

## ARMINIUS VÁMBÉRY AND BRITISH CONSERVATIVES: SOME FURTHER NOTES ON THEIR CORRESPONDENCE

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Arminius Vámbéry (1832–1913) was an important figure in 19th-century Oriental studies in Hungary. Despite the controversies pertaining to his oeuvre and personality, he had a long-lasting influence on the development of several disciplines in Hungary, not to mention that the omnipresent Vámbéry equally left his mark on some other countries from England to Turkey. Since he was, on the apex of his career, one of the internationally most popular Hungarians, his output was enormous, even if the works authored were of varying academic value. As a founding father of Oriental studies in Hungary and educator of, or source of inspiration for, later generations of Orientalists, his work continues to concern scholarship today, and recent publications are dedicated to his life and career.<sup>1</sup>

Probably the least known and remembered part of Vámbéry's legacy is his personal correspondence. In a former study, I gave a detailed description of the recently rediscovered Vámbéry family archive, today kept at the University of Maryland (Sárközy 2014a; 2014b). The aim of the present paper is to publish, with additional notes and commentaries, three important letters from this group, shedding light on Vámbéry's contacts with prominent figures of the British political elite on the turn of the 20th century. Although I already provided a brief introduction to these, hitherto unpublished, letters, during the past few years I have conducted a more thorough analysis of their contexts, which has partially transformed my view about their political significance. The authors of the letters, namely Randolph Churchill, George

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*Author's note:* My former instructor of Classical Arabic, Professor István Ormos, played a key role in arousing my interest in the history of Oriental studies in Hungary. His outstanding work on the lives and scholarly activities of Mihály Kmoskó (1876–1931) and Vilmos Pröhle (1871–1946), two largely forgotten Hungarian Orientalists, are of particular relevance to my research; see Ormos 2012; 2017. The present paper discusses archival material in the University of Maryland Libraries, Washington, DC. I should express my personal gratitude to Professor John Fuegi for his efforts in preserving these documents and for his generosity of making them accessible to me.

<sup>1</sup> For recent scholarship on Vámbéry, see Bartholomä 2006; Kovács 2013; Sárközy 2015; Knüppel 2017; Cwiklinski 2019; for Vámbéry's private correspondence with Goldziher, see Dévényi 2015.

Curzon, and Arthur Balfour, were British conservative politicians, who exerted considerable influence on the Eurasian policies of the British Empire around 1900. As I shall argue, these documents also shed light on the extent of Vámbéry's influence on British foreign policymaking.

Vámbéry was a lifelong and ardent supporter of British imperialism in Asia, as well as an active advisor of British politicians on the Islamic world. Since the early 1870s, he worked for the British Foreign Office, where his reports are preserved, though his pro-British activism can be traced back to his Central Asian journey as a disguised dervish in 1862–1864, or perhaps even earlier. He remained an active adviser to the British on the Islamic world until the last weeks of his life in August 1913, as it is well known from reports preserved in the British Foreign Office where Vámbéry had been recruited since the early 1870's. (The reasons for his own enthusiasm towards the British Empire, and, for that matter, behind his opposition towards the Russian expansion in Asia, his characteristic Russophobia goes back to the Russian suppression of the Hungarian revolution in 1849, when he, as a teenager, witnessed some horrific events. As a Hungarian Jew with limited rights in his home country, he understandably sympathised with the political emancipation of Jews in the United Kingdom. Regarding his outspoken support for colonisation, Vámbéry seems to have genuinely believed that the British sovereignty would benefit the local inhabitants of the colonies.<sup>2</sup>

## 1 Vámbéry and his British ties

Vámbéry undoubtedly was a strong pro-British character throughout his long life since his early contacts with British diplomats in Constantinople before 1860 until the very end of his life. However, his ties to British circles became more important after 1864 following his world-famous journey to Central Asia on the eve of the Tsarist conquest of that region. It is worth noting that it was at the British diplomatic mission to Persia where Charles Alison the then British consul to Persia in Tehran immediately realised Vámbéry's highly informative character relating to the manners and customs of Central Asia.<sup>3</sup> Following these discussions held at the British embassy of Tehran, Vámbéry was provided by letters of recommendation by Alison which eventually paved Vámbéry's way to inner-British political circles in London (such as Lord Palmerston or Lord Strangford). Unlike the controversial reception of Vámbéry in Hungary where he was severely criticised for not being able to provide results of his research trip on early Hungarians and their connections to

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<sup>2</sup> On Vámbéry's pro-British sympathy, see Mandler 2014: 77–128.

<sup>3</sup> The British were still somewhat traumatised by the execution of British military officers (W. H. Wyburd, Arthur Connolly, and Charles Stoddard) in Central Asia who first hosted Vámbéry in Mashhad and Tehran upon his return from Central Asia.

Central Asia, he was warmly welcomed in Great Britain where he proved to be an invaluable source of information for British statesmen after 1864 on the contemporary political conditions of Central Asia. Since 1865 Vámbéry has remained in close contact with the highest political circles of London regularly appearing in the British Isles until 1911, the year of his last personal trip to Britain.

