment, but, in the end, more or less spontaneously. That letter was returned unopened, the messenger himself was treated with ignominy and even threatened, and the King delivered himself of strongly worded uncompromising remarks about Ibn Saud.

In the face of this behaviour on the part of the Sharif, it seems to me idle to pretend that he has the slightest desire for the maintenance of even a semblance of friendly relations with Ibn Saud. A more public and galling insult it would be difficult to conceive. The prospect of Ibn Saud willingly accepting the suzerainty of the King or acknowledging his superior position in any way may be left to the imagination.

For these reasons, I regard even the modified ideal of the "suzerain policy" as incapable of achievement, and the possible further alternative of a suzerain power for all Arab lands except Najd I dismiss as being likely

prima facie to present precisely similar difficulties. Ibn Rashid, for all the efforts of the Sharif and his sons to placate him during the last few months, I regard as more likely to join Ibn Saud for mutual protection against the ambitions of the Sharif than to accept the latter's overlordship: Maskat, Bahrain and the States of the Trucial Coast are little likely of their own volition to merge their independence in an United Arabia; the Idrisi and the Imam have nothing to gain by adherence to the Sharif;—to go further afield, there is, as far as my personal experience goes, little ground for supposing that the people of Mesopotamia would submit to Sharifian overlordship except by force and with extreme reluctance.

I am fully aware of the fact that my criticisms are purely of a destructive nature and contain no germ of a constructive policy. I can only say that the interests of the various Arab States, which go to the composition of the Arab world, are as diverse as those of the various provinces and divisions of India and are as incapable as they of being welded into a homogeneous political entity, except under the influence of a strong foreign domination, capable, at least, of keeping the public peace between jarring sects and diverse interests.

Arabian unity, as an ideal, in the broadest sense of the term, is doomed to perish of inanition; our prestige and influence in Central Arabia have suffered serious, though not irrevocable, diminution through our attempts to give it life. I can see no reasonable solution of the problem before us, short of the recognition of such Arab States, as we find to be in enjoyment of political independence, and I can conceive no *role* in the future, more honourable and satisfying to British aspirations, than that of controlling the destinies of the independent States of Arabia under a loose political hegemony, responsible—if we except the moral responsibility to ourselves and the states themselves to develop their resources—only to localise conflicts and keep the peace, where the interests of the majority are jeopardised.

His Majesty's Government have, during the past few years, grown accustomed to regard the Sharif as the strongest power in Arabia and have, perhaps of their unconscious modesty, tended to minimise the part played in the Sharif's actual military operations by the forces and resources, to say nothing of the services of the British Officers, placed at his disposal. It is not therefore entirely unnecessary to call attention to the growing power of Najd, based on the unifying influence of a stern fanatical creed and consolidated, after years of patient work, by a monarch, who fills to-day in Arab estimation the place occupied but yesterday by Muhammad Ibn Rashid. It is, at any rate, incumbent on H.M.'s Government to avoid provoking that power to action, and one cannot but hope that the adoption of such a policy will not prove altogether incompatible with the recognition of the great part played by the Sharif during these years of war.

14. *The Wahhabi Revival.*

Colonel Hamilton, on his journey to Riyadh in October, 1917, had occasion to pass within a day's journey of Artawiya, one of the centres of the new Wahhabi movement associated with the name of the Akhwan brotherhood. He was impressed with what he heard regarding the tenets of this fanatical sect and, without enquiry, accepted as probably correct a local estimate, which gave the town a population of 35,000 souls. A little reflection would, I am convinced, have deterred Colonel Hamilton from reporting what he had heard without further investigation, and it is not improbable that he did not expect his report to be taken seriously. In the first place it was *prima facie* improbable that a town, twice as big as the biggest town in Central Arabia, could have sprung up in the space of a few years; in the second place—and this point is to my mind conclusive—native estimates of population are notoriously unreliable. Doughty's plan of reducing all such estimates by 90 per cent. might have been usefully resorted to in this case. I saw the town, from a safe distance, in October, 1918, and I am satisfied that its population cannot exceed from 10,000 to 12,000 souls.

Be that as it may, I found, on my arrival at Jidda and Cairo, that Colonel Hamilton's report had obtained official publicity and a disturbing amount of credence, causing no little alarm and predisposing the authorities in charge of Arab affairs to attach more importance, than was perhaps warranted by the facts, to reports emanating from prejudiced sources regarding the growth and objects of the Wahhabi revival. A report, written by Lieut.-Colonel T. E. Lawrence and purporting to give the views of Sharif Faisal, appeared in the *Arab Bulletin* (No. 74 of 1917); Sharif Abdulla's views, in due course, received prominence in the same vehicle, and I felt that the issue was being—if it had not already been—prejudged on totally insufficient data. I deprecated the attaching of too much importance to the views of obviously prejudiced individuals and did my best to discount the serious view that was being taken of the situation in high quarters, but Sharifian circles made the most of the imaginary menace and represented the Wahhabi revival as immediately threatening the peace and security of Arabia.

A solitary incident—the only instance in the course of 12 months, so far as I am aware, of the active ebullition of the dreaded militant Wahhabi movement—occurred, about this time, to lend colour to the stories circulated by the King's sons. A party of non-Wahhabi Ataiba tribesmen, including a *Shaikh*, had come into conflict with the Akhwan of Ghat Ghat, whither they had repaired apparently to raid or rob, and had paid for their temerity with their lives. The injured relatives rushed to the Sharif for redress and the latter drew alarming pictures of the ubiquity of Wahhabi propagandists and the urgency of checking the movement in its initial stages. Ibn Saud was accused of fostering the movement for the furtherance of his own political ambitions.

Suffice it to say that, from this time onwards, the fear of a Wahhabi rising played no small part in disposing H.M.'s Government to regard unfavourably any proposal likely to increase the military strength of Ibn Saud. The crisis created by the Sharif's attacks on the Wahhabi tribesmen of Khurma and the growing possibility of an open rupture between Ibn Saud and the King, which clouded the latter part of the period under report, confirmed Government in their reluctance to arm the former, though the necessity of keeping his attention distracted from Sharifian affairs by active employment against the enemy was recognised.

Subsequent study of the situation in Central Arabia tended to confirm me in my view that the Wahhabi peril, as such, was the fiction of prejudiced minds; I became convinced that Ibn Saud had the movement under perfect control. At the same time, it became increasingly apparent that the most alarming factor of the situation was the Sharif's apparent determination to provoke Ibn Saud to set the forces of Wahhabism in motion against himself, either to convince H.M.'s Government of the justice of his warning or, at the worst, to force Government to choose between himself and Ibn Saud—a dilemma, which, obviously, could only be resolved in one direction. This fact has not perhaps been sufficiently recognised—the Sharif's persistence in the affair of Khurma, unimportant as it was in itself, can have had no other object than to provoke Ibn Saud into open hostility. This was patent to Ibn Saud, who was not blind to the inevitable consequences of action by himself to assert his rights by force, and his determination to avoid being drawn into conflict on a matter, on which, on its merits, he had no strong feelings, was equalled only by the difficulty he experienced in persuading his subjects to be patient. Fortunately for him, the people of Khurma were well able to look after themselves; their defeat by the forces of the Sharif would, certainly, have precipitated a conflict.

Two great difficulties have, from time immemorial, beset the path of those, who have sought to rule Arabia—the nomadic habits of its tribesmen and the lack of a common rallying point. To a certain extent, the house of Rashid has been able to triumph over these difficulties by reason of the peculiar constitution of the Shammar tribe, whose solidarity is emphasised by the possession of a common capital and a ruler of their own blood. It has, however, been otherwise with the house of Saud—a line of foreign rulers residing in a centre of their own creation and ruling a confederation of tribes never unready to throw off their allegiance in the event of its becoming inconvenient.

The civil wars, if we may so call them, of the decades which followed the death of Faisal, aptly exemplify this point, and the present ruler of Najd had no sooner come to the throne of Riyadh, than he found himself called upon to face the same difficulty, pretenders of his own house not only raising the standard of revolt against him but receiving strong support among the tribes and townships of Najd. Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud proved himself, however, to be a man of no mean mould,—the first years of his reign were spent in expelling the foreign invaders from his furthest frontiers, then followed a period, during which he had to face the claims of rival candidates for the throne, then a short sharp successful effort to extend his frontier at the expense of the Ottoman Empire; finally followed the period of reconstruction, which, though retarded by the war, has been steadily pursued. Now, as never before, Najd is a homogeneous political entity acknowledging the rule of Ibn Saud.

In setting to work at the task of consolidation, by which he was confronted, Abdul Aziz cannot have failed to be impressed by two models from the history of Central Arabia. Muhammad Ibn Rashid had owed his strength to the peculiar characteristics, which made the Shammar what they have been and are—a Badawin tribe based on a Badawin city,—while his own great ancestor, Saud Ibn Saud, had carried his conquering arms to the farthest corners of Arabia by reason of the judicious combination of religion and policy, to which he owed his power.

Ibn Saud followed neither the one model nor the other in its entirety—he set to work to combine the two and the result was the Akhwan movement, whose essential characteristics are as follows:—

(1) it was restricted to the Badawin, who, though nominally, for the most part, adherents of the Hanbali or, as they came later to be called, the

Wahhabi doctrines were in practice divided in their allegiance between those doctrines and the codes of unwritten customary law, by which their lives were regulated; the townfolk of Najd, among whom the tyranny of public opinion in matters of religion is strong and well organized, are tacitly assumed to be devout Wahhabis and, therefore, required no special attention;

(2) *Mutawas* or, as Palgrave aptly calls them, Zelators, were appointed from among the *Ulama* of the towns to minister to the religious needs of the Badawin, to instruct them in the simple tenets of the Wahhabi faith, to extol the merits of a life lived on the Prophet's own model, to condemn the wickedness of the customs of desert society, to preach the physical glories of Paradise, and to inculcate the duty of death for the faith as the surest means of obtaining direct entry into that haven of rest and delight. The *Mutawas* at first worked among the nomads, but sedulously extolled the superior merit of communal life in the service of God;

(3) the train thus laid for the breakup of the essential characteristics of Badawin society, suitable sites were, as discovered, made available for the foundation of permanent settlements, and a number of villages or towns have sprung up during the last five or six years in various parts of Najd, a feature of which was the substitution of the bond of religious brotherhood for family ties—thus, while the Akhwan, for instance, of the Mutair retained in relation to their own Akhwan tribesmen the rights and privileges of tribal society, they acquired, with the Akhwan of tribes formerly hostile, all the rights and privileges of religious brotherhood;

(4) The Akhwan, thus collected in convenient centres and enthusiastic for their new faith, immediately evinced a desire to sever their old ties with their unconverted tribesmen, but this tendency Ibn Saud, with rare political acumen, discountenanced and thus was forged a strong bond of communal interest between important sections of all the great tribes of Najd—on this foundation Ibn Saud built the edifice of his political power, relying on the Badawin elements of his new settlements equally with the old settled townfolk, whom he was now able to release, to a large extent, from the irksome obligation, under which they had long lain of fighting the battles of their rulers;

(5) the peace and security of his territories being assured by the obligation to discard the ancient practice of raiding imposed on the new brotherhood, Ibn Saud was able to use the reserve energy of the Akhwan, henceforth vowed to fight only for the faith or in self-defence against attack, as the nucleus of his standing army. To them alone he distributed the arms and ammunition at his disposal; on them he relied to form the backbone of his army in war; they combined the hardiness of Badawin with the stability of the Hadhr; the interests of economy were served without loss of efficiency.

To sum up, we may say that the object of Ibn Saud in fostering the Akhwan movement has been to increase his military strength by spreading the burden of military service over a greater number of his subjects, to minimise the elements of weakness inherent in a Badawin state and a Badawin army and to economise his resources by substituting the hope of eternal reward for more mercenary considerations.

