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Enclosure in Letter from Henry Willock to John McCulloch of 20 Apr 1824

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Reference	IOR/L/PS/9/69/183
Date(s)	Dec 1823-Apr 1824 (CE, Gregorian)
Written in	English in Latin
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About this record

Notes of Henry Willock, HM Chargé d'Affaires in Persia's [Iran] meetings with Persian Ministers and the Prince Royal ['Abbās Mīrzā, Crown Prince] between December 1823 and April 1824.

The meetings concern the proposed transfer of responsibility for diplomatic relations between Persia and Britain to the British Government in India, which is opposed by the Persian side.

The notes were enclosed in Willock's letter to John McCulloch, Secretary to the Political Department of the East India Company, dated 20 April 1824 (IOR/L/PS/9/69/181).

LIPS/9/69/183 ①

Notes of Mr Willock's conferences and verbal
communications with the Persian Government
and officers regarding the transfer of the relations
to the Indian Government -

On my first visit to H. & Kaim
Makani, he received me in a very
cordial manner - we remained some
time in his public room he then
requested me to move to a private
apartment where we could con-
-verse more freely -

I opened the conference
by relating what had occurred during
my residence in England - that it
had been the intention of the late
Lord Londonderry to have sent me
out immediately - that intention
was interrupted by the death of
his Lordship - That on Mr Cumming's
coming into office a considerable
time elapsed before he could give
sufficient time to the consideration
of

of Persian affairs and that the business
of Meerza Sauleh's Mission having been
brought forward at this period a still
further delay had become unavoidable
That the British Government wishing
to facilitate the arrangement of all
matters in which Persia was concerned
had thought it advisable to transfer the
management of the relations with Persia
to the charge of the Government in India
with which the affairs of Persia had
more immediate connection than with
the Government at home and to which
reference could be made direct with
greater facility than by the circuitous route
of England - that from the letters Mr
Canning had addressed to the Prince Royal
and Persian Ministers he would perceive
the opinion of H. B. M. Government of
past occurrences and their intentions
and wishes for the future - H. E. perused
the translations of the letters and expressed
his regret that I was to be relieved by
an Ambassador from India - He then
asked

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asked me if the change was not dis-
advantageous to Persia - I replied that
on the contrary the only object in view
was the better maintenance of the
relations and to facilitate the transaction
of business - that India and Persia
were neighbouring states that business
constantly carried between them
that our first connection with Persia
had originated from India and that
our relations with Persia must always
have reference to the affairs of India
therefore it was advisable that the
communication with India should
be direct -

H. S. stated that in reference
to commercial affairs and the business
of the Gulf a direct communication
with India was certainly advantageous
but that Persia had more important
matters to attend to on the side of Europe
that she might require the support of
an English minister in her transactions
with

with Rujia and that in such
matters a minister from India
could give little or no assistance

The conversation was here
interrupted by the arrival of a
French Merchant who came with
some other people to pay their
respects to His Excellency

December - 10

Ali Mahammed Bey
returned from Schour - The letters
from Sineer and Bowleh Allah
Zar Khan and Meerza Abdul Kapan
Khan to whom I announced my
arrival and had given an outline
of the new arrangements express the
dissatisfaction which the proposal
has given to the Shah's ministers -
They awaited my arrival to broach
the subject to the Shah - H. M. pre-
-sently uses this mode of showing
his disinclination to any proposal
suggested

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suggested to him - H. M. enquired in how many days I might be expected at the Capital - It is evident that the Shah under his present impressions will not express his readiness to admit of the change until further explanations are made - I must therefore lose no time in reaching the Capital

13th - I called upon the Minister and laid before him the letters from Schrau H. E. Said he had stated to the Prince the import of my letters and he wished me immediately to wait upon H. P. A

The Prince said he understood I had letters from Schrau and that I wished to proceed to the Capital - He thought I had better defer my departure I was instructed only to announce the change and if I pressed it I might again irritate the Shah - The ministers when he came from India would declare the views of Government and the Shah would then decide
if

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if he chose to abide by the new ar-
 rangements - then the King might
 direct me to stay and have the
 Company's minister to supply the
 exigencies of Persia and the King's
 to keep up the correspondence with
 His Majesty's Government - The Shah
 was decidedly averse to the change and
 he could not recommend it to His
 Majesty as it was derogatory to the
 dignity of Persia -