His importance was also clearly recognised by the British Foreign Office as well, which eventually hired Vámbéry as a well-paid informant on Middle Eastern issues since the mid-1870s onwards until the last weeks of his life but it appears also that Vámbéry may have been used by the Ottoman as well as their agent in foreign affairs. His role as a 'British agent' eventually led to the deterioration of his fame in the postcolonial period especially in the third world after the publication of documents and reports linked to him.<sup>4</sup> Apparently Vámbéry enjoyed the financial benefits of his services he made both to the Ottomans and the British. He was closely linked to members of the British royal family such as Edward the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) and regularly exchanged letters with Queen consort Mary of Teck (1867–1953) who was partly of Hungarian origin. Vámbéry also maintained a lifelong friendly contact with Sultan Abd al-Hamid II (r. 1876–1909) whom he had come to know in his early years before 1860. Being a go-between and an invaluable source of information, Vámbéry reached the peak of his career as an expert of the Middle East between 1880 and 1890. According to written evidence, the British government allocated to him a significant amount of income (five thousand pounds) under the heading of 'travel expenses', which was later converted into a regular allowance, and then, in his later period, into a life pension (Csirkés and Fodor 2014: 56).

As for his active role in shaping British policy in the Middle East, it is important to mention some of his major contributions in this field. In 1882, for instance, when British–Ottoman relations deteriorated due to the British occupation of Egypt, Vámbéry played an active role as a mediator to restore cordial relations between the two powers. Vámbéry also provided detailed reports on different topics for the British Foreign Office, such as the anti-Armenian measures introduced by the Ottomans (Fodor 2015: 49–62), the Iranian political crisis following the so called tobacco protest in 1891 (Csirkés and Fodor 2014: 55). Furthermore, he showed an avid interest in British–Muslim relations in India as it was testified by his publications as well. Vámbéry, despite his high age, was still able to provide reports on the turbulent political situation of Iran after 1906, though his staunch anti-Russian political credo did not go unnoticed even by his British supporters. Vámbéry was clearly aware of these critical voices on his political views, since he quotes one of these critical opinions in *The coming struggle for India*:

"Professor Vámbéry is a Hungarian, carrying in his breast, in indelible characters, hatred of Russia. He cannot forget 1848 (*sic*), when General

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<sup>4</sup> As an example of a negative, and indeed superficial, approach towards Vámbéry, mention can be made of Öke 1985; see also Dabashi 2009: 51–79.

Paskievitch compelled his countrymen to lay down their arms raised against Austria. He is continually brooding revenge, and thence his constant efforts to embroil us with Russia” (Vambery 1885: 200–201).

The contents of the three letters presented below should be interpreted in the framework of the current political events. These historical documents provide evidence for Vámbéry’s relationships with some of the policymakers of the British Empire, as well as for the prestige he enjoyed in British conservative circles. Apart from the events enumerated above, it appears that he could have played an active role in the so-called Great Game, in which Russia and Great Britain vied for the dominance of Asia, and, in particular, for expanding their influence over Afghanistan and British India, which was one of the main subjects of Russian-British rivalry in Vámbéry’s age. Though Vámbéry’s replies to these letters still remain unknown and the chance for recovering his replies is rather modest, his influence exerted on policymakers of the British Empire as well as the popularity he enjoyed in British conservative political circles is evident from these documents.

## 2 Randolph J. Churchill to Arminius Vámbéry, 15 May 1885 (fig. 1)

As an advisor on foreign affairs, Vámbéry’s popularity in British political circles reached its zenith between 1880 and 1890. He had a crucial role in solving several difficult crises in the Islamic world. One was the so-called Panjdeh incident, in which, following the 1885 Russian military incursion into Afghanistan, his mediation helped to prevent a diplomatic clash between Russia and the British Empire. Allegedly, it was Vámbéry who drew the new border line of north-west Afghanistan after the incident. However, despite his political service and widely popular public lectures in London, he failed to achieve one of his much-coveted goals, to receive an academic position at a university in England (Fisher and Best 2011: 81–110; Alder and Dalby 1979: 389–461).

In 1885, Vámbéry published one of his seminal works, *The coming struggle for India*, on the history of the subcontinent and its position in the Great Game. This book is perhaps the clearest manifestation of Vámbéry’s political stance and ties with members of the Conservative Party.<sup>5</sup> He also gave several lectures in London in 1885, addressing problems in British India (Mandler 2014: 117–120), and presenting his idealistic thoughts about the role of the ‘enlightened’ Brits in ‘civilising’ India. The following passage from Vámbéry’s abovementioned book summarises his view: As a possible credo of his idealistic and perhaps slightly naive thoughts about the enlightened civilizing British role in India, which he could have read out during the

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<sup>5</sup> For a study on Vámbéry’s personality, see Csirkés and Fodor 2014: 53–60.

lecture Randolph Churchill sadly missed in mid-May 1885, let me quote the following passage from Vámbéry's abovementioned book, published in 1885:

"The improved situation in India, the blessings of modern culture, the re-assertion of human rights, will meet with appreciation and thanks here and there, among the lowest classes of the people; but unfortunately in Asia, even more than in Europe, the great masses are following their chosen leaders, either religious or social; and as it is to these leaders England has done most harm, the latter will not be conciliated by concessions of any kind" (Vambéry 1885: 155).