It may be asked with what ultimate end in view Ibn Saud has created this organization and whether there is any guarantee of his ability to control the movement. To the first question I would answer that he is actuated by no motive other than the desire to create a strong permanent bulwark against foreign aggression in the future and by a vague ambition to bring Jabal Shammar once more under the sway of his house; as regards his ambitions in other directions—for he cannot fail to have considered the possibility of extending the Wahhabi frontiers once more to the furthest confines of Arabia—it is impossible to say more than that he regards the British Government as an insuperable and permanent obstacle to the realisation of such dreams and is prepared to accept that position.

The answer to the other part of the question is more difficult; it can, I think, be confidently answered in the affirmative, so far as regards any possible forward policy, but it would be too much to expect that a system based on fanaticism could be controlled at will in the event of that fanaticism being seriously provoked by hostile aggressive action. It is this possibility, the more perilous in the event of Ibn Saud himself passing from the scene, that renders it desirable, in the interests of the future peace of Arabia, to discourage aggressive action by the Sharif or other elements under our control. The hornets' nest of Wahhabism may be regarded with equanimity, so long as it is left undisturbed, but the latest advices from Arabia, received so late as a few days ago, indicate that the Sharif is preparing yet another attack on Khurma.

The prospect of hostilities between Ibn Saud and the Sharif need not, in the changed circumstances, cause us any anxiety for ourselves, but it should be realised, before it is too late, that Khurma is but an incident in a bigger struggle yet to come. His Majesty's Government should make up its mind whether or not they are prepared to see Mecca attacked and overrun once more by the Wahhabis. On the whole I am inclined to the view that, so long as

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Khurma holds its own, as there seems good reason to believe it will, there is little danger of a far-reaching extension of Wahhabi activities, but I am convinced that the defeat of Khalid Ibn Luwai will be a signal for the storm.

15. *The Khurma Episode.*

When I passed through the little village of Khurma, situated in the lower reaches of the Wadi Subai, in December, 1917, on my way to Taif, I became aware of the existence of trouble, but the manoeuvrings of the Subai and Buqum tribes had little in them to indicate that a storm was brewing in that quarter which was destined to form, as it were, the *Leit-motiv* of Central Arabian politics. The circumstances that the Buqum were acting under the command of the Amir of Turaba, official representative of the King of the Hijaz, alone differentiated the operations I saw from the eternal outridings of Ataiba, Harb and Qahtan in the vast steppe country of the west.

According to such information as I was able to collect in Central Arabia, Khurma, having, like the rest of Arabia, formed part of the great Wahhabi Empire and having received from Saud himself dispensation from the obligation to pay taxes to the Central treasury, had settled down under its Ashraf headmen, who exercised a time-honoured overlordship over the Subai owners and negro cultivators of the palm groves of the village, to the enjoyment of practical autonomy under the vague suzerainty of Najd. At a later period, it passed under the similarly vague suzerainty of Turkey, and Ottoman authority was, doubtless, exercised, on behalf of the Sultan, by his representative, the Sharif of Mecca. During the last decades of the 19th Century, however, when the whole of Najd acknowledged the sway of Ibn Rashid, there appears to be reason for believing that Muhammad Ibn Rashid extorted from the Turkish authorities a substantial recognition of his authority and the acceptance of the line of Wadi Aqiq as the boundary between his own territories and the area of elective Turkish domination, namely, the Hijaz. By this arrangement Khurma must have been included by implication in the territories of Ibn Rashid, on whose expulsion from Najd, at the beginning of the present century, Ibn Saud resumed sway over the territories of his ancestors.

The important facts of the case are, firstly, that, so far as I have been able to ascertain, Khurma was always in the past too insignificant, either to form a bone of contention between the authorities concerned or to be mentioned specifically in any public agreement; secondly, that it always remained in enjoyment of virtual autonomy and independence; and, lastly, that it was, if anything, naturally dependent on Najd in virtue of its allegiance to the Wahhabi faith. With that allegiance no attempt appears ever to have been made to interfere, and I see no reason for questioning the correctness of Ibn Saud's statement that Shara Law has always been administered at Khurma for the benefit of its inhabitants by ecclesiastical officials of the Wahhabi persuasion, of whom the *Qadhi*, actually in office at the present time, succeeded his father, who, in turn, owed his appointment to Faisal Ibn Saud at least 50 years ago.

The fons et origo mali—and this we have on the authority of certain letters written by Sharif Abdulla himself to the tribal leaders of the Subai—was an attempt on the part of the Sharif in the Summer of 1917 to impose an orthodox *Qadhi* on the people of Khurma in place of the Wahhabi official, who had ministered to them for so long or, in other words, to interfere with the religious liberty of the community. This attempt was strongly resented and stoutly opposed by the people of Khurma, led by Sharif Khalid Ibn Luwai, their *Amir*; the newly appointed *Qadhi* was refused admission to his See and the forces of the Sharif were set in motion to enforce submission to his orders by the rebellious community.

The Sharif, imputing to Ibn Saud certain unspecified and certainly imaginary activities calculated to undermine his authority in the Khurma area, announced to the British Authorities his intention of sending troops to reduce the Subai and the drama began on or about the 1st June, 1918, with an attack on the Subai encampment, which resulted in the defeat of the Sharifian forces with the loss of two guns and two automatic rifles.

Ibn Luwai announced his victory to Ibn Saud in the customary Badawin way and I, at Riyadh, was in an excellent position to appreciate the effect of the ostentatious announcement of the victory of the true faith over the infidel on the dour spirits of the fanatical Wahhabis, seared by the painful rigours of a mid-summer Ramdhan.

The messengers from Khurma had passed, on their way, through the important Wahhabi settlement of Ghat Ghat, whose inhabitants responded without delay to the call for assistance by despatching a strong contingent towards the scene of action. Riyadh clamoured for war with the Sharif and, so far as I was in a position to judge, its clamour secured the important advocacy of the Imam Abdul Rahman himself and of the Wahhabi high priest; but Ibn Saud, making no secret of the seriousness of the situation in his conversations with me, resisted the pressure brought to bear on him, recalled the

Ghat Ghat contingent and sent it off for service with Turki against the Shammar, and wrote, at my request, to Khalid Ibn Luwai, assuring him that he was making representations in the matter to the British Government and directing him to refrain from forward action in the confidence of his ability and determination to protect his frontiers against attack.

The Sharif, in the course of the discussion, which followed, justified his action on the ground that Khalid Ibn Luwai owed his appointment as *Amir* of Khurma to himself—this claim was, according to my information, extremely doubtful, as Khalid had succeeded his cousin Ghalib in the ordinary course of inheritance on the death of the latter about four years ago, and that Khurma itself lay within his own frontiers. In the meantime, he did not consider it necessary to interrupt his operations against the "rebels" and preparations were pushed on for the renewal of the expedition. Khurma was attacked a second time in July; the Sharif's troops were again routed with the loss of two guns and two automatic rifles and the affair was reported to Ibn Saud by Khalid in a letter, in which he pressed for assistance and threatened to take matters into his own hands, if Ibn Saud found himself unable to support him, by sending forth his women and children to rouse Najd to action. Meanwhile there was little room for doubt that the tribes of the south were collecting for the defence of Khurma and that the Turkish authorities were watching the development of the situation with interest. The letters of the Asir chiefs and of Fakhri Pasha, referred to in another part of this report, provided sufficient confirmation of the suggestions to this effect I made in my reports.

My efforts were devoted to engaging Ibn Saud actively in hostilities with the Shammar, if only to keep his attention off the Khurma trouble and to ensure the employment of as large a part of his available force as possible. He naturally emphasised the delicacy of the situation, protested against the unprovoked aggression of the Sharif and wrote to Ibn Luwai, assuring him that, while the British Government had not had time to consider my representations before the second attack occurred, he would, without fail, go to his succour in the event of a third attack becoming imminent.

I was not in a position to do more than guarantee to Ibn Saud that the British Government would not suffer a violation of his territorial integrity, but the course of the correspondence, which ensued, made it evident that such a guarantee was meaningless. Ibn Saud, while assuring me once more that the Khurma people would not adopt an aggressive policy, warned me that he was pledged to go to their assistance in the event of another attack, and disclaimed all responsibility for the consequences, if the Sharif persisted in his course. At the same time, he offered to submit the boundary dispute involved unreservedly to the arbitration of the British Government with a guarantee that he would accept their decision, whatever it might be. Reporting these conversations I pressed for a settlement of the boundary question or, in the event of that being impossible under war conditions, for the imposition on both parties of a provisional boundary from Marran to Turaba along the line of the Shaib Shaba, which forms the natural boundary between the Subai and Buqum tribes.

My greatest hope lay in the fact that some time must necessarily elapse before the Sharif could renew his operations, and I felt confident that H.M.'s Government would insist on his holding his hand pending consideration of the issues in dispute. In this I was mistaken. The Sharif opposed the idea of arbitration on a question regarding the rights of which he had no doubt, and H.M.'s Government in a placatory message to Ibn Saud, without committing itself to any definite decision on the matter in dispute, adopted the Sharif's formula that he had no intention of allowing his operations, which were directed solely against the "rebel" Amir of Khurma, to develop into hostilities east of Khurma against Ibn Saud's territory.

Such a message, evading the whole point of the dispute as it did, was little consoling to Ibn Saud, who took strong exception to the wording of the clause of Government's message relating to the matter and repeated his inability to accept responsibility for the consequences of further aggressive action by the Sharif. Thus matters drifted inevitably towards war; H.M.'s Government had reassured Ibn Saud regarding his prospects in the event of his undertaking active measures against Ibn Rashid, and I made the most of this message to press him into action, conscious that it was a race with Sharif Shakir, who was known to be preparing for another descent on Khurma.

As a matter of fact, the news of his third attack on Khurma, undertaken, according to information culled from deserters from his force, in consequence of the receipt of peremptory orders from the Sharif to take action or surrender his command, and ending like its predecessors in the defeat of the Sharifian force with the loss of two guns and two automatic rifles, arrived on the day I rejoined Ibn Saud at Qusaiba after his successful raid against Hail.

Ibn Saud, delighted at his own success and equally so by the offer I was now able to make to him, on your authority, of a regular subsidy of £10,000 per month, so long as he maintained active operations against Jabal Shammar and, above all, convinced, by the result of the third attack on Khurma, of

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the ability of Ibn Luwai to hold his own single-handed, took the news calmly and, without losing so good an opportunity of protesting once more against the undisguised and active hostility of the Sharif, made it clear that he would now be too busy with his own operations against Hail to be able to give attention to other matters.

Such was the position, when war against Turkey came to an abrupt conclusion relieving the British Government of all immediate anxiety in regard to the development of the Central Arabian situation. As noted in the last section, Sharif Shakir is still maintaining his threat against Khurma, but the final *denouement* of the episode, whatever it may be and with whatever consequences to the peace of Arabia, falls beyond the scope of this report.

Sufficient has been said to show that the Khurma affair constituted in reality a test case for the decision of the Sharif's claim to jurisdiction over Najd or no small part of it. The British Government is committed by treaty to delimit the frontiers of the territory, over which Ibn Saud is recognised as independent ruler. This problem must receive the attention of H.M.'s Government in the postwar period of reconstruction, now imminent, and it will not be out of place to consider briefly some of the main points of the problem and to suggest, at any rate, the lines, on which it may be approached.

The problem, reduced to its simplest form, is that, while Ibn Saud claims absolute independence and integrity in the whole of Najd, the Sharif has put forward pretensions of overlordship over the whole of the Ataiba and Harb tribes and the western section of the Subai.

One has only to take cognisance of the fact that the Ataiba occupy the Najd highlands and the western steppe from the line of the Dalqan and SIRR Nafudhs to well within the line of the Hijaz mountains; that the Harb extend from the confines of the Batin to Madina over the whole desert of upper Qasim and that the western section of the Subai marches with the Buqum on the line of the Shaib Shaba on the west and with the Ataiba along Wadi Naim on the east; to realise that, in effect, the Sharif claims sovereignty over Central Arabia westward of a line drawn from Thamami, at the west end of the Batin, along the Wadi Rima and thence roughly southward along the eastern boundary of the Mudhib and SIRR districts to the Nafudh Sirra, south of the Najd Highlands, and so westward to the neighbourhood of Wadi Ranya. Thus the whole of the Qasim and SIRR provinces are claimed by the Sharif, whose eastern frontier would almost touch the frontier of Kuwait territory.