I said I hope for H. P. W.'s
 support in pointing out to the Shah
 the advantages of the new system - It
 was proposed with the best and
 most friendly intentions and ought
 to be viewed in that light - It was
 better to announce to the Governour
 General of India the satisfaction
 which the change had occasioned
 It was in no way derogatory to the
 dignity of the Shah - The Governour
 General

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General of India was in point of fact the King's Minister in the East and an Envoy accredited under his authority was the Minister of Great Britain at the Court of Persia. The servants of the Company were the servants of the throne - The order of correspondence being changed produced no change in the relations between the two Empires - The Alliance was still between Crown and Crown and Mr Canning solely with a view of improving the real interests of both parties had wished to place them in direct correspondence instead of pursuing the former plan of communication between Persia and England between whom no interests or relations exist excepting those connected with the affairs of India - There was no remedy but compliance - orders had been issued for

for the appointment of a minister
he was probably already on his way
and the experiment of the continuance
of the new arrangement must be tried
every endeavour would be used to
render it agreeable to Persia - If in the
course of a few years it was found
not to answer the alliance was
still with the Crown and the re-esta-
blishment of the former order of
things might be asked for - When the
East India Company had formerly
charge of the relations good offices &
attentions were always dispensed
and the Government of India were
much more accustomed to observe
the courtesies in practice at Asiatic
Courts - It was necessary to notice
one of H. R. H's observations and to
point out to him how impossible
it was to have two agents at the
Court - He saw by Mr Canning's
orders

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orders the nature of my commission
and that my functions ceased im-
-mediately on the arrival of the Envoy
I hoped he would never suggest to
the Shah's court the possibility of the
existence of such a system - The
Prince said I do not expect you un-
-necessarily to urge the wishes of your
Government or to oppose yourself to
the views we take of the question - The
letters that you have brought state
that you have returned solely for the
purpose of settling the subsidy amount
and of announcing new arrangements

I said the language I wished
Persia to hold to the Governor General
was I thought best calculated to
advance her own interests and that
was my only object in suggesting it
I did not succeed in convincing H. R. A.
14 I announced to the Minister my inter-
-view

intention of taking leave of the Prince.
Tomorrow
15th The Subsidiary accounts arrived
last night from India - I am under
the necessity of deferring my departure.
23rd Mahammed Hussein Khan one of
Commissioners for the survey of the
Persian and Russian frontiers called
upon me - He touched on the new
arrangements for the British Empire
and said the King and Prince would
never consent to the change - They
would be looked on the eyes of
European powers and that Russia
would adopt the same policy
and make over the superintendance
of the relations with Persia to General
Gromaloff who had lately commenced
to call himself Firman Firman
of Georgia - The Shah might receive
the new Empire and then say he
did not approve of the change
and

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and direct me to stay until the opinion of H. M's Government was known. I told him the Persian Government should not decide themselves - a reference to the letters of which I was the bearer would show that it was quite impossible such an arrangement could ever be agreed to.

28 Called at night on Hakim Mahkam and asked him what I should say to Mr. Canning regarding the transfer. H. I desired me to say that the Shah had not yet agreed to it but that I had not as yet had an opportunity of personally communicating with H. M. - H. I afterwards said that if the Shah was certain of great pecuniary advantages from the change he never would agree to it on any account - He would be despised in the opinion of the world and General Gromatoff who now called

called himself Firuzan Ferma of
Georgia would induce his Govern-
ment to follow the policy of England
and take the entire conduct of the
Persian relations—

30th I am told if the British Govt
press the transfer it is the intention of
the Shah to assign the new minister
a residence at Shiraz

January 1824

6 I received a visit from Mohamud
Riza Khan late agent of the Prince
Royal at Shiraz— He said the King
was very wrath at the transfer
of the relations to the East India
Company and never would agree
to it— The Persian Government in
complaining of me had wished
to screen themselves from attack
and now regretted they had in-
curred to prejudice the Government
against me— The late accounts
from

