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Enclosure No. 102 to Letter of 5 October 1828

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About this record

Dispatch No. 102 from the East India Company Envoy to Persia [Iran], Lieutenant-Colonel John Macdonald Kinneir, to George Swinton, Chief Secretary of the Government of Bengal, sent from Tehraun [Tehran] and dated 2 June 1828.

The letter reports the arrival of Abbas Meerza [‘Abbās Mīrzā Qājār, Crown Prince of Persia] in Tehraun and his meeting with the Shah [Fath-‘Ali Shāh Qājār], and describes efforts by both Russia and Turkey [Ottoman Empire] to court Abbas Meerza’s support in the approaching conflict between the two powers.

This document was originally enclosed in Macdonald Kinneir’s dispatch No. 36 to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors of the East India Company of 5 October 1828 (IOR/L/PS/9/71/262).

Copy
No. 102

L/PS/9/71/265^①

To His Excellency
Chief Secretary to Govt
Political department
Fort Williams. —

Sir

His Royal Highness Abbas
Meerza arrived in this City a few days ago.
The main object of his visit is
to consult with his father, on the best means
of restoring the tranquility of the Kingdom,
still troubled in many Provinces; and to con-
clude the requisite arrangements for his
intended Embassy to the Court of St. Petersburg,
to which, several of his brethren, and the
Ministers here, objected on the score of its
being incompatible with the duties, and
dignity of the their Apartment. —

He met a most flattering,
and gracious reception from the Shah, and
in the course of half an hour's conversation,
not only circumvented the intrigues of his
rivals, but regained the whole of his
former ascendancy (shaken for a time by
the disgraceful result of the war) over the
mind of the aged Monarch. —

W

In addition to Azerbijan,
he has received the investiture of the adjacent
Provinces of Kermanshah and Hamadan -
a measure, which puts the whole of the
western boundary of the Empire at his
disposal, inclusive of a great increase of
revenue. - His stay here, will not be
prolonged beyond a period of fifteen, or
twenty days, when on the departure of his
Father for Ispahan, he returns to Tabreez,
in order to prepare for his mission. -

I learn from himself
that tempting offers have recently been made
to him, both by Russia, and the Porte, to
induce this Court to become a Party in
the approaching struggle. - The Turks, who
have proffered money, territory, and military
stores, call upon the Shah, as the Chief
of the only other great Mohammedan Power
now in existence, to arm in defence
of the last hold of their Religion, threatened
by a powerful combination of the infidels
of Europe. - The Russians on the other
hand lead his Highness to expect an
ample

(2)

ample share of the spoil in a war
where a successful issue is regarded
as certain, and on condition of his
falling into these terms he is also to
be supplied with small arms and
artillery to any extent, he may require.

The Prince, if I may judge
from the tenor of his conversation is
yet undecided what course to pursue.
I have strongly dissuaded him against
siding with either Party, and I am
in hopes that he may be prevailed upon
to adopt this line of conduct, as the
most conducive to the best interests
of his own Country. — I have endeavoured
to prep upon him on the one hand
the hopeless prospect of renewing the
contest with Russia; — and on the other
the disgrace, and infamy that would
attend a violation of his engagements
with the Porte, in order to aid in
accelerating the downfall of the
first

first Mupulman state new in the world. -

To side with Turkey
against Russia, he said, he considered
as entirely out of the question - He
had too recently felt the irresistible
power of the one, and knew too well
the deplorable weakness of the other, to
be guilty of an act pregnant with so
much danger - But if fate had decreed
the fulfilment of the prophecy which
foretold the ruin of the Sultan, in the
course of this, or the ensuing year, he
thought no blame could be imputable
to Russia were she in the general scramble
to make an effort to regain her ancient
and natural frontiers which extended
along the left bank of the Tigris from
the mouth of that river to Erzerum in-
cluding the Cities of Buporah, Bagdad,
Mosul, and Diabekor, all of which
unquestionably belonged to the Persian
Empire - The Shahs determination
however

(3)

however he added was to remain neutral
for the present, to watch the course of
events, and in the sequel to adopt such
measures as wisdom, and the state of
circumstances might render expedient.

Though ideas loose, and
indigested as those I have just adverted
to will doubtless continue to float in
the minds of his Highness, and other
leading members of this light and degene-
nerate Court, I have yet reason to believe
that no decisive step will be taken
for some time to come, and I venture
to cherish a hope that the Nation may
not again be plunged into a war,
before it has recovered from the shock
of that, in which it was so recently
engaged. —

I have the honour to be
signed,
James Macdonald
Envoy

Tehran.
22 June 1828
G. L. S.