Such a claim would, it is needless to say, be resolutely contested by Ibn Saud, who claims jurisdiction over the whole of Najd and over such parts of the tribes abovementioned as reside therein. He rejects the possibility of a solution on tribal lines and is supported in this contention by history, which, so far as I know, has never been able to record the solidarity of the Ataiba and Harb tribes in allegiance to a single ruler.

In any case, it is obvious that any claim on the part of the Sharif, involving his acquisition of the Qasim and SIRR, is absurd on the face of it, and that fact alone makes the solution of the problem on a tribal basis impossible. The only alternative solution is a territorial boundary and the recognition of the authority of each ruler over all tribes and individuals residing on his side of such a frontier.

To find such a boundary is no easy task, but not so difficult as it may appear, as Central Arabia has the advantage of having well marked physical features, extending from north to south between the east and west line of the Nafudh Sirra, which shuts off the Wadi Dawasir region, and the boundaries of Jabal Shammar. The boundary line, above referred to, may be rejected as impracticable; its southern section along the Nafudh Dalqan, continued northwards along the western boundary of SIRR and the Qasim, is equally impracticable, in that it places the whole of the true Najd Highlands, which are and have always been under the effective rule of Ibn Saud, within the jurisdiction of the Sharif. The next possible line is the Wadi Naim, running roughly due south from Sija; beyond that westward is the line of the Shaib Shaba; beyond that again is the line of the Wadi Aqiq.

Between these three lines—and there seem to me no other possible ones—the eventual decision must rest; the last though it enjoys a certain degree of historical sanction may be rejected as giving Ibn Saud more than he claims; the first is only open to the objections, firstly, that it places the western section of the Subai tribes and its capital Khurma within the jurisdiction of the Sharif and thus cuts across the doctrine of the right of self-determination of weak communities, which is, to say the least, entitled to respect and, secondly, that it leaves a Wahhabi island in an orthodox sphere and thus keeps open the door of religious friction in Arabia; the middle alternative is to my mind the one best suited to the requirements of local conditions, the one most acceptable to the people most vitally concerned, the one that comes nearest to providing an exact line of demarcation between the hitherto vague geographical terms Najd and Hijaz, and the only one which follows a recognised tribal boundary for a considerable part of its length. Subject to minor modifications of detail its exact course would be along the Hamdh-Rima watershed in the

Harrat Khaibar to Hanakiya (which would, it seems to me, form a convenient meeting place of the boundaries of the Hijaz, Najd, Jabal and Shammar), thence straight across the steppe to Marran, thence to the point on the Shaib Shaba, where the Ataiba, Subai and Buqum boundaries meet and thence up the course of that Shaib to its point of departure from Wadi Subai, whence the line would follow the Wadi to Turaba. Whether from Turaba to Bisha the line would run east or west of the Ranya tract is a question, on which I am not in a position to express an opinion and which could be left to be decided by circumstances.

The one point, which cannot, in my opinion—and you have already given expression to the same view—be taken into consideration in determining the respective spheres of jurisdiction of the Sharif and Ibn Saud is the incomparably greater military service rendered by the former to the allied cause in the course of the war. The wishes of the people to be affected by the decision and the desirability of leaving no loophole for the occurrence of religious friction in the future are practical considerations of cardinal importance, to which the historical and geographical aspects of the case would serve as important, but subordinate, adjuncts.

When to these considerations is added the reflexion that, whatever the abstract merits of the dispute between the Sharif and Ibn Saud over their boundaries may be, the actions of the Sharif during the past year have so alienated the sympathies of the people of Khurma that they will not submit to his rule in any circumstances whatever, the delicacy of the task confronting H.M.'s Government in the near future can be readily imagined. On the other hand, if they decline the heavy responsibility of deciding and enforcing their decision of the dispute, they will find themselves on the other horn of the dilemma in determining the attitude to adopt in the event of the outbreak of hostilities between the Sharif and Ibn Saud, which, to me, seems inevitable and to be fraught with far-reaching consequences.

16. *Ibn Saud and the Turks.*

From time to time, and notably on one occasion, when a consignment of money appears undoubtedly to have got through from Madina to the Turkish forces in Yaman, I think in the summer of 1917, it was stated that Ibn Saud was not altogether innocent of connivance with the Turks, and on this point the Sharif never tired of laying especial emphasis. Whatever may have been the facts regarding the consignment of money referred to, I am convinced that, if it got through, it did so without the knowledge of Ibn Saud, as it might well do by passing down through the great Ataiba steppe, and the suggestion that Ibn Saud gave the party safe conduct, etc., I have no hesitation in dismissing as unfounded and absurd. It has never perhaps been sufficiently realised that, whatever the intricacies of Central Arabian politics, the Turk is Ibn Saud's natural enemy, not only because he is accounted an infidel by the Wahhabi, but because it is impossible that he should acquiesce in the permanent loss of Hasa, if he remains after the war in a position to contest the arbitrament of fate.

When I was at Jidda, the Sharif asserted with much vehemence, as a fact of which he had incontestable proof, that Ibn Saud had long been in secret correspondence with Fakhri Pasha, the Turkish Commandant of the Madina garrison. As a matter of fact, when I was at Riyadh, Ibn Saud had not only informed me of the receipt of letters by himself from Fakhri Pasha, but had handed me three original letters, one of which, at any rate, shewed conclusively that Ibn Saud had never vouchsafed a reply to the others. The Sharif having made his accusation and offered to produce his evidence—I think a human witness—I duly informed him of the nature of the proofs I held that his statement was unfounded and, on the following day, when I produced the letters themselves and proceeded to read them out for his information, he obstinately refused to listen and declared that he was justified in his view of Ibn Saud—but said nothing more about producing his convincing evidence.

I mention the matter here both as shewing the attitude of the Sharif towards Ibn Saud and as sufficiently satisfactory proof that, though the Turkish authorities were fully alive to the advantages of detaching Ibn Saud from our cause, he himself never gave them the slightest encouragement. Fakhri Pasha was, at any rate, discouraged by his experiences and ceased addressing letters to Ibn Saud, until matters became really acute between the latter and the Sharif over the Khurma affair, when, in September, 1918, he took the opportunity of writing, ostensibly to give Ibn Saud the somewhat belated news of the demise of the late Sultan but, more particularly, to congratulate him on the victories of the Akhwan of Khurma over the Sharifian expeditions and, incidentally, to offer to supply him with anything he might require in the matter of arms, ammunition and funds to prosecute a campaign against the Sharif. These letters, also, Ibn Saud made over to me in original and, though the offer of arms, etc., came at a critical moment, when his relations with the Sharif are extremely strained and H.M.'s Government had

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expressed their inability to supply arms for the Hail campaign, it is to Ibn Saud's credit that he resisted the temptation to reply to Fakhri Pasha.

Another Turkish communication received in August he treated with similar contempt—a letter signed by four leading chiefs of the Asir tribes, but obviously, from its style and contents, dictated by Muhiyuddin Beg, the Turkish Commandant and *Mutasarrif* in Asir, in which Ibn Saud was reminded of the benefits accruing to the province of Asir from Turkish rule and was called upon to join the signatories in defence of the true faith.

So much for such correspondence as is known to have been addressed to Ibn Saud by or on behalf of the Turkish authorities. In June a report, emanating from Aden, indicated, apparently on good authority, that Ibn Saud and the Turks had concluded arrangements, whereby certain officers were to be allowed to pass down to Yaman to set the finances of the troops serving there in order, but at no time did this report seem to me to be anything but the fiction of some prejudiced brain. In any case, it was intrinsically improbable on the face of it, and I never heard any more of the results of the alleged arrangement.

The only occasion, on which, so far as I know, Turkish Officers attempted to pass through Najd, occurred in April, when, on my return to Riyadh, Ibn Saud informed me that, having received information of the passage of a Darwish through Riyadh, he had stopped and arrested the man, who proved to be a certain Qol-Agasi Qudsi Effendi, an Officer of the Yaman forces, endeavouring to make his way from Sanaa and Ibha *via* Riyadh to Medina and Constantinople with a considerable sum (£ T341) in Turkish notes and a number of private letters, which contained little of interest and importance beyond the information that another officer had left Ibha some three weeks or so ahead of Qudsi Effendi bound for the same destination. Whether that officer got through or perished on the journey it is impossible to say, but he was not intercepted by Ibn Saud.

As regards Qudsi Effendi, who remained in custody at Riyadh to the end of the period under report, I expressed a desire to see him on my return from Wadi Dawasir, with a view to arranging for his despatch to the coast for internment by the British authorities. My desire to visit him being communicated to him, he made it quite clear that, though he could not refuse to see me, if Ibn Saud insisted on his doing so, his disgust for and hatred of infidels was such, that he would rather be spared the ordeal. In these circumstances I respected his wishes and never saw him, though, hearing from another source that he was in custody in circumstances of great hardship and discomfort, I begged Ibn Saud to improve the conditions of his imprisonment. Qol Agasi Qudsi Effendi, for all his unreasoning fanaticism, had reason to be grateful to an infidel for a very substantial alleviation of the miserable conditions, under which he lived in the dungeons of the Riyadh fort for nearly two months.

17. *Arms in Najd.*

In view of the often-repeated reluctance of H.M.'s Government to supply Ibn Saud with arms and the High Commissioner's insistence on the inadvisability of strengthening the Wahhabi forces on account of the possible development of a Wahhabi menace, it is important to note that, while Government's policy in this matter had the effect of alienating, to a certain extent, the sympathies of Ibn Saud, it failed of its main object owing to the Sharif's lavish distribution of arms and ammunition among irresponsible elements of the population of Najd in the mistaken belief that he was thereby securing their allegiance. To this may be added the illicit traffic in arms and ammunition, out of which, there seems little doubt, certain Sharifian officials, responsible for the custody of military equipment, made considerable profits.

The traffic in arms and ammunition was carried on in Najd on a wholesale scale, and cases came to my notice of the transit thereof through Najd to the Persian Gulf coast. Ibn Saud was constrained to forbid the export of ammunition from his territories and to take steps to purchase such surplus stocks, as were available, for his own use, with the result that, during the last months of the period under report, he had bought up considerably in excess of 300,000 rounds, while I estimated that at least an equal quantity, in the aggregate, was held by individuals. Ibn Saud being content to leave rifles in the possession of those who had them, knowing that they would always be available for his service, it was not possible to procure even the roughest estimate of the number received from Sharifian sources, but it is known that Najd volunteers were freely supplied with arms and regularly came away with the equipments so secured—frequently as deserters. In these circumstances it may be assumed that in one way or another Najd secured large quantities of arms, possibly not far short of 5,000, if we assume a rough percentage of one rifle to 100 rounds of ammunition brought away.

The result of the Sharif's policy and, indeed, of our own was to weaken Ibn Saud in relation to his own subjects and leave him in a worse position to control the Wahhabi movement than before, while, at the same time, greatly increasing the strength of the tribes.

Ibn Saud, while conscious that, under normal conditions, this meant an accession of strength to himself, was not blind to the history of his own house or to the objections against the indiscriminate arming of his tribes. It was largely for this reason rather than in view of his immediate requirements for the campaign against Ibn Rashid, that he pressed so strongly to be provided with arms. Every rifle in his arsenal meant the equipment of an *Akhu*, the addition of one regular soldier to his army, and it was, I venture to think, a mistaken policy to keep him weak in armament, unless adequate steps could be taken to prevent the wholesale armament of his tribes.

As matters now stand, Ibn Saud, even if we count to him the tribesmen armed by the Sharif, is probably weaker in point of armament than Ibn Rashid, who, in addition to what he had received from the Turks in the early stages of the war, received, towards the end of the period under report, at least part of a consignment of arms promised him by his allies. The Sharif is, of course, immeasurably superior in armament to both his Central Arabian rivals, but the continuance of his present methods of check and control will, in course of time, redress the balance in their favour.