Conversely, Vámbéry's description of customs and manners in imperial Russia is full of venomous comments:

"In accordance with the saying, that the river cannot rise higher than source, it would be preposterous to expect from the Russian government any degree of culture higher than she was able to confer on her own subjects. A society where the main principles of administration and corruption are the order of the day; and where every official, either civil or military, is looking after his own personal interest, and has not the faintest idea of duty, honesty, and patriotism; there it is almost an impossible thing to get the beneficent rule based upon right and legality, so indispensable to the welfare of the masses" (Vambéry 1885: 173–174).

Vámbéry's surviving letters confirm that he was a particularly popular advisor among British conservatives in this period; he corresponded with several politicians on a daily basis. The author of one of the letters was Lord Randolph Churchill (1849–1895), a radical Tory politician and the father of Winston Churchill. He reached the peak of his career soon after he wrote this letter, since only forty days later, on 24 June 1885, he became Secretary of State for India. In this position, he was responsible for the governance of Aden, British India, and Burma, though his tenure was rather short. In 1886, he was appointed as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons.

Lord Randolph Churchill's letter contains an apology for missing one of Vámbéry's lectures in London, for which he was personally invited. It is very likely that Vámbéry read excerpts from his forthcoming book at the event, as the title of the lecture, *England's future in Asia*, suggests. That is, this letter can be interpreted as evidence for Vámbéry's marketing strategy advertising his lecture in London. Churchill kindly apologises for his absence, and his style hints at the cordial relationship between them:

Dear Sir,

I have to thank you for your kind letter of yesterday's date asking me to attend a meeting to be held on Saturday next, at which you are to deliver an address on 'England's future in Asia'.

I regret exceedingly that a previous engagement does not permit me to have the pleasure of hearing you speak on a subject on which you are so undoubtedly qualified to express an authoritative opinion.

I am

Dear Sir

Yours Faithfully

Randolph J Churchill

### 3 Lord George Curzon to Vámbéry, 20 March 1898 (figs. 2–4)

Among the pro-Vámbéry circle of the Conservative Party, Lord George Curzon (1859–1925) had a particularly close relationship with Vámbéry. As the British Consul-General at Budapest, Esmé Howard (1863–1939), wrote in one of his reports in 1908, “Vambéry has written so much on subjects which have always especially interested Curzon” (Alder and Dalby 1979: 457). Curzon and Vámbéry exchanged numerous letters, even though only two of them survive today in the Vámbéry family archive.

In his letter dated 20 March 1898, Curzon, who was Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at the time, praises Vámbéry for his expert feedback on a draft of his speech to be delivered in the House of Commons. This letter implies that they had previously exchanged several other letters, discussing questions related to India’s borders. In my opinion, it may also have been related to the Pashtun uprisings in 1897–1898. Vámbéry’s insight, though he had never set foot on Indian soil, was once again sought after for solving a political crisis centred on the question of the Afghan-Indian border. According to Curzon’s remarks, it was Vámbéry’s knowledge of Afghanistan and his voluminous study on India published a decade before that had promoted him to the rank of one of Curzon’s advisors, and the good old Dervish of the Windsor Castle possibly served as a source of information for one of Curzon’s speeches in the House of Commons not long before the latter’s appointment as Viceroy of India.

Notably, Curzon maintained a strong interest in ethnic questions of borderlands, especially in fixing new political borders,<sup>6</sup> and had augmented his knowledge by travelling widely in India, the Middle East, and Russia. He served as Viceroy of India between January 1899 and November 1905, in which position he paid special attention to ethnic conflicts and border issues in north-western India (now Pakistan). His appointment to India took place soon after the Pashtun uprising in 1897–1898, and, purported as a long-term solution to this problem, he created the new administrative

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<sup>6</sup> The so-called ‘Curzon line’, initially put forward by Curzon at the end of World War I, served as a proposed border line between Poland and the areas east of it, and indeed the eastern border of Poland roughly follows the same contour today.

unit called North-West Frontier Province in 1901. Whereas Vámbéry's influence on Curzon cannot be assessed with certainty, if one reads his *The coming struggle for India* carefully, one can extrapolate arguments that resurface in Curzon's policies:

"As is pretty well known, the main and principal aim of the Conservative Ministry in going to war against Afghanistan, was to secure a scientific frontier in the place of the former unscientific, i.e., unsafe, and unreliable one. The scientific frontier may be designated, if we say that it was to have comprised a line of country extending from the Kheiber to Quettah, including the Kheiber and Mishni passes, as well as other defiles, leading from India into Afghanistan, together with the Kuram, Sibi and Pishin, in order to obtain, as Sir Henry Rawlinson very justly remarked, a strong, friendly and independent power in the north-west of India, without being obliged to accept any crushing liabilities in return" (Vámbéry 1885: 70).

