

geography he had learned from Klaproth's map; but he mentioned that on this river, the Kan-pu, had occurred the murder of two French priests, Messrs. Krick and Boury, who had been trying to penetrate from Upper Assam into Thibet about 1842 or 1843. Now it was known, from information on the Assam side, that that murder took place upon the Lohit River, the eastern branch of the Brahmaputra. There could therefore, he thought, be no doubt that the Kan-pu of the Chinese was the eastern branch of the Brahmaputra, and that that river ought to have a much longer source given to it than was usually the case in modern maps. The only Thibetan river thus remaining unaccounted for was the Khiu-shi or Tchitom-chu, which he believed would be proved to be the eastern source of the Irawadi. And this belief is confirmed in some degree by the fact that Dr. Anderson mentions that the eastern branch of the Irawadi is called by the Khamti Shans "Kew-hom."

2. *Afghan Geography.* By C. R. MARKHAM, C.B., F.R.S., Secretary R.G.S.

THERE can be no greater misconception than to suppose that the work of discovery and explanation is well-nigh complete. The *terreæ reclusæ*, for the searching out of which our Society was founded, are still widely scattered and of vast extent. The good work which is now progressing in the Topographical Department of the War Office, and the materials which have recently been brought together in the India Office, remind us that Afghanistan, or a great part of it, in spite of the occupation more than thirty years ago, and of previous and subsequent travels, is still one of these *terreæ reclusæ*. Politically and commercially, Afghanistan, lying between India and the line of Russian advance, contains the most important highways in the continent of Asia; yet vast tracts within its limits have never been explored. Some information, long neglected or forgotten, has recently been collected, and seems of sufficient interest to be worthy of being brought to the notice of a meeting of our Society, as it increases our knowledge of the geography of Afghanistan in some degree, and enables the inquirer to obtain a more accurate idea of portions of one of the great mountain bulwarks of our Indian Empire. The new information is contained partly in route-surveys not hitherto utilised, but chiefly in extracts from the manuscript journal of General Lynch, which have been communicated by his brother, our associate, T. K. Lynch, Esq. They relate to a visit which he paid to the upper part of the valley of the Argandab.

The great opportunity for acquiring a correct knowledge of the geography of Afghanistan was during the occupation of the country by British troops. A reference to the twelfth volume of our 'Transactions' will show that, in 1840, our President, Sir Henry Rawlinson, wrote from Kandahar that "the accumulation of materials of positive geography was going on steadily and satisfactorily;"

and he adds, "I trust that the Indian Government will not delay much longer to display their treasures to the world."

Unfortunately Sir Henry himself then had other work to do, and many of these treasures were lost or forgotten. Officers in the field worked well and zealously, some of them under Sir Henry's own instructions, and much material was collected. But there, to a great extent, the matter ended. There was no one man, no department, diligently to bring all the material together, and to see that it was made use of. A portion of the work of the officers in the Afghan war was embodied in Mr. Walker's second edition of his map, but a great deal has never yet been fully utilised; and it is to this hitherto neglected material that I now propose to refer.

Afghanistan is divided into two regions, eastern and western, watered respectively by the River Kabul and Helmund; and in both our geographical knowledge is incomplete. There are scarcely any data for the valley of the Kabul River above Jalalabad, though it is true that the river, from the Kabul plain to Jalalabad, runs through a series of gorges quite impassable to travellers, so that there is no road near the banks on either side. Neither are there data for the two chief constituents; namely, for the River Kabul itself, from the confluence to within a few miles of the city, and for the larger river from the north, composed of the Ghorbund and Panjshir streams, from the confluence up to near the base of the Hindu Kush. Still more important, the great valley of Ghorbund is practically a blank, though the passes leading from it across the mountains are described in some detail by Leech and Garbett. There is a great deal of information regarding Kohistan of Kabul in the published reports of Leech, Pottinger, Masson, Houghton, and others; but much remains to be done, and a considerable area is still a blank. Some of this blank area was probably surveyed by Captain Sturt, the gallant hero who served through the war, and perished in the Kurd Kabul Pass; but if so, his work has been lost.

In the Helmund valley, the work of the military surveyors and explorers has, however, for the most part been preserved; but it was long forgotten, and has remained unused. The most interesting single exploration was that undertaken by General Lynch. At the time he sent in to Government, through our President, who was then Political Agent at Kandahar, a full and very interesting report on the Jagūri Hazarehs, from which considerable extracts have recently been printed in Colonel MacGregor's 'Gazetteer.'*

* Central Asia. Part II. p. 323.

