

against British subjects to delay the conclusion of a friendly settlement and even of rendering assistance to such people. It is indeed possible that such actions of the local officers are not always known to the Central Government itself, as for instance in the recent case in which, as I informed your Excellency, certain Afghan soldiers were sent to Thal under the orders of the Hakim-i-Ala of Khost to collect taxes from tribesmen living in the British districts of Kohat and Peshawar. But whether the Central Government is aware or not of such activities, its responsibility in the eyes of my Government is the same, and the occurrence of such incidents has created a painful impression in the mind of my Government that the Afghan Government is interfering in matters beyond its own dominions. This impression is strengthened when articles such as that recently published in the "Ittihad-i-Mashriqi" of the 3rd March appear in Afghan newspapers, speaking in threatening language of the unity of the Pathan tribes living on the British side of the frontier with the great Afghan nation. The Afghan newspapers for some weeks past have in fact exhibited most unfriendly sentiments towards the British Government, and many of the articles which have been published are so expressed as may lead my Government to believe that they could not have been written without the cognisance of the Afghan Government. At a time when satisfaction for raids on British territory from inside Afghanistan, such as those at Barshore and Spinchilla, to which I have repeatedly invited your Excellency's attention, has not yet been received, the conclusions drawn by my Government from such incidents may have an unfortunate effect on the development of friendly relations arising from the neighbourly treaty now happily existing between the two States.

My friend! My Government is in no way alarmed on its own account by such actions of the frontier officials of the Afghan Government any more than by the publication of such articles as I have mentioned, but there is a possibility that in the light of such incidents my Government may consider that the intentions* of the Government of Afghanistan are no longer friendly*—nay more (which God forbid!) that that Government has determined* on a provocative* policy* towards my country. To your Excellency, who like myself is anxious that the two States should draw ever closer in friendship, such a result would, I am sure, be a matter of much regret, and I have, therefore, thought it right to warn you seriously of such a possibility.

(Usual ending.)

* The same terms in Persian have been used as in the official text of the Anglo-Afghan Treaty (article 6 and letter No. 1).