18. *Pilgrimage to the Shiah Holy Places.*

I have noted, in the fourth section of this report, that the Mission was instructed to discuss, among other things, with Ibn Saud the question of the restrictions on pilgrimage to the Shiah holy places necessitated by war conditions.

At a very early stage of my work, however, I realised that this portion of the Mission's mandate must have been based on a misapprehension, for, if there is one subject on which Ibn Saud feels strongly, it is the Shiah heresy and everything connected with it. I exercised my discretion, therefore, to avoid all reference to the matter in connection with my work, though the subject was one on which Ibn Saud never tired of expressing his views in general conversation.

The origin of the misapprehension appears to have been a report of Captain Loch, made in August, 1917, in connection with Dr. Harrison's visit to Riyadh, already referred to. Dr. Harrison, in commenting on Ibn Saud's attitude towards us, had mentioned that our failure to open a general river traffic to Baghdad had incurred his censure and Captain Loch had added, as the result of his own observations at Qalif and Bahrain, that the restrictions placed on the Shiah pilgrimage had also evoked similar criticism. Sir Percy Cox had, naturally enough, concluded that both those subjects were of interest to Ibn Saud, whereas I am now convinced that he never felt and, therefore, had probably never expressed the slightest concern with either. Both were, however, matters of some concern, respectively to the merchant and Shiah communities of the Arabian littoral, and the local reports had been oriented accordingly in circumstances liable to give rise to misunderstanding.

Ibn Saud, himself a strong Wahhabi, whose authority in Central Arabia is based on that creed, revived by himself, finds himself in a somewhat delicate position in relation to the Sunni and Shiah elements subject to him in the Qasim and the Hasa respectively. Formal recognition of the orthodoxy of the one or the heresy of the other would involve him in a charge of laxity, intolerable to the followers of the true creed, and is, therefore, impracticable, while persecution of either would certainly end in the loss of his richest provinces and is, therefore, inexpedient. With rare political wisdom, he has evolved a policy, which, while satisfying the Wahhabi element by prohibition of the public parade of unacceptable creeds, is sufficiently gratifying to the followers of such creeds by reason of its toleration of the private celebration of their ceremonies without let or hindrance.

On rare occasions he has had to interfere in cases of actual conflict, and the instances, which have come to my notice, show that he has the courage to check uncalled for interference in matters of religion on the part of Wahhabi zealots. On one occasion, for instance, a party of men from Anaiza were smoking round their camp fire, when five *Akhwan*, happening to pass by and observe them, took it upon themselves to correct the sinners. They had not got further than the stage of reprobation, when the men of Anaiza rose up and slew their reprovers, whose relatives, demanding satisfaction in the court of Ibn Saud, were curtly informed that it was his, not their, prerogative to administer correction to his erring subjects.

To a policy of toleration Ibn Saud looks for the eventual conversion of all his subjects to the true faith, but further than this he does not and cannot go. The pilgrimage to Shiah holy places is not encouraged, but returning pilgrims are subjected to no inquisition—nevertheless no one would be more glad than Ibn Saud, if the pilgrimage to Karbala and Najaf were made permanently impossible, and no one was more delighted than he at the punishment recently meted out to the miscreants of Najaf.

The pilgrimage to Mecca, enjoined in the Quran itself, stands on a different footing and is not only considered permissible to but obligatory on all Wahhabis. The conjunction with it of the pilgrimage to the tomb of the

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Prophet at Madina is anathema and hotly inveighed against; the reverence of other Sunni saints and their tombs, of which an instance is the pilgrimage to the tomb of Abdulla ibn Abbas at Taif, largely resorted to by women disappointed of offspring, is regarded as an act of idolatry; while Ibn Saud never tires of inveighing against the Sharif for permitting the laxity of morals, which makes Mecca itself a byword.

In 1917 Ibn Saud arranged a ceremonious pilgrimage on a large scale from Najd, in which rode his father and his brother, Muhammad. The former's return on account of illness before he reached Mecca was, without any reason whatever, interpreted in Sharifian circles as being indicative of fear or hatred, while the experiences of Muhammad and his fellow-pilgrims and the growing delicacy of the political situation decided Ibn Saud to allow no official pilgrimage from Najd during the year under report. I have no reason to credit reports emanating from Mecca to the effect that Ibn Saud had threatened to visit disobedience in this matter with dire penalties—his orders were in themselves sufficient; while he did all that was reasonably possible to facilitate the journey of the Kuwait pilgrimage, which passed through Buraida, when I was there at the end of August.

On the whole, I am of opinion that Ibn Saud's decision to send no pilgrimage from Najd this year was a wise precaution against trouble; the Sharif's actions and public pronouncements at this period were, at any rate, not calculated to make a Najd pilgrimage free of serious risk of disturbance.

19. Location of Political Agent in Najd.

The question of the permanent location of a British Agent at the Wahhabi court, on which I was instructed to elicit Ibn Saud's views, was a very delicate matter to approach, more particularly in view of Ibn Saud's growing dissatisfaction at his treatment by H.M.'s Government, and I regret to say that I had had no reasonable opportunity to make such a proposal when my Mission terminated in circumstances which left no doubt that Ibn Saud would not consent to it unreservedly.

Towards myself Ibn Saud was invariably frank and cordial; I saw him daily, often, indeed, more than once a day, and he seemed to take pleasure in giving me his views and discussing politics, history and the affairs of the world in general. Nevertheless, it was obvious to me that my presence with him was a matter which necessitated continual explanations to a critical and hostile audience; according to his own account, he countered the adverse comments of the strict Wahhabi element by the explanation that my stay, though prolonged, was temporary and necessitated only by the Sharifian situation and the blockade, in regard to which he found it necessary to be in close touch with the British Government. He never allowed it to be supposed publicly that I was in any way interested in his operations against Hail.

At the same time, he made it clear to me that he regarded my presence as absolutely necessary and, indeed, advantageous to him, and he never suggested that I should go, until, in the circumstances already indicated, he informed me very frankly that if H.M.'s Government were not disposed to modify their recent policy towards him, he would not expect me to return or to be replaced.

Public opinion would certainly be hostile to the permanent location of a British representative in Najd, but Ibn Saud would, I am convinced, be prepared to run counter to the views of his subjects, if the presence of such a representative were likely to be to his own political advantage. That will depend on the line of policy decided on in due course by H.M.'s Government.

In any case, if we may assume that our policy in the future will be such as to dispose Ibn Saud to agree to the permanent representative of H.M.'s Government at his court, the nature of the agency to be established will be a matter demanding serious consideration. The jealousy and exclusiveness of Najd render it, in my opinion, quite out of the question to establish an agency on the ordinary lines in vogue at the ports on the Persian Gulf coast, with all the paraphernalia of office establishments, escorts and flags. The display of alien power would be as unwelcome to the Wahhabi as the influx of alien personnel; the presence of even Muslim clerks and servants from outside would be a ground of suspicion and anxiety to Ibn Saud, calculated to disturb the even tenour of our relations with him.

For these reasons, I am convinced that, at any rate, for many years to come, H.M.'s Government should aim at making their representation at the Wahhabi court as unostentatious as is compatible with efficiency. The British Agent at Riyadh must be content to live the life of the people, adopt their manner of dress and, above all, to submit to the somewhat irksome restrictions imposed on social intercourse alike by the bigotry of the people and the jealousy of their ruler. Perhaps even it would be politic in the beginning so to arrange matters that the presence of a British Officer at Riyadh should be intermittent and not permanent, constituting a series of visits at reasonable intervals rather than continuous residence.

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20. *Acknowledgments.*

This report would not be complete without some attempt on my part to express my gratitude for the generous help and co-operation received by me from many quarters.

On Captain P. G. Loch, I.A., Political Agent, first at Bahrain and then at Kuwait, to whom I cannot adequately express my sense of obligation, fell a heavy burden of work of many kinds in connection with the Mission; on him I could always rely for the prompt disposal of urgent work and for enthusiastic co-operation in a variety of ways.

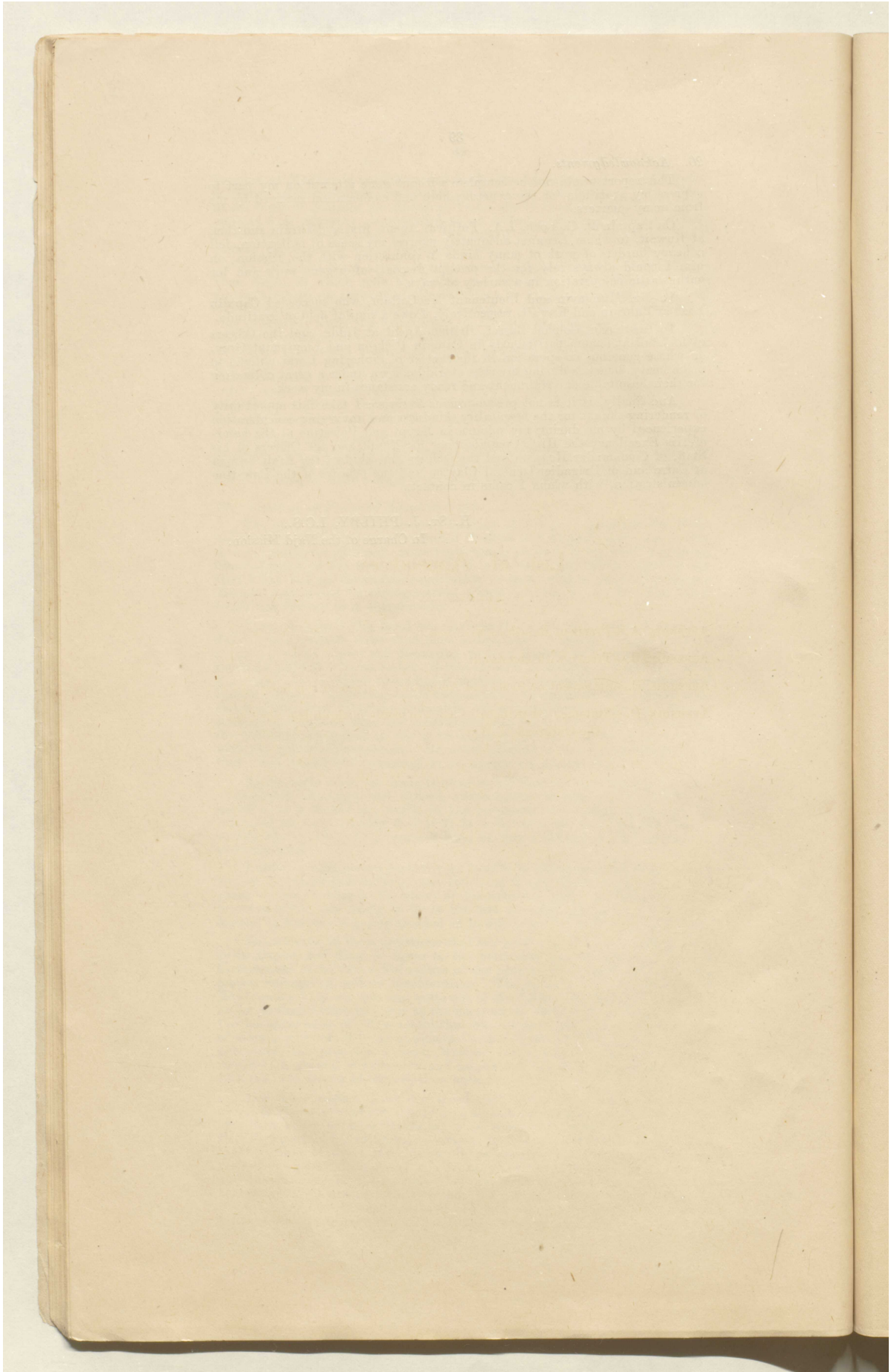
To Mr. Mungavin and Lieutenant MacCollum, who succeeded Captain Loch at Bahrain and Kuwait, respectively, I owe a similar debt of gratitude.

To Lieutenant-Colonel Basset, British Agent at Jidda, and the Officers of his staff and more particularly to Captain Dickson and Lieutenant Grey, on whose generous co-operation in the matter of ciphering I was obliged to make heavy demands during my stay at Jidda, I am under a great obligation for their hospitable entertainment and ready assistance in my work.

