The selection of Mukhtar Pasha as Ottoman High Commissioner is probably the best that could be made; and it is to be hoped that both English and Turkish Commissioners will very soon come to a satisfactory understanding with respect to the reorganization of the country. It is too soon to anticipate what measures will be adopted, but some steps have already been taken to bring about a settlement of the Soudan. It may be necessary to reoccupy Dongola if no peaceable arrangement is practicable; but upon this subject Sir Henry Wolff will be entirely guided by the military authorities. With respect to finance, it is clear that the primary object must be the promotion of economy. It is therefore to be hoped that the projects which have been already set on foot for a more economical administration of the domains may be carried out, and that the general administration of the finances will be such as to remove all danger of foreign intervention under the terms of existing agreements.

Another question which was causing considerable anxiety at the time that the Government assumed office was that of the relations of Germany with Zanzibar. When, under the award of Lord Canning in 1861, the territories of Muscat and Zanzibar were divided, the father of the present Sultan obtained possession, for himself and his successors, of Zanzibar and its dependencies. The line of coast then obtained extended from Cape Delgado to Warsheik, 2° 30′ north latitude. It has always been understood that both the last and the present Sultans claimed sovereignty over that line of coast, but the exact character of the control has always been doubtful. The Sultan's title to territory in the interior is uncertain. When Germany, some eighteen months ago, in pursuance of her recently-developed colonial policy, claimed the protectorate over certain territories to the west of the Zanzibar coast, she came into collision with what the Sultan considered his territorial and sovereign rights. The German claims were founded on the fact that three or four Germans had settled in the interior and had made treaties with certain Native chiefs. More recently still, the German East Africa Company had, it was alleged, made other treaties with two or three chiefs who had hitherto been faithful to the Sultan and acknowledged his sovereignty. In these circumstances, the Sultan declined to acknowledge the German protectorate. His refusal was followed by the despatch of German men-of-war to the coast, with a demand that a treaty should be signed, not only acknowledging the German protectorate, but also agreeing to the possession by Germany of a port on the coast. Considerable irritation was felt in Germany in consequence of the prevalent impression that it was due to the great influence which our able and energetic representative, Sir John Kirk, possessed with the Sultan that opposition was made to the German demands. Very soon after the change of Government took place a better understanding was established, and the influence of England was used to prevent a collision between the Government of Zanzibar and the German authorities. At the same time, Germany proposed that the delimitation of the real territory of the Sultan should be conducted by an International Commission. Owing to a report that the German commodore had received instructions to enforce the demands of Germany, explanations were asked for and received upon the subject, and it was stated that the commodore had no authority to enforce his demands by intimidation. This pacific assurance soon produced a favourable effect. The Sultan very quickly came to an understanding with the German authorities which the latter declared to be entirely satisfactory, and the influence of Sir John Kirk has been successfully used to bring the views of the Sultan and the German Government into harmony. A Commission, consisting of an English, French, and German representative, is now sitting at Zanzibar, and the Sultan has acknowledged the protectorate of Germany, subject to a definition of boundaries by that authority. A commercial treaty advantageous to the Sultan and other nations has been signed between Germany and Zanzibar, and negotiations for a similar treaty with England are now in progress.

Another subject which has long engaged the attention of the Foreign Office is that of international copyright. The existing British copyright law consists partly in certain vaguely-defined common-law principles, and partly in the provisions of fourteen statutes ranging in date between the years 1735 and 1875. The complexity and obscurity of these statutes had given rise to such frequent complaint that in the year 1875 a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the subject. Their report, published in 1878, fully confirmed the justice of the complaints which had been made. The Commissioners, with some dissentients on points of detail, consequently recommended that the existing statutes should be reduced by codification to an intelligible form, and should be amended in substance in many important particulars—notably as to the duration of copyright and the right of translation, and as to the formalities of registration, deposit, &c. So far, however, no action has been taken in the sense suggested by the Royal Commission. The anomalies inherent in the existing system of British law on this subject have become especially apparent in the international branch of the question, for it is there brought into comparison with the more recent and less cumbrous systems adopted by foreign countries, with which it can rarely be made to harmonize; and it is for this reason that all the attempts which have lately been made by Great Britain to conclude copyright conventions have failed. The British International Copyright Acts require the insertion in such conventions of many detailed formalities, unacceptable in spirit and unintelligible in form to foreign countries, where the tendency is always to facilitate the protection accorded to the owners of intellectual property. It was this difficulty of harmonizing the varying details of divers legislations which led the International Literary Association to hold a meeting at Berne in 1883, with a view to some sort of international codification, as a first step towards the formation of an International Copyright Union. The rough scheme prepared at this meeting showed sufficient promise to encourage the Swiss Government to take the matter up diplomatically, and to invite all countries to be represented at an official International Copyright Conference. This was held at Berne in September, 1884, and was attended by delegates from twelve States, including Great Britain, the result being the submission for the approval of the Governments represented of a draft convention for the creation of an International Copyright Union. The British delegate was Mr. Adams, Her Majesty's Minisetr at Berne, who was not, however,