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AFRICA.

[September 5.]

CONFIDENTIAL.

SECTION 1.

[A 5598/486/1]

No. 1.

*Major Dodds to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston. — (Received September 16.)*

(No. 104.)

My Lord,

Addis Ababa, August 16, 1922.

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 5th instant twenty-six liberated slaves arrived here from Aden in charge of a havildar of the Aden police and four sepoy with the attached letter from the Acting Resident at Aden.

The uninterrupted journey of the party to the capital is undoubtedly due to the tactful manner in which the havildar carried out his duties. The Abyssinian authorities at Diré Daoua are notorious for their capacity to annoy and impede travellers. In view of the nature of the party in this case, and that they were accompanied by five uniformed British policemen, their speedy arrival at Addis Ababa without incident is surprising.

Their arrival has caused a sensation here. The Abyssinians are saying that the British have brought home the truth of their accusations in respect to slave dealing in their country, and they are unanimous in declaring that the slave dealers in this case should be brought to justice and punished.

I lost no time in bringing the matter to the notice of the Abyssinian Government, and I requested them to assist me to obtain the manumission of the slaves according to local customs, and to repatriate them to their countries. I explained that Shahema-bin-Umar was in the hands of the French authorities at Jibuti. I have received a letter in reply from Ras Taffari, a translation of which I enclose for your Lordship's information. In the meantime the twenty-six people remain at this Legation, and I am having them housed and fed.

The receipt of your Lordship's instructions to liberate the slaves employed by Legation servants coincided with the arrival of the party from Aden, and I took the opportunity to speak to Ras Taffari on this subject at the same time. He has also promised to help me in any manner I require in this connection.

I am now proceeding with this matter, and I find it to be more easily accomplished than I anticipated.

The servants, with two exceptions, are perfectly willing to give their slaves freedom, and in almost every case they refuse to accept the price originally paid for the slaves, either from His Majesty's Government or the slaves themselves for reasons which I will explain in due course.

I hope to report very soon that there are no slaves either in the compound or in the possession of an employee of the British Legation.

(Copy sent to Aden.)

I have, &amp;c.

HUGH DODDS.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

*Acting Political Resident, Aden, to Major Dodds.*

Sir,

Aden, July 24, 1922.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the commander of H.M.S. "Cornflower" captured a dhow near the Hedjaz coast containing slaves whom he removed and brought with the crew to Aden. During the trial it was ascertained that an Abyssinian, named Shahema-bin-Umar, had been dealing in slaves, whom he purchased either on his own behalf or as a broker, in the interior of Abyssinia and shipped at Tadjourah for the Arabian coast.

Shahema has been discharged at the Aden court for want of jurisdiction as he is not a British subject and the offence was not committed in British territorial waters. Orders for the deportation to Jibuti of Shahema and his nephew Abdul Kader, age about 12 years, have been issued, and I have informed the French consul of the facts in case the French authorities at Jibuti wish to take further action in the matter.

[98 e—1]

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