The 'Journal,' however, contains many details not given in the Report.

General Lynch set out in September, 1841, from a station near the head-waters of the Turnuk, and visited the valley of the Argandab. Both these rivers are naturally tributaries of the Helmund, but their waters are exhausted by irrigation before they reach the main stream. The upper courses of the Helmund and Argandab* are in the mountainous country of the Jagúri Hazárah, which is almost entirely unknown, yet a knowledge of this region is of great political importance. It was occupied in ancient times by a people of Tajik race, whose chiefs fortified themselves in the almost inaccessible mountain-recesses, and long resisted the invasions from the direction of Persia or Ghazni. The most important chiefship was that of the Shansaboniah dynasty of Ghur, whose head, in the twelfth century, conquered Ghazni, and eventually overran Hindustan, and established his rule at Delhi. But the Tajiks appear to have been conquered, and their country overrun by the Mughal conquerors, who established four regiments of Turks, of a thousand men, in this mountainous region. Hence the name *Hazárah* (or a thousand) for the people, and *Hazárah-jat* for the country, which is the plural of *Hazárah*. In the same way the district of the Derahs, on the Indus, is called *Derahjat*. The *Hazárah* were composed of four Turk tribes, called *Char-i-mak*, and the present inhabitants of this region are their descendants. The fullest account of the early Ghuri dynasty is in the *Tabakat-i-Nasiri*, now being translated by Major Raverty. The country, though lofty and snow-covered in winter, is probably quite practicable for the march of armies, and for caravans of commerce; and its mountain-recesses contain much that is interesting and valuable.

Two very important documents for the geography of the Hazárah country are Captain Arthur Conolly's route from Kabul to Mymeneh, published in the 'Calcutta Review' for 1845, and Eldred Pottinger's Report on the country between Kabul and Herat, which is printed in Colonel MacGregor's 'Gazetteer.' † Ferrier also crossed one corner of the Hazárah country.

But, with the exceptions of Conolly, Pottinger, and Ferrier, General Lynch is the only European who has penetrated into this secluded region. In September, 1841, he left the valley of the Turnuk, and entered a gorge of the mountains leading to the basin of the Resenna, through which flows one of the Turnuk feeders.

* The length of the course of the Argandab is about 350 miles, the source being about 5500 feet above the sea, and the mouth in the Helmund, 2000 feet.

† Central Asia. Part II. p. 811.

This Resenna basin is described by him as about $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles long by 5, and surrounded by high mountains. The valley is highly cultivated, yielding fine crops of corn and lucerne, and is irrigated by *khariz*, or underground watercourses. It was densely populated by people of the Hazárah race, and covered with forts, in which they reside for safety. The Hazárahs and Afghans are at deadly feud, holding the tenets of the two antagonistic Muhammadan sects. The Hazárahs, as a rule, may be distinguished from the Afghans by dearth of hair on their faces, and rather snub noses.

Continuing to march across the country, between the Turnuk and the Argandab, General Lynch descended through a gorge into another basin called Naran by the inhabitants, and Angori by the Afghans. He describes the basins or valleys of Resenna and Angori as perfect little paradises, surrounded by barriers of rocky mountains, from which numerous streams descend. In the Angori valley there were no less than 150 forts, in which all the inhabitants live, and into which they drive their cattle in times of danger. The population is about 5000. The Sultan, or Chief of this secluded valley, and his son, received their guest most hospitably, and showed him some excellent sport.

Thence the route led, by Margari, down the stream of Loman, to the banks of the Argandab, which is here a fine river, flowing rapidly over a ford where the water was up to the horses' girths. General Lynch was lodged in the fort of Kuleh Jaffer Sultan, close to the river, which was rushing over huge granite boulders with a deafening noise. The valley was populous and well cultivated, and, as a consequence, there were numerous forts. It is called in this part Seng-i-Marsha.