And finally, if it is not presumptuous to do so, I take this opportunity of rendering thanks for the hospitality, kindness and unvarying consideration experienced by me during my sojourn in Egypt and Palestine at the hands of His Excellency the High Commissioner for Egypt and the Officers of his Staff, of Commander Hogarth and the Officers and Staff of the Arab Bureau at Cairo and of Brigadier-General Clayton and the Officers of the Palestine administration, with whom I came in contact.

H. St. J. PHILBY, I.C.S.,
In Charge of the Najd Mission.

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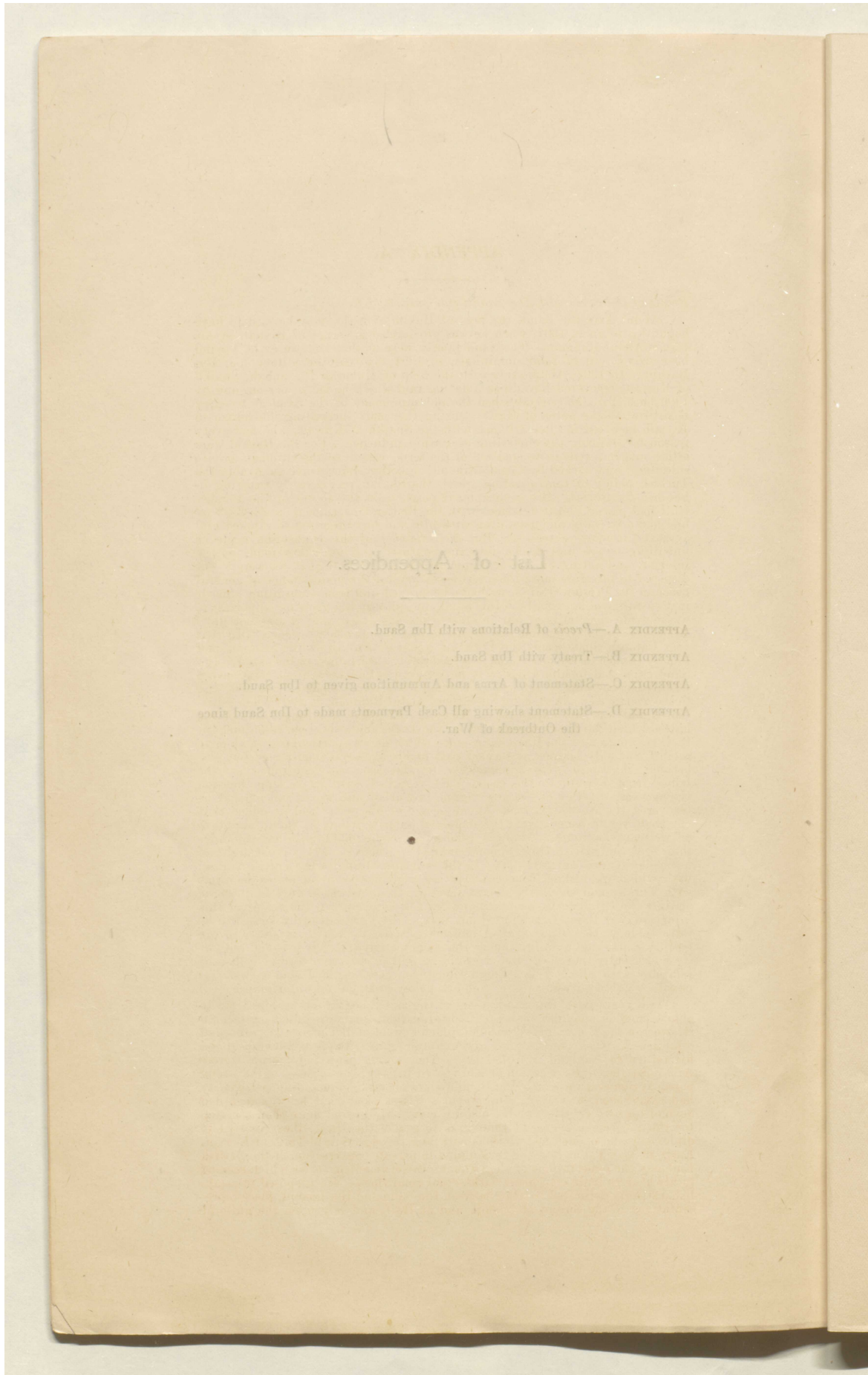
APPENDIX A.—*Precis* of Relations with Ibn Saud.

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APPENDIX A.

Precis of Relations with Ibn Saud (vide para. 2 of Report).

Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, the present Hakim of Najd, may be said to have begun his reign in 1901, when he was proclaimed governor of Riyadh by his father Abdul Rahman. The Saud family were at that time in exile, having been driven out of their dominions, in 1891, by their hereditary foe, Ibn Rashid. In 1902, Abdul Aziz with the help of Mubarak Ibn Sabah, Shaikh of Kuwait, recovered Riyadh in a daring raid which he led in person, and by 1906 he had so far re-established the old supremacy of the Saud as to carry hostilities to the gates of Hail. During the years succeeding his return to Riyadh he acted in close alliance with the Shaikh of Kuwait, who had every reason for desiring the curtailment of Rashid influence. For the Rashid were allies, and in a remote acceptance of the term, vassals of the Ottoman empire subsidised and backed by Constantinople, and they represented in Arabia the Turkish policy of centralisation which the Shaikh was covertly resisting in his own territories. His geographical position on the shores of the Persian Gulf had placed him in relations with the British Government; since 1899 we had had a friendly understanding with him and had promised to support him against Ottoman aggression. But the existence of this connection made us unwilling to see him drawn into the confused and uncertain feuds of the interior, and acting on the principle laid down in 1897 that we were "not disposed to interfere more than was necessary for the maintenance of general peace in the Persian Gulf", we had discouraged him from embroiling himself in Central Arabian affairs. Ibn Saud, in spite of his growing importance, was outside the limits of our interest, thus appointed, and it was not until 1911 that special attention was drawn to him in our official reports. In that year Captain Shakespear, the Political Agent at Kuwait, while on tour, met him by chance in the desert and was hospitably entertained in his camp. Ibn Saud expressed to him a desire to be received into a recognised relationship with Great Britain; he referred to Colonel Pelly's visit to Riyadh in 1865 and to the overtures made to us by his father, Abdul Rahman, in 1904 when a British Agent was first appointed to Kuwait. He spoke in strong terms of the hatred which the Arabs entertained for the Turks and of his own resentment of their occupation of the Hasa, a province which he was particularly anxious to regain, not only because it formed part of his ancestral dominions, but also because it would give him access to the sea and control over the tribes from Riyadh to the coast. He regarded with grave apprehension the aggressive policy of the new regime in Turkey and would welcome, if he recovered the Hasa, a British Agent in one of his ports, and he added that our trade would benefit from the increased security which he would maintain on the caravan routes. Captain Shakespear could make no other rejoinder than that the British Government confined its interests to the coast and had never challenged Turkish claims to the ordering of affairs in Central Arabia, with which we had no concern; that we were moreover on amicable terms with Turkey and should be averse from anything in the nature of intrigue against the Ottoman Government, but in his comments on the report of this interview, Sir Percy Cox pointed out that as the Porte seemed disposed to be intractable in the adjustment of matters relating to British interests in the Gulf, we could not afford to ignore Ibn Saud's attitude. His personal authority had greatly increased, and it would be well to entertain cordial if distant relations with him. The Foreign Office, however, decided that it was impossible at that time to swerve from our policy of strict non-interference.

Two years later Ibn Saud, without the assistance which he had tried to obtain from us, though he was credited throughout Arabia with having secured it, overran the Hasa, ejected without difficulty the small Turkish garrisons and established himself on the coast at Qatif and Ojair. Captain Shakespear, on his return to England in June, 1914, from a long projected journey across Arabia, in the course of which he had visited Riyadh, bore witness to the strong personal domination which Ibn Saud's vigorous and commanding personality had established, and from other reports it was clear that he was regarded beyond his own frontiers as the coming man. He proved more than a match for the ineffective efforts of the Turks to retake the Hasa; they resorted to diplomacy and opened negotiations with him through Saiyid Talib of Basrah. Early in May Tal'at Beg had formulated in private conversation at the British Embassy the expectations of the Ottoman Government in terms which seemed to his hearers little consonant with actual conditions. He proposed to establish a strictly delimited frontier between Ibn Saud and Ibn Rashid, place representatives of the Sultan at Riyadh and at Hail, and rely upon the guile of

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these officials to control without the aid of force the actions of the two Amirs. As for the Hasa, Ibn Saud would be appointed Mutasarrif of the province, but the collection of the customs would remain in Turkish hands and Turkish garrisons would be replaced in the ports.

Nothing was more certain than that Ibn Saud's appearance on the coast must ultimately bring him into direct contact with ourselves whether we welcomed it or sought to avoid it; and this anxiety underlay and possibly accelerated the action of the Porte. But at the moment Turkish fears were groundless. We were concerned wholly with the conclusion of prolonged negotiations with Constantinople touching interests in Mesopotamia and the Gulf which were of vital importance, and were less inclined, if possible, than before for Arabian adventure. We made a friendly offer of mediation which was refused, and when, in April, 1914, the Amir met the British Agent, Colonel Grey, outside Kuwait, he was given to understand that we had recently concluded a comprehensive agreement with Turkey and could hold out to him no hope of support. Ibn Saud was thrown back on his own resources, but these were considerable, and the secret treaty which was signed in May by himself and the Wali of Basrah, fell short of Tal'at Beg's anticipations. He accepted the title of Wali and Military Commandant of Najd which was offered to himself and his descendants as long as they should remain loyal, and engaged to fly the Turkish flag, but he was to have charge of the customs, on behalf of the Ottoman Government, raise his own levies and provide the garrisons for Qatif and Ojair. Deficiencies in the Najd budget were to be met from the customs, and no revenue from any local income was to be paid to Constantinople until such time as there was a surplus—an eventuality of doubtful occurrence. But while exercising in his own territories an authority which was in all but the name that of an independent ruler, his correspondence with foreign Powers was to be conducted solely through the Porte, and in case of war he was to come to the assistance of the Sultan.

What would have been the upshot of a treaty which so imperfectly reflected the convictions of the contracting parties can scarcely admit of doubt. The guiding trait of Ibn Saud's character is what must be called a racial rather than a national patriotism, but this sentiment was not likely to evoke sympathetic consideration from the leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress, who were blindly determined on the Ottomanization of the Arabs. As a strict Wahhabi, the new Wali of Najd looked with abhorrence on the loose religious principles of the Turks and was far from admitting their pretensions to represent and direct Islam. He had, in conversation with Captain Shakespear, spoken with unexpected vehemence on this point, saying that in his eyes the infidel was preferable to the Turk, since the latter broke the rule he professed to follow, while the former acted in accordance with his own law, and to the same listener he declared that he had accepted the terms of the agreement only because he was assured privately that even the small measure of sovereignty accorded to Turkey would never be claimed. The Kuwait treaty was put to the test by the outbreak of the European war and found wanting.