In this passage, Vámbéry mainly reiterated the decisions of the 1881 Treaty of Gandamak that put an end to the second Anglo-Afghan war. Besides the territorial changes, Vámbéry also emphasised the idea of a 'scientific frontier', that is, a safe and strictly controlled area devoid of the tribal riots of Pashtun tribes. Vámbéry's proposal for creating this buffer zone was probably the main impetus behind Curzon's establishment of the North-West Frontier Province in 1901.

Curzon and Vámbéry remained in close contact for a long period. Curzon reportedly visited Vámbéry in his apartment in Budapest (Alder and Dalby 1979: 323–326), and their relationship might have paved the way for Curzon's noted Hungarophilia. In 1919, when he participated in the Versailles Peace Conference as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Curzon argued for a more humanistic treatment of post-war Hungary and briefly supported Hungary's claim for changing the deeply unjust new border system that the Entente powers were about to impose on Hungary. His knowledge of geography, long-lasting friendship with Vámbéry, and familiarity with the ethnicity map of Hungary could have made an effect on the conference's decision. The Entente, however, eventually rejected Curzon's suggestion (Cartledge 2009: 99–102).

"My dear Professor

I was very much gratified nearly a month ago to receive your very kind complimentary remarks about my Indian frontier speech. Before writing to thank you I have been waiting for the revised and official copies of my speech in order that I might send you 2 or 3 copies which I now do.

It is a great pleasure to me to think that in advocating the cause to which you have devoted your life, I have encouragement and approval of so great an authority and so illustrious a pioneer.

I am rejoiced to think that you are in good health,

Yours sincerely, George Curzon"

#### 4 Prime Minister Balfour to Vámbéry, 22 May 1905 (figs. 5–8)

A third letter in the Vámbéry family archive represents the latest phase in Vámbéry's career as an advisor on the Islamic world. It appears that by this time his political influence had, to some extent, lost its former prominence. The author of this letter, Arthur Balfour (1848–1930), was a renowned conservative politician, who, both as Prime Minister (1902–1905) and later as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1916–1919), had a leading role in British foreign policies. His most famous deed was the statement of creating 'a national home for the Jewish people' in Palestine, known as the Balfour Declaration, in 1917. In addition, it was also Balfour who signed the Anglo-French convention in 1904, thereby creating the basis of the Entente.

Balfour's letter, arguably one of the most interesting documents in the newly resurfaced archive, responded to a former letter from Vámbéry, concerning the Afghan-Russian relations. As it is known, the issue of Afghanistan was of primary importance to British politicians for several reasons, and Vámbéry was repeatedly asked to share his views in this respect. Though an ardent Russophobe until the very end of his life, Vámbéry remained highly informative on the questions of the Great Game even in his twilight years, and would still send reports to the British Foreign Office, as well as letters to British politicians. As for Vámbéry's ideas pertaining to Afghanistan, it is clear that this country was highly important in his eyes as an obstacle for Russian infiltration into India, which Vámbéry considered a great threat to British interests as he already made it clear quoting a speech of a Conservative British politician, Sir Henry Bartle Edward Frere as early as in 1885 in *the Coming Struggle for India*:

"If we suppose Afghanistan only so far Russianised that Russian travellers freely move about the country, that Russian officers and men, not necessarily in the pay of the Russian Government, but deserters, possibly, or vagabonds from Russia, drill the [Afghan] Emir's troops, cast his cannon, coin his rupees, and physic him and his subjects, what would be the effect in India? Can any man in his senses, who knows anything of India, doubt that the effect now, and for many years to come, must be disquiet every one in India, except the great majority of the cultivators who will go on cultivating without talking politics till the crack of doom? Every Englishman, from the Governor-General downwards, will be disquieted; they will feel that a great foreign Power has as much to say to the proceedings of all the troublesome classes as the Viceroy and his English officials. Every prince and chief will see in the Russians a possible alternative claimant for empire in India."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Vambéry 1885: 159–160. Sir Henry Bartle Edward Frere (1815–1884) was a high-ranking British colonial administrator, who served as the governor of Bombay between 1862 and 1867.



Balfour's letter dates from the very end of the Great Game. By that time, the Russian and British political interests had begun to conflate, and the two countries, along with France, were to put aside their former enmities in favour of forming a coalition against Germany. As noted above, the Entente was formally created in 1904 between France and Great Britain, to which Russia joined in 1907. This sudden twist in the political alliances had a tremendous and dramatic impact on Eurasian politics as well, where the former British-Russian rivalry was replaced by, officially, though not always publicly, acknowledged by both parties. The Balfour letter addressed to Vámbéry in 1905 is a very good example of this changing attitude. The ailing Vámbéry – though his reply has not resurfaced in British archives – could possibly have received these changes with a significant reservation, as he remained a staunch anti-Russian thinker and was apparently stunned by the new direction taken by his British Conservative friends. Instead of a Russian-British war on India, now the sides allied with each other to defend their interests against Germans.

