CHAPTER V

LONDON - ST. PETERSBURG RULE OVER PERSIA
The Russians had come not to go back. They were determined either to annex the Northern Persia permanently or, at least, to transform it into a protectorate. But they had tactfully promised to withdraw the troops in case their demands were complied with and provided that fresh incidents did not arise in the mean time. Britain too, assured the Persians in the above sense. As further stay of the Russian, even after the compliance with the demands, might have made British cooperation with Russia exceedingly difficult, so the Russian, to justify the retention of the troops, planned to create disturbances at important places like Tabriz, Resht and Anzeli. 

Tabriz was calm. No disorder prevailed in the town, of course, anti-foreign feeling was prevalent. This was enough for the Russian Consul-General to consider it necessary to take some precautionary measures. Consequently, he ordered the city to be patrolled by the Russian troops stationed there. Reinforcement of the Russian troops was also deemed necessary and a force consisting of 500 men was called from Ardebil. 

4. A Russian force consisting of 1,000 men was already present there.
They arrived at Tabriz on 17th and 18th December. This was all to excite the anti-foreign feelings — in search of a pretext lest the compliance with the demands should compel the Russian to recall their troops. On the 20th December, 1911, the day, the Committee of five was selected to settle the Russo-Persian dispute which definitely meant the compliance with the demands, the Russian troops hurriedly discovered the flimsy pretext to make their stay in Persia indefinite. They started massacre of the inhabitants of the town on the allegation that while a party of the Russian soldiers was engaged in repairing a telephone line in the night of the 20th December they were attacked by a Persian police patrol. The Russians in self defence, fired and killed two of the patrols. On the following day, it was again alleged that the fedais fired at a Russian patrol and wounded one of them, which led to serious fighting. The fedais took position in the citadel. The Russian started to bombard it. The bombardment continued for several days. The Russian troops indulged themselves in terrible brutality, killing women and children in the streets and hundreds of other non-combatants. The Persian Minister at London complained to Sir E. Grey that some

1. Ibid., Enclosure in No. 89, p.33.
+ On the other hand, the Persian Govt. reported that some Russian soldiers, without previous warning, climbed on the roof of the police-station to lay a telephone wire. The Persian sentries on duty, challenged them. Thereupon, the Russians opened fire and killed two Persians. See CD 6264, Enclosure in No. 89, p.33.
2. CD 6105, Nos. 319 and 320, p.136, Nos. 326 and 327, p.138, also see CD 6264, Enclosure in No. 89, p.33.
500 women and children had been massacred, but, when the British Foreign Secretary made an enquiry through his Minister at Teheran as to be truthfulness of Persian Minister’s statement, Sir J. Barclay reported that the accusation of slaughter and general inhumanity was wrong, though some women and children might have been killed during the bombardment. He further stated that the Russians had been quite generous to the inhabitants and treated them with kindness. However, it stands to reason that with a large number of fully equipped Russian soldiers along with several reinforcements on one side and poorly armed fedais on the other, a battle which lasted for several days must have resulted in a large number of casualties of the Persians. The Persian version of the situation seems to be nearer the truth.

On 26th December, Zia-ed-Dawleh, the Acting Governor of Tabriz, took refuge in the British Consulate. By 27th December the citadel in which the fedais were besieged, was entirely evacuated. It was occupied by the Persian Cossacks and the Russian troops. The Russian flag was flown over it.

2. CD 6264, No.29, p.6.
3. On 25th December, it was reported that a reinforcement consisting of nearly 5,000 men had left Julfa to join the Russian troops at Tabriz - see Ibid., No.19, p.5.
4. Ibid., No.21, p.6.
meantime, the disturbances at Resht and Enzeli, which were undoubtedly created by the Russians themselves, were crushed by the Russian troops. On 28th December, the Russian Government decided to take severest punitive measures in the towns mentioned above. The measures contemplated were reported to be the arrest and trial by martial law of all those who took part in the attacks; disarming of the fedais and other turbulent elements; destruction of buildings from which opposition was offered; and any other necessary steps to restore 'order' and punish the 'offenders'.