The disquieting attitude adopted by Turkey on the outbreak of war between Germany and the Entente Powers produced a profound alteration in our policy towards the Porte. It became necessary to reckon up our assets in Arabia, and early in October Captain Shakespear, who was in England, was ordered to return to the Persian Gulf and get into touch with Ibn Saud so as to prevent if possible the outbreak of unrest in the interior, and in the event of war with Turkey to ensure that no assistance should be rendered from that quarter. Before he could reach his destination war had been declared. A message had been despatched to Ibn Saud informing him of Captain Shakespear's impending visit, recognizing his position in Najd and the Hasa and guaranteeing him against reprisals by sea or land if he would commit himself to enter the lists against Turkey. The Turks, on their side, lost no time in approaching the Amirs of Central Arabia. Their scheme, which was that Ibn Rashid should aid in the campaign against Egypt while Ibn Saud opposed the British advance in Mesopotamia, showed that they were as unaware of the feeling towards them which prevailed among the Arabs as they were ignorant of the conditions of the desert, where the network of tribal feud permits no man to withdraw his forces on a distant expedition without fear of attack on his unprotected possessions. Ibn Saud, apparently in order to gain time, took advantage of his abiding enmity with Ibn Rashid and launched into open hostilities against him. In vain Enver Pasha urged him to abandon private quarrels, sent him a gift of money for the expenses of co-operation with the Sultan's armies, and ultimately entrusted Saiyid Talib with the task of bringing about a reconciliation. At this juncture Saiyid Talib was busily engaged in endeavouring through the intermediation of Shaikh Khaz'al and His Majesty's Consul at Muhammareh to drive a bargain with the British Government providing for his adherence to us in the event of war with Turkey, but the terms which he put forward were so extravagant as to be impossible of acceptance, and he was still hesitating over Shaikh Khaz'al's advice to him to abate them when the declaration of war left him

stranded. Then it was that he saw in his proposed deputation to Najd a providential means of escape from Basrah where his position had now become highly precarious, and he left hurriedly for Ibn Saud's camp, *via* Zubair. Meanwhile the Wahhabi Chief, in response to Turkish exhortation, had pleaded that he could spare no troops for the Iraq till he had reduced Ibn Rashid to his rightful state of vassalage. To the British message he replied that he was unshaken in his long-standing desire for intimate relations with us. But he was not unnaturally reluctant to take open part with us until he was satisfied that our change of front towards himself was likely to be permanent, and in spite of his personal confidence in Captain Shakespear it was with some misgiving that he consented to his visit. The meeting took place on December 31st at Khufsah near Majma' in Sudair. Ibn Saud spoke with great frankness. Before compromising himself wholly with the Turks he asked that our assurances of support should be embodied in a formal treaty, the terms of which were drafted forthwith. They included a guarantee of complete independence on our part and an undertaking on the part of Ibn Saud that he would have no dealings with other Powers except after reference to the British Government. He informed Captain Shakespear that he had been in communication with the Sharif and with the heads of the northern Anazah confederation and that they were resolved to stand together. He was holding in detention a party of four envoys sent by the Turks to urge him to join Ibn Rashid in a *jihad* against us, but after consultation with Captain Shakespear the Turkish mission was dismissed with the reply that Ibn Rashid's forces were camped within two days of Ibn Saud and that there could now be no question of peace between them. On January 17th a messenger arrived from Mecca bearing a letter from the Sharif's son, Abdullah, who wrote that the Sharif had been called upon to proclaim the *jihad* and was temporising till he heard what line Ibn Saud proposed to take. Ibn Saud made an answer that he saw no advantage to the Arabs in joining the Ottoman Government and had himself dismissed a Turkish deputation empty-handed.

Upon the reports sent by Captain Shakespear from Ibn Saud's camp, Sir Percy Cox was authorised to proceed with the negotiations for the treaty, but on January 24th battle was joined between Ibn Saud and Ibn Rashid and Captain Shakespear, unarmed and present only as a spectator, met his death. Ibn Saud's version of the disaster was that he was shot dead by a Shammar rifle-bullet, but this statement is in any case based only on second-hand information, as it is undisputed that Captain Shakespear had taken up a position in a different part of the field than that where his host was located. Since then various and divergent accounts of what happened have been recited, one of little more value than another, but the balance of evidence goes to show that he was first wounded in the leg and disabled, and soon afterwards killed in the charge of Ibn Rashid's cavalry which overwhelmed the flank on which he was posted. In the *saue qui peut* which ensued it is feared that he was either abandoned or forgotten, but the precise circumstances of his untimely death will probably never be ascertained. Ibn Saud expressed profound regret for the loss of one whom he regarded as a brother, and always refers to him with respect and affection.

The action was indecisive: both parties claimed the victory and both were temporarily crippled and forced to retire. It was an unexpected and a somewhat disconcerting result, for Ibn Saud's preparations had been made on an exceptional scale and his forces were said largely to outnumber those of Ibn Rashid, though he was inferior in cavalry. The accounts given by the Arabs attribute his defeat to the treachery of the Ajman. Ibn Saud's personal courage is beyond question, but he not uncommonly falls short as a tactician, and Mubarak of Kuwait pronounced him to be a poor leader in battle. But if he had not dealt Ibn Rashid a crushing blow, he had at least put him out of action and prevented him from joining the Turks, as he unquestionably would have done. The intervention of Ibn Rashid in the early part of the Mesopotamian campaign might have added considerably to our difficulties. Nevertheless Captain Shakespear's death was a heavy price to pay for the advantage of immobilizing him.

The two chiefs held apart without further hostilities till the summer when an agreement, dated June 10th, was concluded between them. Ibn Rashid recognised Ibn Saud's claims, except that of overlordship which he could scarcely be expected to acknowledge, and undertook not to play a treacherous game towards the Turkish Government but to incline towards whichever Government was in alliance with Ibn Saud. He confined his own jurisdiction to Hail and its villages and the Shammar tribes, while Ibn Saud was acknowledged to hold all Najd from Al Khahaf to Dawasir. Al Khahaf is no doubt the Kahafah of Hunter's map, a little north of latitude 27 degrees. In a tribal country the adjustment of frontiers can never be very exact, but it is clear that Ibn Rashid renounced all pretensions to the Qasim, a province whose rich oases had frequently changed hands. It is of interest to note that the tribes reckoned as subject to Ibn Saud are the Mutair, Ataiyah, Harb, Bani Abdullah, Ajman, Murrah, Manasir, Bani Haja, Subai, Sahul, Qahtan and Dawasir, but this catalogue must not be taken as exact, for the Mutair are

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mostly in Kuwait territory and the Ataibah and Harb come for the greater part under the Sharif.

After Captain Shakespear's death Ibn Saud sent an immediate request that another officer should be accredited to him or, failing this, that negotiations should continue through his agent in Basrah, Abdul Latif Mandil. No suitable officer was available, but Ibn Saud was advised to sign a preliminary agreement on the lines of Captain Shakespear's draft and leave all details to be settled later. He signed and returned the new draft which had been sent to him but with some important modifications concerning which it seemed better to postpone further discussion till a meeting with the Chief Political Officer could be arranged. For the time therefore the conclusion of the treaty was suspended, Ibn Saud being wholly engaged with internal affairs. His position at home at this epoch was the reverse of secure. His reputation among the tribes had suffered from the unsuccessful operations against Ibn Rashid during which he had incurred much loss in material and equipments, and during the greater part of 1915 he was engaged with a dangerous rising in the Hasa on the part of the Ajman. He himself believed that the revolt was instigated by the Turks and Ibn Rashid, but it is doubtful whether his view was correct. Mubarak of Kuwait was convinced that there was no evidence to support it, but Mubarak, during the last few years of his reign, was not a lenient critic of Ibn Saud's difficulties.

His opinion is so far borne out that the troubles with the Ajman seem to have begun with the occupation of the Hasa by the Amir in 1913. Up to that time the tribe had been on good terms with him and had generally recognised him as suzerain, but the extension of his direct authority to the Hasa, which is their headquarters, had strained their allegiance. He attempted to impose a poll tax upon them and stopped them from taking dues from caravans passing through the country, a toll which they had been accustomed to exact in the days of the Turks. The discontent of the Ajman was fanned by members of Ibn Saud's family who had long been at enmity with him, the Araif, grandsons of his uncle Saud. Two of the Araif cousins, Fahad Ibn Saud and Salman Ibn Muhammad, had taken refuge with the Shaikh of Bahrain. The Shaikh made a half-hearted attempt to patch up a reconciliation in 1914, but the Araif refused his mediation and sought the protection of the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi, from whom they received some countenance when hostilities were renewed with Ibn Saud in 1915. The rebellion now assumed serious proportions. Ibn Saud sent for more troops from Riyadh and asked help from Kuwait, but before the arrival of either reinforcement he attacked the Ajman by night near Hofuf and met with a reverse, due partly to the cowardice of the Hofuf town levies. His brother Saud was killed and he himself wounded. For a time his fortunes were at a very low ebb. He was in want of money and arms, and for all practical purposes was besieged in Hofuf. Ibn Rashid, oblivious of the agreement recently signed, seized the opportunity to raid the Qasim, but his advance was easily stopped, and the arrival of a force from Kuwait under the Shaikh's son, Salim, turned the balance in the Hasa. The Ajman were routed in September, harried on their retreat northwards by the Bani Khalid and forced to take refuge in Kuwait territory, where they remained until Shaikh Mubarak's death in December. Fahad Ibn Saud was killed in the retreat: Salman made his peace with Ibn Saud at the end of the year. During the struggle we had facilitated the despatch of ammunition to Ibn Saud from Bahrain and done what we could to restrain Abu Dhabi: in October we presented Ibn Saud with 1,000 rifles and gave him a loan of £20,000. The Turks had not yet abandoned all hope of winning him over, and in July, previous to Ibn Rashid's raid, a Turkish emissary, Salih al Sharif al Hasni, communicated with him and proposed a meeting; but his request was refused, and on December 26th Ibn Saud met Sir Percy Cox at Qatif and the long-delayed treaty was completed and signed. Subject to certain safeguards it provided Ibn Saud with a dynastic guarantee in the dominions now in his possession and promised him the support of Great Britain in case of unprovoked aggression from foreign Powers. On his side Ibn Saud engaged to hold no correspondence with any foreign Power and to grant no concessions to foreigners, to keep open the roads to the Holy Places and to commit no aggressive act on other Shaikhs under our protection.

Ibn Saud was unaware of the exceedingly confidential correspondence which we had been carrying on with the Sharif during the winter of 1915-1916, but the results to which it led could not leave him indifferent. Relations between the Hijaz and Najd had been dictated by conflicting sentiments. The Sharif had even more reason than Ibn Saud to fear the Turks, but he was jealous of Ibn Saud's position as an Arab Chief, and the feeling was reciprocated in Riyadh. The fluctuating allegiance of the tribes is a rich source of discord in Arabia, and the absence of any defined frontiers enhances the uncertainty of claims and obligations. In 1910 the Sharif Abdullah, asserting that he acted on behalf of the Ottoman Government, marched to the borders of the Qasim for the purpose of reasserting an authority which was probably a thing of the past and must at the best have been shadowy. The tangible results of the raid do not seem to have been more than a reassertion on the Sharif's suzerainty over the distant sections of the Ataibah, a tribe

which had once been under Ibn Saud but had largely seceded to the Sharif. A small tribute to Mecca from the Qasim villages was stipulated for by Abdullah before his withdrawal, but it is unlikely that it was ever paid. From 1913 the Sharif showed strong anti-Turkish proclivities, and before the outbreak of war he and Ibn Saud drew together. They were in correspondence when Captain Shakespear paid his first visit to Riyadh in the spring of 1914. In January 1915, they were acting in concert, and Ibn Saud told Captain Shakespear that in his view the Khalifate would revert to the family of the Prophet, of which the Sharif was the representative, if it dropped from the hand of the Sultan of Turkey. In November, 1915, Abdullah reappeared in Najd, with what object is not very clear. His own explanation was that he was sent on a mission to Ibn Saud, with the further purpose of collecting dues in the Qasim and Sudair. Except for a doubtful suzerainty over wandering sections of the Ataibah, the Sharif does not seem in Beduin estimation to have rights in either province, his limits eastwards being somewhere between Longitude 44 degrees and Longitude 45 degrees at Sha'arah, Duwadmi, Jabal Dhurai and Jabal al Nir. Abdullah is not reported to have advanced much beyond Sha'arah: he collected dues from the Ataibah, subdued the small allied section of the Buraih (by origin Mutair) and returned to the Hijaz: but Ibn Saud, barely emerged from a perilous contest in the Hasa, not unreasonably regarded the expedition as inopportune and even suspicious. (These sentiments were reflected in his conversations with Sir Percy Cox in December. He reminded the Chief Political Officer that the Wahhabis recognised no Khalif after the first four, and was careful to add that if the Sharif should assume the title it would make no difference to his status among other ruling Chiefs). In June of the following year the Sharif rose in open rebellion against the Turks and declared the independence of the Arabs. Ibn Saud, writing in July to the Chief Political Officer, acknowledged the receipt from him of official news with regard to the Hijaz, expressed his satisfaction at the discomfiture of the Turks, but put forward his own apprehensions that the Sharif might proceed to claim authority over parts of Najd, and in support of this fear observed that in declaring the independence of "the Arabs" the Sharif appeared to treat them as a compendious whole, an attitude which he regarded with anxiety.