In the valley of the Argandab there are many carvings on the rocks. From the rough copies which General Lynch showed him at Kandahar in 1841, Sir Henry Rawlinson judged that these were not real inscriptions, but rude marks and symbols cut by the mountaineers, possibly, however, of an ancient date. Near Seng-i-Marsha, at a place called Seby Chúb (or the green wood), there are inscriptions on a large block of dark-coloured granite. As they are on the road leading from Malistan (the district at the sources of the Argandab) into Uzeristan,* General Lynch suggests that they may have been inscribed for the purpose of denoting the hours, or the distance in hours from a large city that once existed in Malistan, the ruins of which may still be seen. He heard of rock-inscriptions

* Most of the places mentioned by Lynch are named in extracts from Burnes and Leech, given in MacGregor's 'Gazetteer of Afghanistan,' p. 322.

in other parts of the valley, and of ruins, including old towers built at intervals on a road. The interior region, now called Hazárah-jat. once the seat of the Shansabaniah Dynasty of Ghur, is no doubt full of such ruins. It was many centuries before the inhabitants of the country, who preceded the present Hazárahs, were all converted to Islam, and they resisted invasion by constructing numerous *kushk* or fortified villages. In the *Tabakat-i-Nasari*, now being translated by Major Raverty, there is a frequent mention of the building of forts and towers by the Ghuri kings.

Leaving the Argandab, the explorer entered a narrow valley to the south, which brought him to a place called Girdí, where his tent was pitched in a grove of trees near the remarkable mountain-peak of Ser-i-Saduk. The tribe inhabiting Girdee are called *Khodadad*, or "God given." Here he found a number of curiously-shaped pyramidal mounds or *tupas*, in many of which there were cells or excavations occupied by Hazárah families. In all directions there were old silver and lead mines, and General Lynch has little doubt, from the information he received, that coal is to be found in some part of the Hazárah country. On many of the rocks there were inscriptions and hieroglyphics.

In this valley there was a plentiful growth of the *Salab (Salep)-i-Misri*, which is like an onion. The bulbous root, when dried in the sun, shrinks into a small hard substance, which is the *Salab (Salep)* so much used in India for strengthening invalids. Its name here is *Peaj-i-koh*, or "the onion of the mountain."*

From this point General Lynch commenced his return journey to the valley of the Turnuk, through a well-cultivated but mountainous country, thickly dotted with forts. The road led thence into the fertile vale of Dolena, where he encamped near a clump of trees and close to a stream of delicious water. The mountains, 4 miles to the north, throw out spurs, forming a beautiful crescent, and half enclosing a fertile tract. Following up a ravine to the south-west, there are several rock-cut figures and inscriptions. Here also is a large cave, the entrance of which is small, and partly filled up to keep the sheep out; but inside there are halls about 30 feet high, and galleries cut through the rock in various directions. Its extent is unknown to the present inhabitants of the neighbour-

* It is not, however, an onion, but a *Eulophia* (belonging to the *Orchidaceæ*). Dr. Cleghorn says that the starch is highly nutritious, and the tubers fetch a high price. It is carried all over India, as far south as Bangalore, by the Kabul horse-dealers; and is eaten, boiled with milk, like arrow-root, for dysentery and internal inflammation. Mr. Baden Powell has given a full account of *salep* in his 'Hand-book of the Economic Products of the Punjab.'

hood, but it leads far into the bowels of the earth. Near it is a high mountain, called *Mérzuka*, on the summit of which is a fine table-land, once the site of a town where, say the natives, the King of the *Gins* resided and held his court.

General Lynch also made an excursion to a place called *Zer Keshan*, in a defile of the mountains. On either side of the track he observed large blocks of granite, in which were circular holes cut or ground out, about 3 feet in diameter and 18 inches deep, in the centres of which were small holes still deeper. He was told that the gold, found in a mine close by, was ground in these holes; and the general aspect of the place indicated that works on a large scale had once been carried on there. From the summit of the *Zer Keshan* mountain a magnificent view was obtained, and a round of angles taken.

Another object of interest was the shrine of *Bíbí Nani* (*Nannea* or *Diana*), in a cave on the top of a gigantic scarped rock, about 200 feet high, which overhangs a cluster of forts, while from the base of the rock flows a copious clear stream, the source of the *Turnuk*. The cave is entered by a number of small doorways cut in the rock, and inside there is a cairn or mound of stones, by the side of which the women sacrifice to *Bíbí Khani*. In climbing the scarp they often fall, and, if not mortally wounded, are seriously hurt. On reaching the cave they erect, between two sticks, a cradle in which they put a doll-like bundle, and pray to the goddess for the objects of their desires. From the rock there is a glorious view far away over the lake of *Abastadeh*, and the valley of the *Turnuk*.