By January 1, 1912, Tabriz was completely occupied by the Russian troops. The Russian troops were posted at all public offices, the customs, and the post office. Everything was in the control of the Russians. On the new year's day, the Russian executed in Sarbaz Khane eight persons including Sheikh Salim and the Sikat-el-Islam, the chief priest of Tabriz. The execution was carried out in accordance with the decision of the court-martial established by Russia in Tabriz.

From this time on, the Russians continued to hang or shoot any Persian whom they suspected guilty of being a constitutionalist. At Resht, a dozen Persian notables were arrested and deported to Russia, but the Russian authorities sent them back to be tried by the court-martial. There were a

1. Ibid., No. 15, p. 13.
2. Ibid., No. 37, p. 14.
3. Ibid., No. 44, pp. 15-16.
large number of Russian troops stationed at Resht and Enzeli both. In the meantime, the Russian Consul at Tabriz was reported to have received an emissary of Shuja-ed-Dowlah, a supporter of the ex-shah. Shuja was intending to come to Tabriz with his followers. The Russian Consul had decided to recognize him as Governor de facto. Sir G. Barclay feared that Shuja would proclaim the authority of the ex-Shah at Tabriz. The British Foreign Secretary had no objection to raise on the assumption of the Governorship of Tabriz by Shuja provided that he did not proclaim the ex-Shah. Sir E. Grey hoped that Russia would convey an intimation to Shuja to the effect that in case of his assuming office of the Governorship he must not proclaim the ex-Shah. M. Sazonow assured that the proclamation of Mohammad Ali would not be permitted in that town so long as the Russian troops were in occupation there. Meanwhile Shuja entered Tabriz with 200 followers. In the beginning, Sir G. Barclay instructed the British Consul at Tabriz that he should receive no call from Shuja as he was in rebellion against the Persian Government and was not even a de facto governor. Later on, the British Consul was authorized to recognize Shuja as de facto

1. CD 6264, Enclosure in No. 193, p. 78.
2. Ibid., No. 32, p. 9.
3. Ibid., No. 42, p. 15.
4. Ibid., No. 51, p. 17.
5. Ibid., No. 49, p. 17.
6. Ibid., No. 59, p. 20.
governor. On September 19, 1912, Sipahdar, who had been appointed as Governor-General of Azerbaijan, long before, assumed his office. At first, Shuja made preparations to oppose Sipahdar's arrival at Tabriz by force, but on the representation made by British and Russian authorities, he agreed to hand over the administration to Sipahdar. However, the appointment of a Governor-General by the Persian Government had made no difference for Russia. Practically whole of the Northern Persia was occupied by the Russian forces. The question of the recall of the troops did not arise as the disturbances were purposely being created by Russia herself. It is interesting to note that the poor Persians had no courage even to demonstrate against the brutalism of the Russians. Therefore, the disturbances created by the Russians ended soon and the situation could not take such an alarming turn as to enable Russia to justify the retention her troops for an indefinite period. Consequently, Russia decided to excite the religious feelings of the Persians which was bound to arise anti-Russian feelings throughout the whole of Persia. On March 29, 1912, the Russian began to bombard the sacred Sherine at Meshed.

There was practically no resistance, although Yusuf Herati, a notorious agent provocateur, was hired by the Russian Consul at Meshed to carry on a propaganda in the interests of the ex-Shah from the shelter of the Russian consulate. The matter was reported to the British Legation at Teheran and on the protest of the British Minister, the Russian Minister instructed his Consul to expel Yusuf and his followers from the Consulate. Yusuf and his followers proceeded to the Shrine where the Russian Consul continued to employ him. Yusuf carried on his propaganda in the sacred precincts. A large number of men and women, including hundreds of pilgrims gathered (cont...
and his followers, according to the instructions of their Russian master, replied with a few shots. A large number of innocent pilgrims and citizens were killed and wounded. Anti-Russian feeling arose not only in Persia but throughout the Muslim world. The British Foreign Secretary followed a policy in order to propitiate Russia. He was determined not to antagonize the Russians on the Persian question. If the Persian question was mismanaged, he argued, 'the Persian question might disappear, and bigger issues would arise.'