In the letter, Balfour reacts with a great deal of pessimism to Vámbéry's thoughts about Russians, emphasising that British policy is largely unable to halt the further growth of Russian influence in Central Asia and Afghanistan since the British 'cannot civilise' Afghans against Russian interests.

On the other hand, one must note that the Anglo-Afghan treaty of 1905 was signed only two months before this letter. In this treaty (which was in some ways a renewal of the former treaties made under Amir 'Abd al-Rahman before 1901) Curzon, the Viceroy of India, Curzon, accepted Ḥabīb Allāh Ḥān (r. 1901–1919) as the independent ruler of Afghanistan, guaranteeing the territorial integrity of Afghanistan against Russian and British intrusions. In return, the Afghan ruler acknowledged the British control over his country's foreign affairs.<sup>8</sup> As it is known, the Anglo-Russian Convention was signed two years later (on 31 August 1907), where an important chapter was dedicated to the highly complex status of Afghanistan.<sup>9</sup> This agreement confirmed the neutral status of Afghanistan between Tsarist Russia and British India. Britain declared that it would exert "influence in Afghanistan only in a pacific sense," and Britons do not "take, nor encourage Afghanistan to take, any measures threatening Russia." In return, Russia declared that it would recognise "Afghanistan as outside the sphere of Russian influence", and that it would uphold contacts with Afghanistan only "through the intermediary of His Britannic Majesty's Government" (Kazemzadeh 1985).

The passivity or pretended pessimism of Balfour's letter to Vámbéry in May 1905 therefore cannot be conceived as a personal remark but rather a forerunner of a new British attitude concerning Russian political interests in Afghanistan. Therefore the tone of the letter was a conscious sign of changing winds in British Eurasian

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<sup>8</sup> On the Anglo-Afghan Treaty, see Norris 1985.

<sup>9</sup> For the Anglo-Russian Convention, see: Kazemzadeh 1985.

policy, which was unacceptable for the ardent Russophobe Vámbéry, who spent nearly all of his life opposing Russian political interests in the Islamic world.

“Professor Vambery

I am greatly obliged to you for your letter of the 17th.

In it you point to a real danger. But it is one I could hardly properly deal with in a speech, the danger, I mean the Afghan misgovernment in Afghan Turkestan, and the opening this will give to the growth of Russian influence in that region. There is I fear no way of dealing with this. We cannot civilise Afghan methods, and we cannot prevent Russia deriving some advantage from them. It is one of the weaknesses of the position which has to be recognised, but which, so far as I can see, cannot be remedied.

I beg to remain, yours very truly

Arthur James Balfour”

## 5 Closing remarks

Our knowledge of Arminius Vámbéry’s personal correspondence is in a highly fragmentary state, since it was regrettably scattered after his death due to unwelcoming political conditions in Hungary and because of the emigration of his family in 1938. But it also appears that Vámbéry did not make steps to preserve his letters for posterity, perhaps due to political reasons and his manifold non-public relations held with different politicians.

This small collection suddenly and unexpectedly showed up in the US some years ago as the bequest of his late grandson. Róbert Vámbéry (1907–1999) preserved – as I believe – only a small part of his correspondence. Perhaps other items of this collection are being preserved in some libraries, since we know that it was Ruzstem Vámbéry (1873–1948), the son of Arminius Vámbéry, who brought this collection and other precious personal belongings of his late father with himself from Hungary in 1938. Owing to financial reasons, however, Ruzstem Vámbéry was forced to sell large parts of his father’s bequest in London and in New York. This small collection of letters, however, remained in the possession of the Vámbéry family till the death of the last scion, Róbert Vámbéry. Why these letters were preserved, remains family history. No one can know the true reasons behind it. Prestigious personalities, personal memoirs, royal stamps matter in all times and have high prestige in the eyes of posterity, and perhaps for these reasons these letters were not sold by the descendants of Arminius Vámbéry. The original collection is now at the Library of the University of Maryland (Sárközy 2014a, Sárközy 2014b).

In the present paper, I have commented on three of the surviving letters addressed to Vámbéry. As argued above, the wider political contexts, in which they were written, not only shed light on their contents, but also prove that they have more historical

significance than hitherto expected. However, the greater part of this collection still awaits to be investigated and contextualised, which will be the subject of further publications in the near future.