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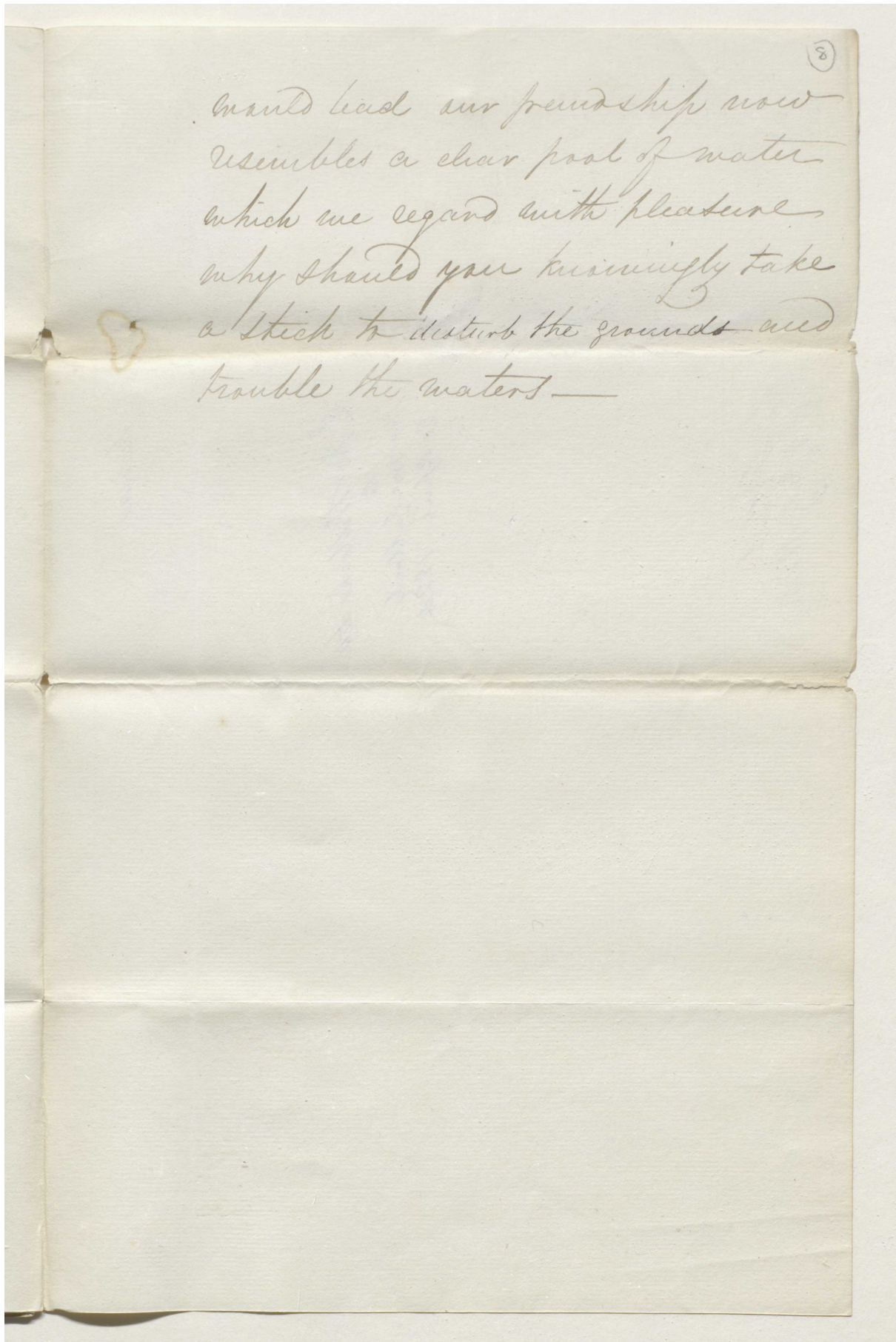
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From Calcutta he said did not give
a very flattering prospect of what
they were to expect from the Indian
Government

April 10

Called on Anwar ud Dowleh Khan
asked him if he had received my
message by Meerza Abdul Kapan Khan
— Lord Strafford on the receipt of
my last despatches which contained
H. B.'s answer to my letter regarding
the transfer had received the im-
pression that it was likely to be
objected to by the Shah. That His
Lordship hoped no disposition of
the kind would be manifested by
the Court of Tehran as the resolution
of the British Government was irrev-
ocable — it was calculated for the
benefit of both States and must be
carried — that it was not in my
power to listen to or admit any
objections

I hoped the Shah would reconsider
the measure and comply with it as a
contrary determination would give
much offence to our Government —
H. E. said he thought he had already
said quite sufficient to convince me
that the resolution of the Persian gov^t
was as decided and irrevocable as
that of Great Britain regarding the
transfer — Without giving unnecessary
preamble to the sentiments of the
Shah they were simply thus — England
wishes the alliance of Persia the
relations must be transacted as
they are at present — If they are to
be changed the Shah is ready in
preference to sacrifice the alliance
and the Shah has commanded me
to answer Mr Cairn explicitly
in these terms — We know our
real interests and will not relinquish
them — We see to what the transfer
would

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