B - British Activities in South Persia:

While Russia was sending a large number of troops to Northern Persia with the intention to occupy that part of the country permanently, Britain was active in South Persia, in order to maintain her interests there against the Russians. As has

been referred to, in October, 1910, Britain had complained of the insecurity of the roads in the South and practically demanded that a number of officers of the British-Indian army should be placed in charge of the policing for these roads. The Persian Government protested strongly. She also assured Britain that measures would be taken to eradicate the sedition and incitement in the country. Britain, at that time, however, did not insist on the implementation of her scheme. But due to several factors which have already been discussed in detail (attempt of the ex-Shah to regain the throne; financial difficulties of the Persian Governments; Russo-British determination to make every plan of the Persian Government a failure, which if implemented, would have put the Persian house in order; and etc.), the Persian Government could not restore peace and maintain order in the country. Consequently, the situation deteriorated rapidly and lawlessness prevailed. The authority of the Central Government was nominal not only in Northern Persia where a large number of the Russian troops were stationed and where a large number of forces were being sent by the Russian government but also in South Persia. The situation in South Persia was growing from bad to worse.  

1. For details, see Supra, Sub-Chapter B of Chapter III.  
2. To have a clear view of the deteriorating situation in South Persia, see CD 6105, Enclosure in No. 332 and Enclosure in No. 333, pp. 140-151. These are the reports, of course exaggerated, sent by Acting British Consul to Sir J. Barclay from Shiraz. The first report (Enclosure in No. 332) was despatched on September 7, 1911, and the second (Enclosure in No. 333), was sent on October 20, 1911.
Taking advantage of the situation, Britain decided to increase her consular guards at various places in South Persia. On October 10, 1911, Sir G. Barclay informed Vazuk-ed-Dowleh that owing to the possible danger to the British lives and property at Shiraz and elsewhere, it had been decided by his Government to strengthen the consular guard at Shiraz, and possibly also the consular guards at Isfahan and Bushire.¹

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Persia communicated the reply to Sir G. Barclay the other day. The Persian note stated that top priority had always been given by the Government to the problems relating to the maintenance of peace in South Persia and improvement of affairs in Fars, but due to the several factors, the Government could not succeed in maintaining security in that region. The Kawam incident and the taking of refuge by him in the British Legation; the attempt of the ex-Shah to

