

EAST AFR. PROT.
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15 OCT 14

Foreign

1914

4th October

at previous Paper.

ADIS ABABA (ABYSSINIA)
INTELLIGENCE REPORT FOR AUGUST

Sends copy.

38429
Sci

See on 40271

Apr, Mar to Jan 1914 } 9/10 sent 3 Nov
(40271)

Subsequent Paper.

40130
Sci

If any further communication on this subject, please quote

56222

Under Secretary of State,
Foreign Office,
London.

Confidential

5 OCT 14

518

The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copy of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office

October 14th 1914

Reference to previous correspondence:

Letter to Foreign Office:
from

Description of Inclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
<p>Am. Chang. Affairs Adis Ababa No 75. 6th Sept's</p>	<p><u>Adis Ababa</u> Intelligence Report for August</p>

(Similar letter sent to

Cairo

BRITISH LEGATION.

ADIS ABABA.

5th September, 1914.

Sir:-

I have the honour to forward herewith copies of the
Adis Ababa Intelligence for August, 1914.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

C. H. M. Doughty-Wylie.

Right Honourable

Sir E. Grey, Bart., K.G.,

&c., &c., &c.

ADIS ABABA INTELLIGENCE REPORT.

August, 1914.

No. 9.

The war in Europe has unsettled the minds of the Abyssinians.

They have some not too respectable counsellors, who either interested in the arms trade, or for private reasons, weave for them exaggerated stories of the war.

At first, Abyssinia hoped that Italy was going to fight with France and England. In that case, they would have made an effort in all probability to recover their lost provinces in the north. But as things are at present, they are not, I hope, likely to attempt this, more especially in the face of our warnings.

Recently a story has been put about that the Germans have captured British East Africa with the Uganda railway. This has produced a certain effervescence on the subject of the southern frontier, and even some so called precautionary measures.

Sheikh

Sheikh Khojali of the Beni Shargul is in high favour with Lij Yasu. It is said that he is trying to or has persuaded the Prince to allow him to raid into the Sudan, in order to retake what he calls his old country.

It is very probable that other chiefs will be with the same desire, thinking no doubt that we shall be too busy to attend to such matters.

In this country it is impossible to be sure of anything, but on the whole as long as Italy remains neutral and Germany does not take East Africa (which seems to me impossible) I am inclined to think that no trans frontier expedition of any serious importance is likely to take place. This does not mean that small slave and Ivory raids are not probable at the end of the rains.

In the north, it is said that King Mikhail has been buying all the arms and ammunition that he could get by way of Tadjourah, and that his soldiers are to gather after Mascal (16th September) with six months supplies.

King Mikhail's objective is unknown to me. There are various conjectures, such as:-

First.

First. To attack Dejaz Ghebr Selassie. The Italians have promised to hand him over if given into their hands.

Second. To attack Ras Waldo Giorgis, should he not hand over peaceably the coveted provinces.

Third. To crown Lij Yasu at Adis Ababa.

Fourth. To march through his new kingdom of Tigre and receive the submission of all the chiefs.

Of course it is possible that orders were given originally to attack the Italians in Eritrea, and this although King Mikhail has given personal assurances to the Italian Minister that he has no warlike intentions.

The Italian Minister says that Eritrea is now well fortified and that she has about 24,000 men and a very large number of guns available, sufficient to hold the defensive against all Abyssinia. He has further said that he was averse to the sending of reinforcements to Eritrea, such a measure being in his opinion likely to be regarded as provocative by Abyssinia.

It is of course equally possible that the forward section of the Italians might find in the present affirma-

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effervescence in Abyssinia, a good opportunity for an advance.

But it is not likely that they could carry their point in Rome, without a large reinforcement of Italian troops.

In Adis Ababa, it seems that Lij Yasu has ordered his soldiers to be ready after Maacal and to fatten their mules.

To official enquiries as to the meaning of all these preparations, the same answer is always returned, namely that this form of mobilisation is always practised after the rains, and that it is for the army a necessary and not unusual exercise.

Railway.

The departure of the French reservists, among whom was included Monsieur Hallot, the Chief Director, will probably delay the completion of the line. There is said to be a lack of ready money, and a cessation of work.

Gambela.

The Consul has arrived at Gore to superintend the construction of the Consulate. The roads to Gambela appear to have been safe up to the present, and the season to have been a good one.

Gondar

Gondar Harar and Meviale.

There is no news from any of these frontiers.

Rains.

The Abyssinians say that this is the heaviest rainy season for many years. According to them a heavy rainy season is always a sign of war. Up to the present there has been little or no diminution in the rains, and a good Nile may be hoped for.

Trade.

Trade is more or less at a standstill, as there are no buyers. Consequently local prices are very low for coffee, etc.

At a meeting held in this Legation, British Merchants formulated certain suggestions which have been telegraphed to the Board of Trade, for the improvement of trade conditions. The object was to try to open communications by means of British steamers, and to divert to British hands the trade usually carried on by Austria and Germany.

(Signed) C. H. M. Doughty-Wylie.

Adis Ababa.

6th September, 1914.