The worship of *Nani* or *Nannea*, the *Babylonian Venus*, was introduced into *Bactria* from *Syria*, and is frequently indicated on the *Indo-Scythic* coins. The name of *Bíbí Nani* still appertains to many sites in *Afghanistan*, but, of course, no religious rites or worship are now performed at the shrines.

The sources of the *Turuk* are at the base of a high rock on the high road from *Kandahar* to *Kabul*, and to the north of the village of *Mudur*, where there is a pool of water supplied by six or seven springs. *Dr. Kennedy* also visited the source, having followed the course of the river for 150 miles from *Kandahar*. The *Turuk* would naturally join the *Argandab* about 40 miles below *Kandahar*; but, in fact, the *Turuk* water rarely, if ever, now reaches the *Argandab*, both of these rivers being consumed in irrigation a short distance to the south-west of *Kandahar*.

After making the proper arrangements for the peace of the country during his absence, General Lynch proceeded to *Kandahar*

in the end of September, 1841, to pass the winter, and took up his quarters with our President, Sir Henry Rawlinson.

Although General Lynch did not prepare a map, he has regularly recorded bearings and distances, with rounds of angles at several conspicuous points; so that the new region which he traversed, with the positions of places and courses of rivers, can be added to the map of Afghanistan.

To appreciate the value of this journal, a clear idea should be formed of the unknown region, a small portion of which is described in it. The upper basins of the Helmund and its tributaries descend from the Safid-Koh, the Paropamisus of the ancients, a series of lofty and rugged mountains, cut by deep ravines, and inhabited by the Hazárah tribes. To the south and east is the road from Kandahar to Kabul; to the south and west that from Kandahar to Herat; and to the north Eldred Pottinger's route from Herat to Kabul. The vast region between has never yet been thoroughly explored for a length of 300 miles. It forms a triangle with Kandahar at the southern angle.

General Lynch just penetrated a short way into it from the south; and surely what he tells us is calculated to whet our curiosity. We hear of a simple and hospitable people; of lovely valleys, well watered and highly cultivated, and surrounded by magnificent ranges of mountains; of vast natural caverns; of mines of silver, lead, gold, and coal; of curious rock-inscriptions and sculptures; and of ancient ruined cities.

General Lynch was not, however, the only officer who explored the previously unknown country round Kandahar.

Colonel Fraser Tytler, of Balnain and Aldourie, was in Afghanistan, in the Quartermaster-General's department, from December, 1838, to December, 1842, and devoted the whole of his spare time to the collection of geographical materials. To his care is also due the preservation of the route-surveys of several other officers. Of these the district of Nesh, between the Helmund and Argandab, the district of Teereen, and the country on the right bank of the Argandab to the east of Nesh, were surveyed by the engineer officers, Captain Sanders and Lieutenant North, accompanied by a force sent by General Nott to restore order in this part of the country in 1841. The valley of the River Bugran, a tributary of the Helmund, which rises in the Siab-koh and joins the main stream a few miles above Giriashk, was surveyed by Lieutenant Cooper, of the Bengal Horse Artillery. The valley of the Helmund, from the junction of the Argandab to Rudbor, including the whole country of the Garmasl, was explored and roughly surveyed by Lieutenant Patterson, who

was despatched on a mission in this direction by Sir Henry Rawlinson. Patterson was soon afterwards murdered by some mutinous troops at Kandahar. A detailed survey of the valley of Kandahar, and a plan of the city, were executed by Mr. Fraser Tytler.

All this material was preserved by Mr. Tytler, who recently presented it to the Geographical Department of the India Office, and the several sketch-routes have been joined up on one scale, and lithographed on a single sheet.

In 1845, with the rich materials that he had so carefully collected, Mr. Fraser Tytler commenced the compilation of a general map, and completed it during the following two years. It covers the ground from the mouths of the Indus to Bokhara, and from the Sistan Lake to the longitude of Delhi, and, with the original surveys, is the most important geographical work connected with the Afghan war. This is the only map on which there is any attempt to treat the Hazárah country intelligibly, and it is the only one which combines all the materials then attainable. Colonel Tytler has presented it to the Geographical Department of the India Office, and it is exhibited here to-night in order that the value and originality of this admirable compilation may be appreciated.