1. CD 6105, Enclosure, 1 in No. 29, p. 10.

2. As has been discussed, the whole internal politics of the South Persia revolved around the tribal chiefs. There were sharp differences among them. They fought against each other as the result of which, the peace of that part of the country was always disturbed and lawlessness increased. The two powerful tribes of the region - Kawamis and Kashghais - were the main source of trouble. They were traditional enemy of each other and always fought amongst themselves. The Persian Government was powerless to crush them. To keep them calm and quiet, the Government, sometimes, followed a policy of appeasement towards them. But, whenever, the Kawamis were appeased, the Kashghais resented and when the Government tried to enlist the support of the Kashghais, the Kawamis fostered their hostile attitude against the Government. However, Nizar-es-Sultaneh, the new Governor-General of Fars, who arrived at Shiraz on 6th April, 1911, arrested the Kawamis brothers - Kawam-ul-Mulk and Nasr-ed-Dowleh, the ostensible reason being the failure of the latter, who commanded the forces at Shiraz, to capture some brigands in pursuit of whom he had been sent. On April 18, 1911, a large crowd, including sons of Mullahs who
were killed by the Kawamis, assembled and demanded summary execution of the two brothers from the Governor-General. Nizam-es-Sultaneh promised that they should be tried on the 20th April and said that their crimes were punishable to death. The trial did not take place as the Persian Government on the insistence of Sardar Assad, refused to sanction it and ordered Nizam-es-Sultaneh to send the Kawamis to the capital. The Governor-General opposed this course. The Government did not insist on the Kawamis being sent to Teheran and ordered the Governor-General to send them to Europe. The Acting British Consul, under instruction from British Legation, urged Nizam-es-Sultaneh to fall in with this arrangement. At first, he strongly refused, maintaining that the Kawamis would lose no time in returning to Persia, but finally he gave way and the Kawamis left Shiraz for Bushire on May 8, 1911, accompanied by a guard of 150 men supplied by Nizam-es-Sultaneh. On their way to Bushire, they were attacked by Soulat's men. Nasr-ed-Dowleh was shot dead. Kawam-ul-Mulk, however, escaped. He safely reached Shiraz and took bast at the British Consulate. The inhabitants of Shiraz protested against the asylum afforded to the Kawam-ul-Mulk. Nizam-es-Sultaneh urged the Acting British Consul that Kawam should be sent off from Shiraz without delay. The Acting British Consul replied that so long as the Governor-General could not put an end to the agitation against the Consulate, it was obviously impossible to regard any guarantee from him as sufficient to warrant Kawam-ul-Mulk's leaving. In the meantime, the
a position. The time limit was, however, extended for
twenty-four hours more, later on, it was reported that
the bombardment did not take place. On the 6th July, it
was reported that the movement against the Governor-General,
was growing. Soulat, on the invitation of the Governor-
General, ordered his tribe to send every available men to
Shiraz. On July 13, 1911, fighting was reported to have
started between Governor-General's men and the rebels. It
continued for several weeks. Kashghais rushed to Shiraz
to help the Governor-General. On August 5, 1911, Mizam
was reported to have been recalled by the Persian Govt.,
but he refused to recognize the order. On August 8, 1911,
the Government revoked her order regarding the dismissal
of Mizam and began to endeavour to induce the Governor-
General to make terms with the Kawamis but in vain. At
last, the Government again recalled Mizam on September 19,
1911. On the same day Soulat was reported to have arrived
at Shiraz with 1,000 men. He declared that he had come to
support Mizam. On 29th September, Soulat bombarded Kawami
quarter. On 30th September, 1,500 tribesmen were reported
to have arrived at Shiraz to reinforce the Kawami party.
In the meantime, the Acting British Consul recommended Sir
G. Barlay that the Consular guards should be strengthened
immediately. Severe warnings were also given to Soulat and
Mizam that in case any damage was done to the British
lives and property, they would be responsible. Consequently
Mizam and Soulat were reported to have left Shiraz on 5th
October Ala-ed-dowleh was appointed Governor-General. Kawam
was entrusted with the Deputy Governorship. Meanwhile, the
British Government decided to increase the Consular guards
at various places and informed to the Persian Government
to that effect on October 10, 1911, CD 6104, No.73, p.43, No.81, p.
regain the throne; and the insurrection of the Salar-ed-Dowleh and his followers - drew the attention of the Persian Government as the result of which, the Government could not direct her energy towards the settlement of affairs in South. The note further stated that the Government was now free from embarrassment and would direct her full attention to the South to restore peace there. The note enumerated the following measures which were either taken or being contemplated to be taken by the Persian Government in order to restore peace and maintain order:

1. A Cossack detachment of consisting of 350 men (horse, foot, and artillery) were to be sent to Shiraz.

2. Ala-ed-Dowleh, the new Governor-General was to shortly leave Teheran for Shiraz with necessary force.

3. The Swedish officers, specially engaged for the organisation of gendarmerie and the maintenance of security on the roads were busy with their task. A sufficient force for the protection of the southern routes was to be sent shortly.

4. Steps had been taken by the Government to bring about a reconciliation between Kawam-ul-Mulk, Soulat-ed-Dowleh and their followers. The two persons above named had agreed to make up their differences and had pledge to obey the orders of the Government.

