

OMAN.

AN independent State in South-eastern Arabia extending along a coast line—S. E. and S. W.—of almost 1,000 miles from the Gulf of Ormuz and inland to the deserts. Area, 82,000 square miles; population, 1,500,000. The capital, Muscat (40,000 inhabitants), was occupied by the Portuguese till the seventeenth century. After various vicissitudes it was taken in the eighteenth century by Ahmed bin Sa'eed, of Yemenite origin, who was elected Imam in 1741. His family have since ruled. The present Sultan is Seyyid Feysal bin Turki, second son of the late Seyyid Turki bin Sa'eed bin Sultan, who succeeded his father June 4, 1888, and has now been formally recognised by the British Government. In the beginning of the present century the power of the Imam of Oman extended over a large area of Arabia, the islands in the Persian Gulf, a strip on the Persian coast, and a long strip of the African coast south of Cape Guardafui, including Socotra and Zanzibar. On the death of Sultan Sa'eed in 1854 Zanzibar was detached from Oman and placed under the rule of the second son, and subsequent troubles curtailed the area of the state in Asia. The closest relations have for years existed between the Government of India and Oman, and a British Consul or Political Agent resides at Muscat. The authority of the Sultan does not extend far beyond Muscat.

The revenue of the Sultan amounts to about 225,000 dollars.

The exports in 1895-96 were valued at 1,419,450 dollars; chiefly dates, 645,000 dollars; cotton fabrics, 220,000 dollars; fruit, 50,000 dollars; pearls, 30,000 dollars; rice, 30,000 dollars; salt, 40,000 dollars; rifles, 80,000 dollars; fish, 38,000 dollars. The imports were valued at 2,288,760 dollars; chiefly rice, 707,500 dollars; coffee, 72,000 dollars; sugar, 60,000 dollars; cotton stuff, 165,000 dollars; twist, 90,000 dollars; salt, 40,000 dollars; pearls, 65,000 dollars; mother-o'-pearl, 30,000 dollars; ghee, 41,000 dollars; oil sweet and cocoa-nut, 35,000 dollars.

The imports from India were valued at 1,561,930 dollars; Persian Gulf, &c., 359,005 dollars; South Arabia and Africa, 193,125 dollars; United States, Mauritius, and Singapore, 174,700 dollars.

Vessels entered and cleared the port of Muscat in 1895-96, 368 of 194,100 tons, of which 130 of 169,200 tons were European.

Administrative Report of the Persian Gulf Political Residency for 1895-96. Calcutta 1896.