In conclusion, I must add that the unearthing of these precious materials for a new map of Afghanistan is due to a hint from our President, Sir Henry Rawlinson, which turned the quest on the right scent. In this way were brought to light the route-surveys of Sanders, North, Cooper, and Patterson; the large general map of Tytler; and the interesting narrative of Lynch. All have been, or will be, handed over to our associate, Major Wilson, of the Topographical Department of the War Office: who is engaged in the preparation of what has long been a desideratum in geography, namely, a map of Afghanistan based upon all existing materials.

It will then be seen how wide are the gaps that require to be filled up, and how much there is for the daring traveller to explore before Afghanistan can be completely mapped. From a political, as well as from a commercial, point of view, this region is of vast importance; and one useful step towards its exploration will undoubtedly be the thorough taking stock and utilising of all existing materials.

Colonel MACGREGOR made the following remarks:—

The subject of Afghan Geography is one which should have been of the very greatest interest to us. I say, should have been, advisedly; because it is a fact that although our frontier has run with Afghanistan for the last thirty years, though our attention as an Asiatic power has been drawn to it since the com-

mencement of this century, and though we must always have felt the day might come when we might again be drawn into closer connection with it, still for more than thirty years we have almost neglected all attempts to add to our knowledge of that country. This want of information has been more brought home to me than to most people, and therefore it is right I should continue, as I have done hitherto, to take every opportunity to bring it to notice. In 1869 I was employed by the Indian Government to compile a work from existing records, relating to the topography of Afghanistan. I did so; yet, though it was finished in 1871, nearly all the information in it dates from as far back as 1841-2, having been, in fact, collected by the gallant officers of our army operating in the country in those years, and therefore it is evident that it might just as well, in fact better, have been done in 1849 than in 1869.

Having thus acquired some knowledge of Afghan Geography, I might tell you here much that no doubt would be new to many of you; and the best thing I could do would be undoubtedly to extract from those pages of my work which relate to the subject of this evening; but, in the first place, the time at my disposal is limited, and, in the second place, my work has been made of such a strictly confidential character that I am not sure that I should be justified in reading it myself without permission. But if I may not tell you what is in it, I may at least say what is not in it; and if the list seems to you rather a long one, my mentioning it here may perhaps have some effect towards inducing those, in whose power it lies, to do a little towards diminishing it.

I will begin with the parts of Afghanistan nearest our frontier; and it is strange to find that, if we except a few places where our troops have penetrated in the various frontier expeditions, we are just as curiously ignorant of the country immediately beyond our border as we are of many other important parts of Afghanistan. We do not even know the proper course of the Indus between Boonjee and Tahkot; and of the Dard valleys which drain into it on either side between these points, namely, Chilass, Kolee, Paloo, Darel, &c., we know not much more than the name. Then of Yaseen, Kungoot, Hunza, Nager, and other tributary valleys of the Gilgit River, we do not know a quarter enough, and the same may be said of Vakhan and Badakhshan, and of the whole of the Chitral and Kashkar valleys.

Coming further south, our knowledge of the hill country of the Yoosufzaiclan, viz., Chakesar Ghorbund, Booner, Swat, Deer, of Bujawur, and the further Mohmund country is extremely limited.

I might continue this list all down the frontier till we come to Sind, and show that the country of the Afreedies, of the Zwaemoosht, Bungush and Toorees, of Khust and Dawar, the Zhob valley, and the large tract inhabited by the Kakurrs, are almost to us sealed books. And to show that I am not exaggerating, I may mention that I have three times fruitlessly given in lists of no less than seventeen important military routes, leading from Afghanistan to our frontier, of which we have not sufficient information to enable our Government to form any sound opinion. There is one point which will bring this before you in a very clear light. You have all read Sir H. Rawlinson's able work, in which he says that if the Russians go to Merv we must go to Herat. Now I ask by what route would such a force enter Afghanistan? Probably you will answer by the Bolan. But why the Bolan? our principal military strength is not down in Sind, but in the Punjab, and men as well as materiel could much easier be concentrated at Mooltan than at Sukkur. Still I think the route chosen would be the Bolan, and the reason is because we do not know any other sufficiently well. And yet, in the list I have alluded to, there are no less than six other routes mentioned which are probably not inferior in any one respect to the Bolan.