The above measures, the note claimed, would enable the Persian Government to restore peace and maintain order in the south within a short period. It was assured that every measures would be taken to protect the lives and property of the British nationals and requested that the British Government, taking into
consideration the above steps being taken by the Persian Government, would defer from taking her contemplated measure in the southern Persia. On October 13, 1911, Mirza Mehdi Khan, the Persian Minister at London protested against the decision of the British Government to increase her Consular guards at various places and argued that the state of Fars did not justify the dispatch of the reinforcement to British Consulate. On October 18, 1911, Vosuk-ed-Dowlah again addressed a note to Sir G. Barelly requesting him to postpone the increase of the Consular guards. The note enumerated the several measures being promptly taken to remove the British anxiety, but in vain. The British Government decided to send necessary cavalry squadrons from India to Shiraz. They were expected to land at Bushire on the 27th October. Two squadrons sailed from India on 20th and 21st October. Two more squadrons were to be sent soon after. The escorts, Sir G. Barelly informed Vosuk-ed-Dowlah on 24th October, 1911, would not patrol the roads or make expedition and would only be used solely as Consular guards to protect the British Consulates and British lives and property in the towns where they would be stationed, provided that the Persian Government would devise an effective scheme to protect the roads and restores.
security. They were to be withdrawn as soon as the scheme of the Persian Government would effectively be put into operation. ¹

The Persian Government, however, considered the measures taken by the British Government as the greatest obstacle to the execution of the scheme which she had elaborated for the maintenance of order in the South and maintained her protest.²

The Indian cavalry for Shiraz arrived at Bushire on the 27th October. Disembarkation was completed by the 30th October.³ It was reported on November 14, 1911 that they reach Shiraz without any incident.⁴ The remaining two squadrons of Indian cavalry reached Abadeh on the 23rd November. One proceeded to Isfahan. Later on, some unfortunate incident such as attack on Mr. Smart, the Acting British Consul at Shiraz etc., provided pretext for the British Government to retain the reinforcement of the consular guards for an indefinite period.

1. Ibid., Enclosure 1 in No. 140, p. 62.
2. Ibid., Enclosure 4, in No. 140, pp. 62-63.
3. Ibid., No. 75, p. 32, Enclosure in No. 139, p. 61.
4. Ibid., No. 106, p. 44.
5. Ibid., Enclosure in No. 302, p. 131.
6. For details, see CD 6264.
C - Persia - A Russo-British Condominium

The destruction of the Najiss, the dismissal of Mr. Shuster, and the presence of a large number of the Russian troops in Northern Persia as well as the reinforcement of the British Consular guards at various important places in South Persia resulted in the consolidation of the Russian and British control over Persia. The two Great Powers were now in a position to dictate whatever they liked to the Persian Government. The independence of Persia was an illusion. Having consolidated their position in the respective spheres of interest, the two great powers proceeded with their so-called, constructive programme and the following joint Russo-British communication was addressed to the Persian Government on February 18, 1912.

'Animated by the desire to place upon a solid basis of friendship and confidence the relations between the Government of His Britannic Majesty, the Imperial Government of Russia, and the Imperial Government of Persia, and desirous of assisting the Persian Government as far as possible in their task of re-establishing and maintaining order and tranquility in the country, the Russian and British Legations have the honour, by instruction of their Governments, to make to the Persian Government the following proposals:

+ Mr. Shuster left Teheran for America on January 11, 1912.
1. The two Governments are prepared, in order to meet urgent expenditure, to advance to the Persian Government a sum of 100,000 l., each. The Imperial Bank and the Banque d'Escompte will each open an account for this sum as soon as the two legations have received a favourable reply to the present note, and it is understood that the sum paid into the account by the Banque d'Escompte will be placed at the disposal of the Persian Government in roubles, amounting to the sum of 245,750 roubles.

2. The above mentioned sums will be lent at a rate of interest of 7 per cent., per annum, and will be repayable out of the first proceeds of the forthcoming loan of the Persian Government, and until then the surpluses of the Northern and Southern customs revenues, which have hitherto been placed by the two banks at the disposal of the Persian Government, will be wholly and respectively assigned to the amortisation of and to the payment of interest on the Russian and British advances.