In August he wrote again, saying that he had now received a letter from the Sharif in which the latter announced the occupation of Mecca and asked him for his help. Ibn Saud gave a summary of his reply, and a copy of the original letter has since been received. He assured the Sharif that he would render all assistance which was in his power, but asked for a written undertaking that the Sharif would abstain from trespassing in his territory or interfering with his subjects. Ibn Saud went on to ask Sir Percy Cox whether his relations with the Sharif might be regarded as a matter which affected the two chiefs alone, or whether they touched on our interests, in which case he would be guided by our wishes. According to Arab reports received at Kuwait the Sharif wrote three times to Ibn Saud asking for aid, and on two occasions sent him £2,000. Not improbably there is some truth in the rumoured remittance of small sums.

The Sharif's answer, dated September 5, to Ibn Saud's letter was, to say the least of it, unconciliatory and aroused his lively indignation. His letter and the draft undertaking which had been sent with it for the Sharif's acceptance were sent back with the observation that Ibn Saud's request could emanate only from a man bereft of reason. About the same time Ibn Saud received a letter from Ali Haidar acquainting him with his appointment as Sharif in place of Husan by the Ottoman Government, and calling on him to join the *Jihad*, but in his reply Ibn Saud expressed the resentment felt by the Arabs towards him and towards the Turks.

The Chief Political Officer dealt at length with the Hijaz question in a letter to Ibn Saud, dated October 19th. He pointed out how important it was to the Arab cause, which it was the policy of the British Government to support, that all the great Arab chiefs should work together and in co-operation with us in the common task of expelling the Turks from Arabia. As to Ibn Saud's own position he need have no misgivings for he had been acknowledged by us to be an independent ruler and the Sharif must recognize the full import of the treaty. The British Government had no reason to believe that he entertained any hostile intentions against the tribes and territories of Najd.

In the negotiation over the treaty in December, 1915, Sir Percy Cox had discussed with Ibn Saud the possibility of his giving us assistance against Ibn Rashid. The Hakim of Najd then thought that Ibn Rashid would either come in or maintain a strict neutrality; if, however, he showed himself actively hostile, Ibn Saud would attack him and incite the northern Anazah against him. This intention, however, he failed to carry out. During the spring and summer of 1916 he was occupied with a rebellion of the Murrah, following on, and perhaps connected with, that of the Ajman, which endangered his communications with the Hasa. Though a large proportion of the fighting men of the Shammar had gone north with Ibn Rashid against the Iraq, no

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effective attack was made on Hail in their absence. In late June or early July, Ibn Saud's son, Turki, raided Jabal Shammar, and the news may have hastened Ibn Rashid's retreat from our frontiers. In September or October Turki renewed hostilities against some of the Shammar Shaikhs and an allied section of the Harb, but the affair resulted only in the capture of a small amount of booty, and Ibn Saud's doctor, passing through Bahrain, brought a message to the effect that the Amir could do nothing against the Shammar as long as the fugitive Ajman remained on his flank. The true reason for his inactivity was no doubt his own insecurity at home, but the implacable hostility which he entertained towards Ajman, whom he regarded not only as rebels but as the murderers of his brother Saud, threatened to become a problem of some difficulty.

When Shaikh Mubarak died in December, 1915, Ibn Saud pressed his son and successor in Kuwait, Jabir, to drive out the Ajman Shaikhs. Jabir made a temperate reply. He was unwilling to eject the Ajman, fearing that they would be thrown into the enemy camp; but he could not hold out against Ibn Saud's insistence without creating an open breach and he expelled the tribe in February, 1916. As he anticipated, they turned for protection first to Ajaimi and then to Ibn Rashid, but in May they asked and obtained permission from the Shaikh of Zubair to settle quietly near Safwan, and subsequently several of the leading Shaikhs made submission to us. When Ibn Rashid returned to Hail only two of the Ajman Shaikhs remained with Ajaimi and they had little or no following. Ibn Saud's ardent desire to direct his energies upon the extermination of this tribe was not one with which we had any sympathy, at all events at the present juncture.

Shaikh Jabir, new to his office, could not hope to exercise the influence over Ibn Saud which had been possessed by that practised and weighty diplomatist his father: moreover for some years before Mubarak's death relations between Riyadh and Kuwait had been growing cooler. Ibn Saud bitterly resented Mubarak's attitude during the negotiations between himself and the Ottoman Government in the spring of 1914. According to his account the Shaikh had at first counselled him to accept the Turkish offers, but when he reached Kuwait in April Mubarak changed his note, without explanation, and advised Ibn Saud not to come to terms with the Turks, refusing, at the same time, to be present at his meeting with the delegates. So indignant was the Amir that he expressly stipulated with Captain Shakespear that Mubarak should not be consulted in the negotiations with ourselves. The asylum given the Ajman was another grievance, and in 1916 Ibn Saud complained of the incidence of the transit dues which had been, from time immemorial, levied in Kuwait.

While Ibn Saud's anxiety as to the ambitions of the Sharif, and his growing estrangement with Kuwait showed that the chiefs allied with ourselves had not reached a satisfactory understanding with each other, there was evidence that the Turks were still active in Arabia. News was received from Ibn Saud and from other sources of the despatch of an agent (Muhammad) Taufiq Ibn Fara'un of Damascus, for the purpose of buying camels for the Ottoman Government; the emissary was well chosen, for he was a personal friend of Ibn Saud and had visited Najd on the same business the previous year. But on this occasion the Amir was pressed by us to prevent him from obtaining camels: he accordingly arrested Ibn Fara'un, confiscated 700 camels which had been purchased in the interior and sent them to Kuwait. Various reports, some of which came from Ibn Saud, indicated that another attempt to stir up Ibn Rashid against us was in the wind. Rushaid Ibn Lailah, Ibn Rashid's representative at Constantinople, joined him at Hail with a few German and Turkish officers, a small body of Turkish soldiers and some guns; accounts varied as to the exact composition of the mission, but its presence in Hail in some form seemed fairly certain. Ibn Saud had written in September that he would be glad of a personal interview with the Chief Political Officer to discuss the question of co-operation with the Sharif or offensive action against Ibn Rashid. In October he repeated the request urgently, and on all grounds it seemed advisable to accede to it. Sir Percy Cox met him at Ojair on November 11. Ibn Saud explained to him his position in detail. He had lost considerably, in men and material, in the fight with Ibn Rashid in January, 1915. Since then he had been almost continuously in the field, first against the Ajman and then against the Murrah. Most of the normal trade of Najd was with Syria, and the tribes were accustomed to sell their camels to Damascus dealers: the strict blockade imposed by Ibn Saud—the seizure of Ibn Fara'un's camels bore witness to its reality—grew more and more galling: the Najdis grumbled, the tribes were restless, all asked wherein lay the advantage to themselves of their Chief's attitude, and it was increasingly difficult for him to keep them in hand. With regard to the Sharif, Sir Percy Cox was able to give Ibn Saud the fullest reassurance. Our treaty with the Amir had been communicated to Mecca, and when the Sharif announced to us his intention of proclaiming himself King of the Arabs on November 5, we had insisted on a formal admission that he claimed no jurisdiction over independent rulers. The news of the coronation at Mecca had not yet reached Central Arabia and was not discussed. During conversation with the Chief Political Officer at

Basrah Ibn Saud made a passing remark about the Sharif's calling himself "Sultan", but his mind seemed to be set completely at rest on hearing that his rights were safeguarded by us and that the Sharif had explicitly denied any design on the independence of himself or his compeers.

Ibn Saud having expressed to the Chief Political Officer at their meeting at Ojair his inclination to pay a brief visit to Shaikh Jabir of Kuwait before returning home, the project was cordially encouraged as appearing eminently expedient, and Sir Percy Cox recommended that he should be presented with the K.C.I.E., at a majlis which was to be held at Kuwait where the Shaikh was to be invested with the C.S.I. When he intimated to Ibn Saud that this honour was to be accorded to him, the Chief Political Officer was authorised to inform at the same time that his rights had been carefully reserved in all dealings which the British Government had held with the Sharif, and Ibn Saud in his reply said that he was entirely satisfied on this point.

The majlis took place on November 20th. The Shaikh of Muhammerah had come to Kuwait for the occasion and many Beduin were present, including the friendly headmen of the Shammar Aslam, and Dhafir, and Shaikhs of the Mutair. The Chief Political Officer, in presenting the decorations, alluded to our satisfaction in feeling that the great Arab chiefs were bent with us upon a common purpose. The Shaikh of Muhammerah followed him with words which were warmly pro-British, and Ibn Saud struck the key-note of the meeting in a speech which was as spontaneous as it was unexpected. He said that the Turks had placed themselves outside the pale of Islam by the iniquities which they had committed on other Moslems. He contrasted their policy with that of Great Britain, pointing out that the Turks had sought to weaken the Arabs by fomenting their differences, whereas the British Government encouraged them to unite in their own interest. He praised the action of the Sharif and urged the obligation of all true Arabs to co-operate with him in forwarding the Arab cause. When he had brought his speech to an eloquent close, the three chiefs, Kuwait, Muhammerah and Ibn Saud, swore together that they would work with us for the achievement of a common end.

This scene made a deep impression on the local notables and on the Beduin Shaikhs present, who will no doubt carry the tale far and wide. During the receptions at Kuwait, Ibn Saud showed in all his utterances how clearly he had grasped the principle which guides our relations with Arabia. He quoted as an example of our benevolent policy towards the Arab cause the fact that we were ready even to promote a reconciliation between himself and Ibn Rashid if the latter would abandon his attitude of hostility. The arrival of Ibn Fara'un's 700 camels, each branded with the wasm of that well-known dealer, gave a dramatic completeness to the Kuwait gathering.

From Kuwait Ibn Saud went to Muhammerah as the guest of Shaikh Khazal who co-operated most heartily in the endeavour to make Ibn Saud's visit profitable to him. The two chiefs arrived at Basrah on the evening of November 26. Early next morning the Chief Political Officer accompanied by two chief military representatives of the Army Commander present in Basrah went on board the Shaikh's launch and presented Ibn Saud with a sword of honour and message of welcome from the Army Commander. The day was spent in exhibiting to him the Base Camps and organisation and the latest machinery of warfare including the aircraft in which he took an eager interest. Dhari Ibn Twalah and Humud al Suwair, Shaikhs of the Shammar Aslam and the Dhafir, were present, while Shaikh Ibrahim of Zubair and several Sunni notables of Basrah and refugees from Baghdad had an audience with Ibn Saud on the launch.

The Kuwait Durbar and Ibn Saud's visit to Basrah have placed us in a singularly strong position. Three powerful chiefs have made public protestation of their friendship with each other and their confidence in the British Government. A telegram received from the Sharif, congratulating them upon their zeal in the Arab cause and regretting that he had not had time to send a representative to Kuwait, confirmed the identity of his aims with their own, and in a further message he apologised for any deficiencies in his previous letters on the ground that while he was in the throes of war he might unintentionally fall short as a correspondent. The dream of Arab unity which engaged the imagination of the Liberals of Damascus during the year before the war, has been brought nearer fulfilment than dreams are wont to come, but the role of presiding genius has been recast. Instead of the brilliant, unscrupulous Saliyid Talib, gyrating in the blast of his own ambition, the chiefs of Eastern and Western Arabia have united at the instance of the British Government.