Then, though in our most recent and best map of Central Asia by Colonel Walker, the hills and rivers of the country north of Kandahar and east of

Herat are very boldly and graphically delineated; the fact is, we have almost no warrant for placing anything here but a blank. And this is a country which is of the utmost importance to us, for through it lead important military routes from Maimunna to Kabul, from Bala Moorghaub to Kabul, two routes from Herat to Kabul, one by Bamian and the other by Besood, a route from Herat to Ghuznee, and a direct route from Kabul to Furrab.

Besides all these unknown routes, I find there are a series of passes, no less than thirteen in number, which lead over the Hindu Kush from Balkh and Kunduz to Kabul, regarding the military practicability of which we are absolutely ignorant. Finally, we know far too little of the country lying in the direct line between Kelat and Seistan.

It may be said it is all very fine to pick holes, but I beg to say I have done more than this, for I have shown how all this may be remedied; and till it is remedied we cannot be said to know Afghanistan thoroughly, nor can our Government ever feel free to undertake operations in that country.

The policy, too, of thus exposing our ignorance may be doubted. But it is not I who expose it: the blanks on our maps of that country have shown it only too clearly for the last thirty years; and, besides, I think it is much better to acknowledge our own ignorance than to ignore it till it brings us to grief. The first step towards rectifying a fault is to acknowledge it; and as we have now done the last, let us hope ere long the first may meet with the attention it deserves.

Colonel YULE said that the defects or discrepancies in the maps of Afghanistan were so great, that in trying to establish the distance between Kabul and Charikar, a celebrated post near the foot of the Hindu Kush, he found by measurement that on one map it was 42 miles, on another 27 miles, and on a third 34 miles. What had become of all that was done during the Afghan campaigns? He had been making inquiries for a long time about Major Saunders's maps, and those of Lieutenant Sturt, but they seemed to have been utterly lost, and nobody could tell him anything about them. He had written to various offices in India and inquired at the India Office, but could discover nothing of them. The only trace of Sturt's maps was in a little rather trifling book, called 'A Peep into Turkistan,' the author of which accompanied Lieutenant Sturt in a journey that he made from Kabul to Tashkurgan shortly before the outbreak. Sturt appeared to have lent this writer his map of the route, and a meagre lithograph derived from it was the only trace that could now be found of the labours of Lieutenant Sturt for a year and a half.

Mr. TRELAWNEY SAUNDERS said there were no doubt many gaps to be filled up in the geography of Afghanistan, but much better use might be made of what was at present known than in the wall-map exhibited at the Meeting, which gave quite an erroneous view of the orography of the region.

The PRESIDENT said the map referred to by Mr. Saunders was merely a rough diagram which did not pretend to the accuracy of a scientific document. There was no doubt a great deal of truth in the complaints that had been made about the insufficiency of our present knowledge of Afghan Geography, but it should be remembered that when the British army occupied Afghanistan, the several departments of the force had more important matters to think of than collecting geographical information. There was no regular survey department attached to the army, and the political department, which might have supplied its place, was overwhelmed with other work, so that surveying operations were put off till a more convenient time. That time, however, had never come. Colonel MacGregor had omitted also to point out how the desiderata might have been obtained since the date of the occupation. Afghanistan had been a sealed book during the greater part of the interval; for many years it was entirely isolated, and it was at the risk of their lives that travellers like Colonel Pelly, and one or two others, occasionally passed through the country.

The region, indeed, bounded on the south by the Kabul River, on the east by Kashmeer, and on the north by the Hindu Kush, was about as difficult to examine and travel in as any portion of Asia. Of late years efforts had been made by the Survey Department in India to obtain some information regarding it by means of native explorers, and certainly the Government in India was fully aware of the necessity of pressing their inquiries in that direction as far as they reasonably could, but he could not hold out the prospect of the country being thoroughly surveyed under present circumstances. Small additions, however, were being constantly made. Colonel MacGregor was probably not aware that within the last two months Captain Sandiman, with an escort, and a large party of Belooch chiefs, had marched from the Valley of the Indus in the direction of Quetta to Sibi, and, without entering the Bolan Pass, had proceeded by an easy route from Sibi to the head of that Pass, called Bibi-Náni, from whence the party might, in 10 miles, have debouched on the high table-land of Shawl or Quetta. Whenever an opportunity offered, the authorities were quite alive to the necessity of obtaining information, but it must be a work of time. With regard to the Hazárah, whom Major Lynch visited, they were a very remarkable race, speaking an old Persian dialect, and yet having all the physical characteristics of Kalmuck or Tartar descent. He was not aware on what authority Mr. Markham had said that the Tajiks inhabited those mountains before the time of the Ghaznevides.