3. The advances will be expended under the control of the treasurer-general, in accordance with a programme prepared by him in agreement with the Cabinet and approved by the two legations. It is understood that a considerable part will be assigned to the organisation of the Government gendarmerie with the assistance of the Swedish officers. In making this proposal, and in order to attain the ends indicated at the beginning of this note, the two

4. The well-known notorious M. Hornard was appointed as Treasurer-General.
Legations hope that the Persian Government will undertake

(i) to conform their policy henceforth with the principles of the Anglo-Russian convention of 1907;

(ii) as soon as Mohamed Ali Shah and Salam-ed-Dowleh have left Persia; to dismiss the feudal and irregular forces now in the Persian service;

(iii) to discuss with the two legations a scheme for the organisation of small regular and effective army;

(iv) to come to an agreement with Mohamed Ali Shah on the subject of his departure from Persia, of his pension, and of a general amnesty to his followers'.

Ominous political conditions were attached with the loan offer. Curiously enough, contrary to their declaration of July 31, 1911, to the effect that by entering Persia in an attempt to regain the throne the ex-Shah, Mohamed Ali had forfeited his all right to the pension, which he had been receiving from the Persian Government under the stipulation signed by the representatives of the two powers with Persia in September 1909, the two great Powers forced the so-called Persian Government to restore to Mohamed Ali his pension and to grant his plundering followers a general amnesty. 'This unjustifiable action casts a strange light on the oft-repeated protestations of the Russian Government and the frequent

1. CD. 6103, No. 1 pp. 1-2.
2. CD. 6104, No. 246, and Enclosure in No. 246, p. 118.
declarations made by Sir E. Grey in the House of Commons to the effect that the Russian Government had no sympathy with, or participation in, the ex-shah's attempt to overthrow the constitutional government of Persia and seat himself upon the throne. The plain truth is that his filibustering expedition was initiated, executed and financed with the full connivance of the St. Petersburg Cabinet. Had there been a 'free and independent' government in Persia, she would have undoubtedly rejected these conditions, the acceptance of which certainly undermined the sovereignty of the Persian government. But, the Foreign Minister of Persia, Vosuk-ed-Dowleh informed the representatives of the two Powers on March 20, 1912, the readiness of the Persian Government to accept the joint Russo-British proposal in their entirety. On March 22, 1912, the Persian Government approved, at a Council of Minister, the following programme of the expenditure of the advance of 200,000 T.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount (T.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To His Highness Mohammad Ali Mirza</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Purchase of arms for the Gendarmerie</td>
<td>140,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Monthly pay of gendarmerie</td>
<td>280,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teheran Police</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To the Bakhtiyaris</td>
<td>125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Pensions</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Remittances to the provinces, including those to the Governors.</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Urgent expenditure</td>
<td>85,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Arrears due to Ministers</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,100,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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2. CD 6103, No. 2, pp. 3-4.
3. CD 6807, Enclosure 1 in No. 83, p. 35.
The programme of the expenditure was prepared by the Treasurer-General, in concert with the Cabinet and the two Legations approved it. ¹

Later on, Russia commenced to agitate the question of building of the long-discussed trans-Persian Railway. This line, as originally planned, was to traverse Persia from north-west to south-east, connecting with the Russian lines at Julfa and stopping only at the Indian frontier. It was truly a sinister proposal in every respect. If constructed, it would have been purely strategic in character and would have facilitated the Russian military movement up to the Indian border. However, Russia, tactfully dropped the idea of complete realization of her scheme and proceeded with the question of partially carrying it out. On September 24, M. Sazonow communicated a memorandum regarding the construction of the desired line. The memorandum stated that Societe de' Estudes, formed with a view to construct the Trans-Persian Railway, was ready to carry out the scheme partially. It had decided to construct a line which, starting from Alat, on the Trans-Caucasus Railway, would run as far as Teheran, and would thus form a part of the Russian section of the great railway proposed. The memorandum requested that the British representative at Teheran be instructed to support the Societe' in getting the concession from the Persian Government.² The British