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## FIGURES

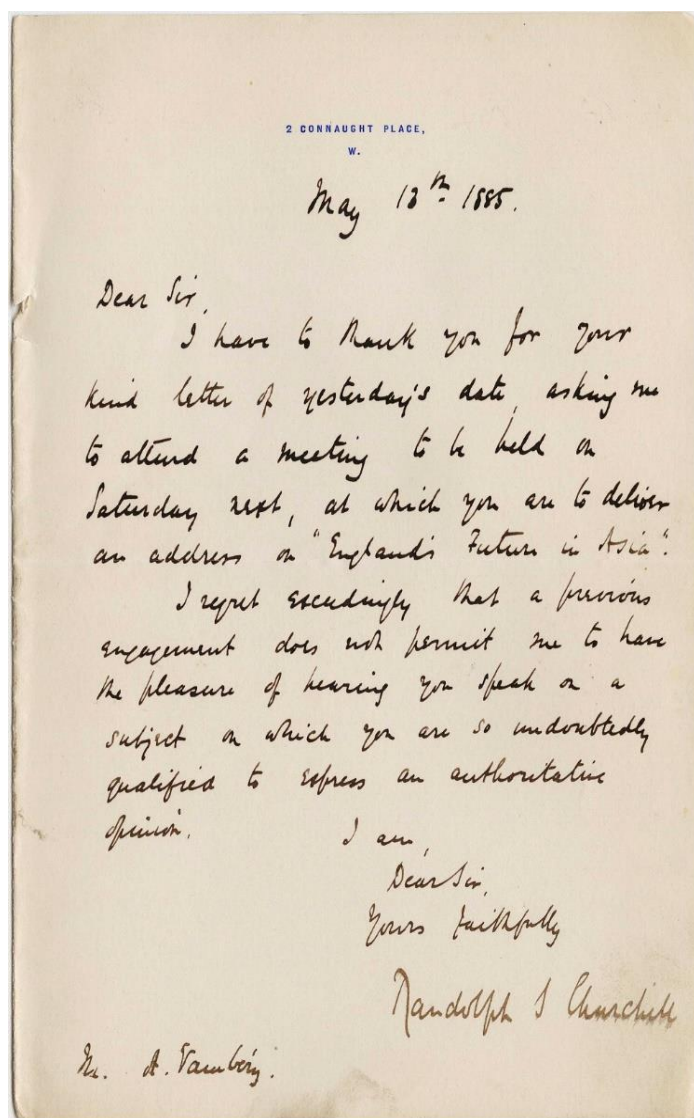


Fig. 1. Letter from Randolph Churchill to Vámbéry, 15 May 1885. University of Maryland Libraries, Washington, DC. Courtesy of Professor John Fuegi.

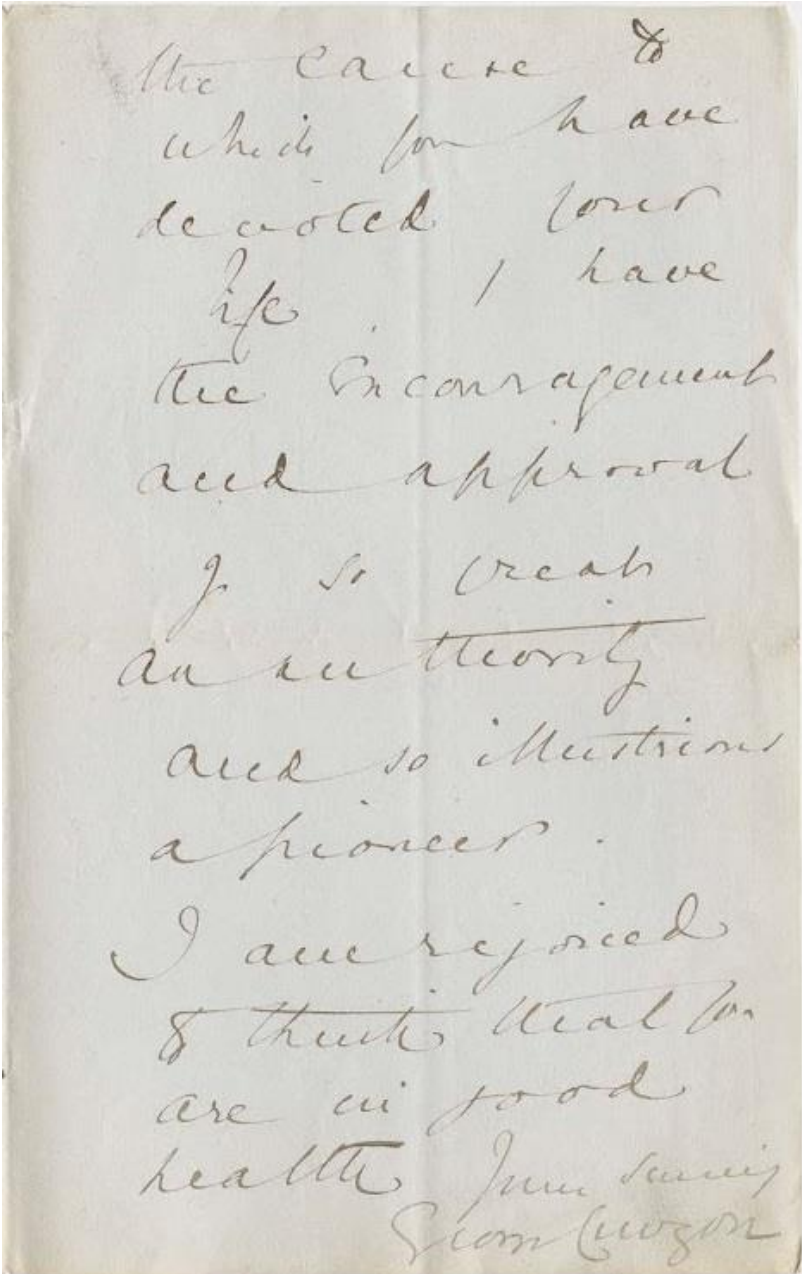
4, Carlton Gardens.  
S.W.  
March 20. 1898  
My dear Professor  
I was very  
much gratified  
nearly a month ago  
to receive your  
very kind &  
complimentary  
remarks about  
my Indian frontier  
speech. Before  
writing to thank you

Fig. 2. Letter from Lord Curzon to Vámbéry, 20 March 1898, page 1. University of Maryland Libraries, Washington, DC. Courtesy of Professor John Fuegi.