Mr. MARKHAM: Major Raverty.

The PRESIDENT doubted the fact. There certainly was a chief, the Shár of Gharshistán, who might have been a Tájik or Arian, but the original inhabitants of the country in historical times were the Yue-chi or Sacæ, a Scythian race, who occupied the district in the first century before Christ; and he believed to them was attributable the present Kalmuck or Tartar type of countenance. He also thought these Yue-chi or Sacæ made the caves and sculptures which were seen by General Lynch. They were Buddhists, and made caves for ascetic retirement, wherever they settled; and he considered the caves found in the valley of the Argandab and Helmund dated from the time of the Yue-chi occupation. He also thought General Lynch was in error in speaking of inscriptions, for he remembered perfectly well seeing the copies which the General brought back from the mountains nearly thirty-five years ago, and being satisfied at the time that they were merely rough carvings and tracings which the wild tribes had made on the rocks in memory of their visit to the spot. They were mostly shepherds, and the figures were rude imitations of sheep, horses, goats, cattle, &c., without any attempt at alphabetical writing. He had that day, in looking over his papers, lighted on some memoranda which he had collected at Kandahar in 1840, giving several cross-routes from the valley of the Turnak to the valley of the Oxus; one from Kandahar, straight across the mountains to Maimana; and another from Kelat-i-Ghiltzye to Balkh; but as the notes were merely collected from native travellers, of course they were not reliable geographical data. He believed that many officers who were in Afghanistan at that time collected such information as they could, and if the information thus obtained could be now put together and utilised, the map might be still further filled up. At present it was certainly not satisfactory that a country which had been occupied by the English for three years should be so imperfectly represented geographically. Whenever the Russians occupied a new country, the first thing they did was to examine it thoroughly with a view to constructing a map; while England left geography to take care of itself, or to be dealt with at some other time. He regretted that there had not been more discussion on Mr. Ney Elias' paper, as the author had bestowed very great pains upon the report, and was a most intelligent and deserving officer. He was now officiating as the British agent at Bhamo, and might have an opportunity of distinguishing himself very shortly. as

that region would in all probability become the theatre of interesting events, when Mr. Grosvenor's Mission reached the frontier, and the escort sent from Rangoon marched up from Mandalay. Mr. Markham had mentioned several travellers who had passed through the Hazarah Mountains, but he had omitted Mr. Stirling, of the Bengal Civil Service, who crossed them about 1827, and who, he believed, was still living. Mr. Stirling published a report of his journey at the time, which was to be found at the India Office, and in many private libraries.

Eighth Meeting, 13th March, 1876.

SIR RUTHERFORD ALCOCK, K.C.B., VICE-PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

PRESENTATION.—*Charles James Wainwright, Esq.*

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DONATIONS TO THE LIBRARY, FROM 28TH FEBRUARY TO 13TH MARCH, 1876.—Bulletin of the U. S. Geological and Geographical Survey of the Territories, 2nd ser., No. VI. (*Dr. F. V. Hayden*). Nuova Italia, vol. ii., by *Dr. J. McCosh*, 1875 (*Author*). Port Catalogues of the Chinese Custom's Collection at the Austro-Hungarian Universal Exhibition, Vienna, 1873; Trade Statistics of the Treaty ports in China, 1863—1872; Reports on trade at the Treaty ports, 1871—1873; Statistics of Trade at the Ports of Newchang, Tientsin, Chefoo, Hankow, Kiukiang, Chinkiang, Shanghai, Ningpo, Foochow, Tomsui, Takow, Amoy, Swatow, and Canton, 1863—72 (*The Inspector-General of Customs, Peking*). Demarcacion política del Peru, Lima, 1874 (*The President of Peru*). El Peru, vol. i., by *A. Raimondi*, Lima: 1874 (*Col. J. Jara Almonte*). De Reizen der Nederlanders naar Nieuw-Guinea in de 17de. en 18de. Eeuw, door *P. A. Leupe*, 's Gravenhage, 1875 (*C. R. Markham, Esq.*). The complete works of Count Rumford, vol. iv., 1875 (*The American Academy of Arts, &c.*). Outline of plan for proposed navigation through the Isthmus of Suez, 1850 (*S. M. Drach, Esq.*). Statistics of New Zealand for 1874 (*The New Zealand Government*). Address.