¹ Ibid., No. 83, p.34.
agreed to co-operate with the Russian Government in getting the concession for the societe provided that the proposed railway line should not be extended beyond the Russian sphere of influence without the consent of the British Government and provided that the Russian Government would support the British demand for the construction of a railway between Mohammerah and Khurammabad. Sazonow agreed with Sir. H. Grey. However, the grant of the concession was delayed. Meanwhile the financial difficulties of the Persian Government increased. The Russian Government refused to grant any loan to the Persian Government till the latter would grant a concession for the Julfa Railway. At last, at the pursuasion of the British Government, the Julfa-Tabriz Railway concession was granted to Russia on February 6, 1913. As has been referred to, the financial embarrassment of the Persian Government was also an important factor which led to the grant of the concession. The Persian Government, however, expressed her inability to accept the proposals of the British syndicate for Mohammerah - Khurammabad railway as the conditions on which the concession

3. CD 6807, No. 420, p. 216.
4. Ibid., No. 554, p. 300.
5. Ibid., No. 554, p. 300.
was sought, were not favourable to the Persian Government. Sir E. Grey, in a fit of anger, instructed Sir W. Townley, the British Minister at Teheran, on February 8, 1913, that he should insist 'On their granting the option desired by the syndicate without further delay'. Finally, the Persian Government was compelled to give the right of option to the British syndicate for construction of a railway from the Persian Gulf to Khurammabad.

The period which intervened between the conclusion of Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 and the outbreak of the Great War (1914), was miserable one for Persia. Russia acted as predatory Power, constantly seizing on, or creating pretexts for further intervention. During these seven years Russia continued to absorb Northern Persia, protected rich land lords and merchants in Khorasan, collected the revenues due to the Persian Government from the so-called Russian 'subjects' in Azerbaijan, purchased villages for nominal prices through an exercise of pressure and imported Russian subjects to work there. Had Russia continued these practices, the independence of Persia would have been lost within a generation. Fortunately,

1. Ibid., No.557, p. 301.
2. Fatemi, Oil Diplomacy, p. 53.
the collapse of Russia during the Great War provided a chance to Persia to work out her own salvation.¹

The continued alarming European situation, compelled Britain to co-operate with Russia. Sir E. Grey was determined not to antagonize Russia on Persian affairs. Consequently, Russia exploited the situation and pursued the desired sinister policy in Persia. Sir E. Grey, however, often protested mildly against a too hard Russian policy in Persia, but always yielded whenever, the Russian Government proved obstinate. Later on, as has been referred to, Russia poured a large number of troops in Northern Persia and, more or less, occupied that part of the country. Britain, too, to safeguard her 'interests' reinforced the Consular guards at various places in South Persia. The two Great Powers became the virtual rulers of the country. A sort of Russo-British condominium was established in Persia. However, contrary to the Russian desire to occupy the Northern Persia permanently, Britain never wished to annex the South Persia but, she pursued a policy which would enable her to strengthen her grip over that region of the country. The attack on Mr. Smart, Acting British Consul at Shiraz, the murder of Captain Eckford at Dastajin by tribesmen and other

¹. Ibid., pp. 433 - 434.
tragic incidents — provided pretext to the British Government to dispatch a large number of troops in South Persia. The necessity of sending a military expedition consisting of several thousand men; the occupation of Bushire — Shiraz road, of Kazerum and of Shiraz was advocated in many British quarters, but Sir, 3. Grey opposed this course as, in his opinion, it was a policy, which might lead to the permanent occupation of South Persia and to the partition of the country, which would involve much expenditure on the British Treasury.\(^1\)

Though, Britain had not dispatched a large number of troops in South Persia, and had no intention to occupy that part of the country, yet, her dealings with the Bakhtiyari Khan and Sheikh of Mohammerah, were undoubtedly for the sole purpose of strengthening her hold in that region. The policy followed by Great Britain, was in no way consistent with the integrity and independence of Persia. To safeguard her oil interests in Persia, Britain pursued a policy which, firstly, created "State within a state", and finally resulted, in political partition of Persia( to be discussed later On ) — which was hitherto opposed by her.

1. CD 6807, No. 572, p. 310.
+ To be discussed in Chapter VI.