I have been  
 waiting for the  
 revised & official  
 copies of my speech  
 in order that I  
 might send you  
 2 or 3 copies  
 which I now do.

It is a  
 great pleasure to  
 me to think that  
 in advocating

Fig. 3. Letter from Lord Curzon to Vámbéry, 20 March 1898, page 2. University of Maryland Libraries, Washington, DC. Courtesy of Professor John Fuegi.



the cause to  
which you have  
devoted your  
life. I have  
the encouragement  
and approval  
of so great  
an authority  
and so illustrious  
a pioneer.  
I am rejoiced  
& thank that you  
are in good  
health. I am sincerely  
Yours  
Lord Curzon

Fig. 4. Letter from Lord Curzon to Vámbéry, 20 March 1898, page 3. University of Maryland Libraries, Washington, DC. Courtesy of Professor John Fuegi.



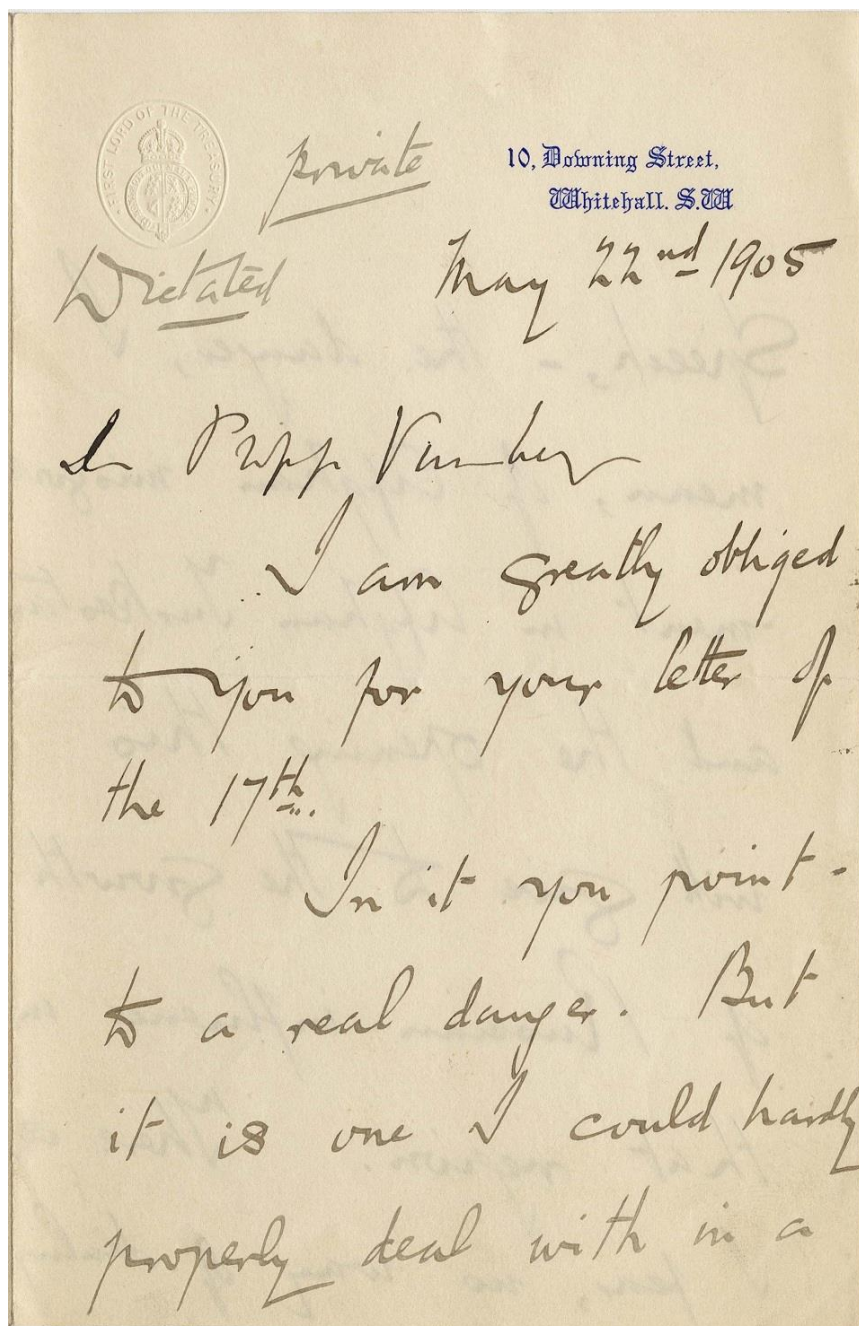

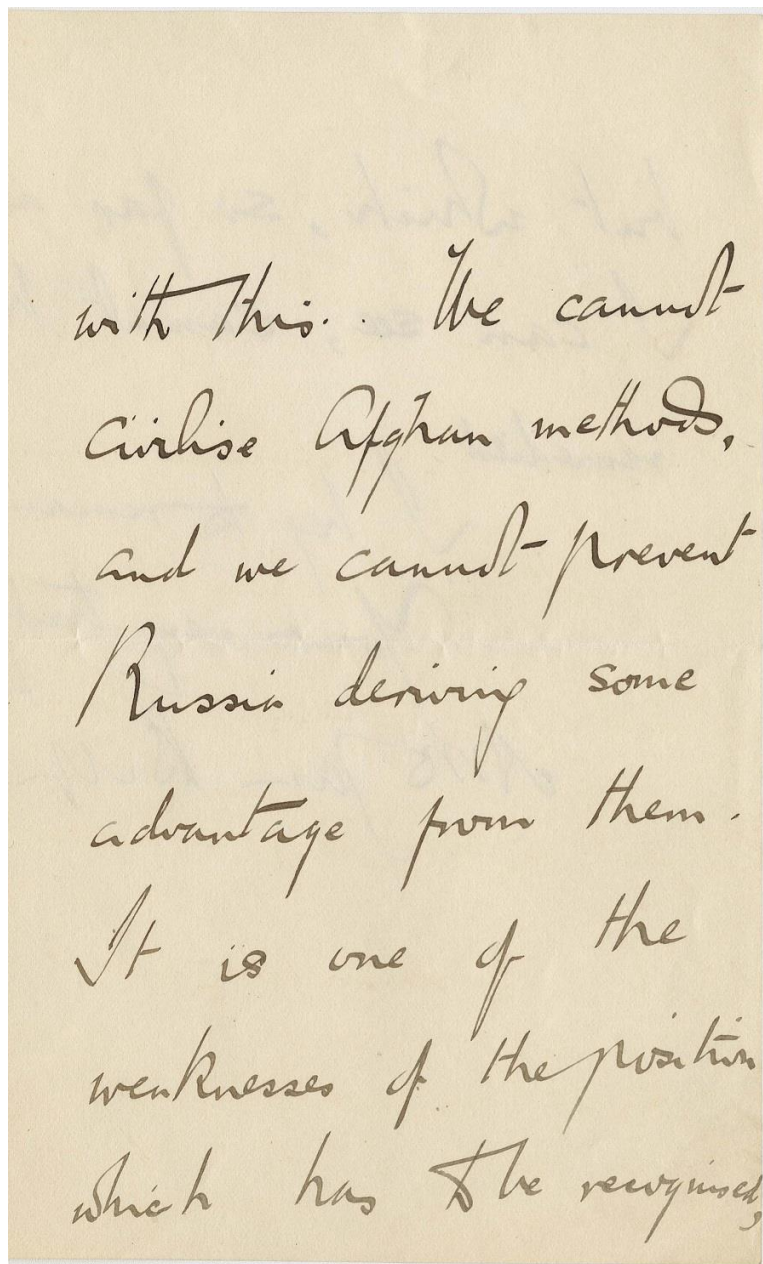


Fig. 5. Letter from Balfour to Vámbéry, 22 May 1905, page 1. University of Maryland Libraries, Washington, DC. Courtesy of Professor John Fuegi.



Speech, - the danger, I  
mean, of Afghan misgov-  
-ernment in Afghan Turkestan,  
and the opening this  
will give to the growth  
of Russian influence in  
that region. There is,  
I fear, no way of dealing

Fig. 6. Letter from Balfour to Vámbéry, 22 May 1905, page 2. University of Maryland Libraries, Washington, DC. Courtesy of Professor John Fuegi.

A photograph of a handwritten letter on aged, cream-colored paper. The text is written in a cursive script with dark ink. The paper shows some faint blue ink bleed-through from the reverse side. The handwriting is fluid and legible, with some variations in line height and spacing typical of personal correspondence of that era. The text is arranged in seven lines, with the first line starting with 'with This.' and the last line ending with a comma.

with This. We cannot  
civilise Afghan methods,  
and we cannot-prevent  
Russia deriving some  
advantage from them.  
It is one of the  
weaknesses of the position  
which has to be recognised,

Fig. 7. Letter from Balfour to Vámbéry, 22 May 1905, page 3. University of Maryland Libraries, Washington, DC. Courtesy of Professor John Fuegi.



but which, so far as  
I can see, cannot be  
remedied.  
I beg to remain,  
Yours very truly  
Arthur Balfour

Fig. 8. Letter from Balfour to Vámbéry, 22 May 1905, page 4. University of Maryland Libraries, Washington, DC. Courtesy of Professor John Fuegi.