Besides this knitting together of Arab leaders, the meeting at Kuwait has produced certain immediate results. In the first place the extent and nature of Ibn Saud's share in future hostilities with Ibn Rashid, if such should occur, was agreed upon. He undertook to maintain 4,000 men under arms: if Ibn Rashid moved in force towards the Iraq he would move up parallel with him towards Zubair and join the friendly tribes and a contingent from Kuwait. He informed the friendly Shaikhs that he would support them if Ibn Rashid threatened to attack them in strength. If, however, Ibn Rashid should re-

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main at Hail, Ibn Saud would harass and attack him as opportunity offered, using the Qasim as a base. In view of the strain upon his resources during the last two years, he has been given 3,000 rifles with ammunition, as well as four machine guns, and granted a monthly subsidy of £5,000 to cover the expenses he will incur in maintaining his men in the field. Active co-operation with the Sharif was not considered practicable, but Ibn Saud was ready to send one of his sons with some 40 men to Mecca as a sign of goodwill, if the Sharif would make a special request for them.

Secondly, a letter was written by Ibn Saud, in the name of the three chiefs, to Ajaimi Ibn Sadun urging upon him the harm which he was doing to the Arab cause by his present attitude, inviting him to enter into communication with them and promising him friendly consideration and an opportunity for honourable submission.

Finally, with the co-operation of Shaikh Jabir of Kuwait and the diplomatic skill of the Shaikh of Muhammerah who was throughout of the highest service to the Chief Political Officer, the delicate problem raised by the presence of the Ajman among the friendly tribes reached a satisfactory solution. For the period of the war a truce between Ibn Saud and the Ajman was agreed upon and instructions were drafted defining the position of the fugitive Shaikhs with respect to all tribes under our protection. On his return to Basrah, Sir Percy Cox called in the Ajman leaders. They had been profoundly disquieted by the advent of Ibn Saud thinking that it augured ill for themselves, but the principal and more courageous headmen met the Chief Political Officer at Zubair and accepted the proposed terms, in return for which they were promised a monthly allowance similar to that received by the other friendly Shaikhs of the Shamiyah. They evinced little doubt that the remaining headmen of the Ajman, including the two who were still with Ajaimi, would come in as soon as they heard of the happy issue of their own venture.

Letters have been written to Fahad Beg Ibn Hadhdhal informing him of the Kuwait meeting and inviting him to join the league of Arab chiefs in expelling the Turks. These have been sent through a man from Fahad Beg's tents who was in Basrah at the time of Ibn Saud's visit and went to see him at Muhammerah, where he received advice and instruction from Shaikh Khazal in full measure. He was entrusted also with letters from the Sharif which have been waiting opportunity of despatch to Fahad Beg, Hachim al Muhaid, Ali Sulaiman of the Dulaim and others, and with presents in money to guide Fahad Beg's decision and to encourage the amicable disposition of the Shaikh of the Dahamshah, Jaza Ibn Mijlad. Communications of the same nature are on their way to Atiyah al Qulal of Najaf and Muhammad Ali Kamunah of Karbala.

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APPENDIX B.

TREATY WITH IBN SAUD.

In the Name of God the Merciful and Compassionate.

PREAMBLE.

The High British Government on its own part, and Abdul Aziz bin Abdur Rahman bin Faisal al Saud, Ruler of Najd, El Hasa, Qatif and Jubail, and the towns and ports belonging to them, on behalf of himself, his heirs and successors, and tribesmen, being desirous of confirming and strengthening the friendly relations, which have for a long time existed between the two parties, and with a view to consolidating their respective interests—the British Government have named and appointed Lieutenant-Col. Sir Percy Cox, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., British Resident in the Persian Gulf, as their Plenipotentiary, to conclude a treaty for this purpose with Abdul Aziz bin Abdur Rahman bin Faisal al Saud.

The said Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Percy Cox and Abdul Aziz bin Abdur Rahman bin Faisal al Saud, hereafter known as " Bin Saud " have agreed upon and concluded the following Articles:—

I.

The British Government do acknowledge and admit that Najd, El Hasa, Qatif and Jubail, and their dependencies and territories, which will be discussed and determined hereafter, and their ports on the shores of the Persian Gulf are the countries of Ibn Saud and of his fathers before him, and do hereby recognise the said Ibn Saud as the independent Ruler thereof and absolute Chief of their tribes, and after him his sons and descendants by inheritance; but the selection of the individual shall be in accordance with the nomination (*i.e.*, by the living Ruler) of his successor; but with the proviso that he shall not be a person antagonistic to the British Government in any respect; such as, for example, in regard to the terms mentioned in this Treaty.

II.

In the event of aggression by any Foreign Power on the territories of the countries of the said Ibn Saud and his descendants without reference to the British Government and without giving her an opportunity of communicating with Ibn Saud and composing the matter, the British Government will aid Ibn Saud to such extent and in such a manner as the British Government after consulting Ibn Saud may consider most effective for protecting his interests and countries.

III.

Ibn Saud hereby agrees and promises to refrain from entering into any correspondence, agreement, or treaty, with any Foreign Nation or Power, and further to give immediate notice to the Political Authorities of the British Government of any attempt on the part of any other Power to interfere with the above territories.

IV.

Ibn Saud hereby undertakes that he will absolutely not cede, sell, mortgage, lease, or otherwise dispose of the above territories or any part of them, or grant concessions within those territories to any Foreign Power, or to the subjects of any Foreign Power, without the consent of the British Government. And that he will follow her advice unreservedly provided that it be not damaging to his own interests.

V.

Ibn Saud hereby undertakes to keep open within his territories, the roads leading to the Holy Places, and to protect pilgrims on their passage to and from the Holy Places.

VI.

Ibn Saud undertakes, as his fathers did before him, to refrain from all aggression on, or interference with the territories of Kuwait, Bahrain, and of the Shaikhs of Qatar and the Oman Coast, who are under the protection of the British Government and who have treaty relations with the said Government; and the limits of their territories shall be hereafter determined.

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VII.

The British Government and Ibn Saud agree to conclude a further detailed treaty in regard to matters concerning the two parties.

Dated 18th Safar, 1334, corresponding to 26th December, 1915.

(Sd. and sealed) ABDUL AZIZ AL-SAUD

(Sd.) P. Z. COX, LIEUT.-COLONEL,
British Resident in the Persian Gulf.

(Sd.) CHELMSFORD,
Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

This Treaty was ratified by the Viceroy and Governor-General of India in Council at Simla on the 18th day of July, A.D. one thousand nine hundred and sixteen.

(Sd.) A. H. GRANT,
*Secretary to the Government of India,
Foreign and Political Department.*

APPENDIX C.

STATEMENT OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION GIVEN TO IBN SAUD.

| (1) ARMS. | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| September, 1915 | 300 Turkish rifles. |
| December, 1916 | 4 Machine guns. |
| do. | 1,000 long .303 rifles. |
| do. | 2,000 .303 carbines. |
| April, 1917 | 2 Turkish guns (7-pounders). |
| July, 1918 | 1,000 Winchester rifles. |
| October, 1918 | 1,000 .303 rifles* (1914 pattern). |
| (2) AMMUNITION. | |
| December, 1916 | 250,000 rounds S.A.A. |
| July, 1918 | 100,000 do. do. (Winchester). |
| August, 1918 | 250,000 do. do. † |
| October, 1918 | 100,000 do. do. |

*In replacement of the 1,000 Winchester rifles issued in July and found to be unacceptable.

†To replace ammunition issued in December, 1916, which was found to be defective (possibly owing to long and careless storage).

N.B.—In addition to above a certain amount of ammunition for the Turkish 7-pounder guns was sent to Ibn Saud.

APPENDIX D.

STATEMENT SHEWING ALL CASH PAYMENTS MADE TO
IBN SAUD, SINCE THE OUTBREAK OF WAR.

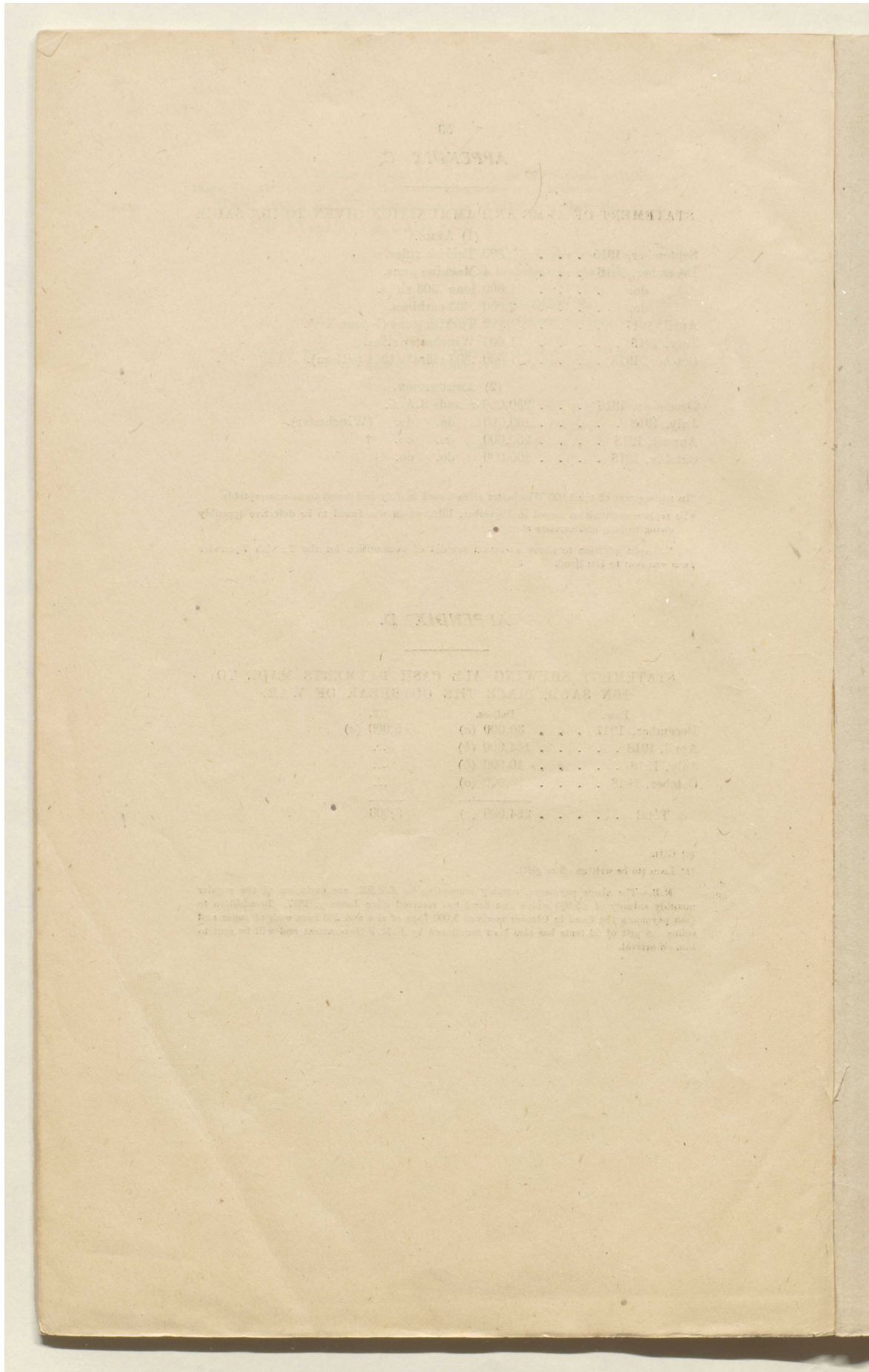
| Date. | Dollars. | £T. |
|-------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| December, 1917 | 30,000 (a) | 5,000 (a) |
| April, 1918 | 154,000 (b) | ... |
| July, 1918 | 10,000 (b) | ... |
| October, 1918 | 70,000 (a) | ... |
| Total | 264,000 (c) | 5,000 |

(a) Gift.

(b) Loan (to be written off as gift).

N.B.—The above payments, roughly amounting to £42,500, are exclusive of the regular monthly subsidy of £5,000 which Ibn Saud has received since January, 1917. In addition to cash payments Ibn Saud in October received 3,000 bags of rice and 200 bags each of sugar and coffee. A gift of 60 tents has also been sanctioned by H.M.'s Government and will be sent to him on arrival.

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