I.

KAFRISTAN AND THE KAFIRS.

A LECTURE DELIVERED

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SIR PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

The subject of my lecture is Kafiristan and the Kafir location, the Southern Slopes of Hindu Kush.

Ever since Elphinstone's Mission to Peshawar in 1809, first made us acquainted with the existence of this country and people, a curious interest has prevailed to learn more about them, and from time to time different travellers and enquirers have given us the benefit of their researches and views regarding both, more especially the people.

A great variety of information regarding them is to be found in the works of Elphinstone, Burnes, Masson, Wood, Mohanlal, and others, as well as in the writings of Leach, Lumsden, Raverty, Leitner, Hughes, and others, and also in the pages of the journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society.

But up to the present time we have no account of this country and its inhabitants by any European traveller who has himself visited them. This deficiency is, however, we may now hope about to be remedied by the voluntary enterprise of an able and energetic Officer who has devoted himself to the enterprize; and we may confidently look forward to the acquisition ere very long of some valuable discoveries and much interesting information regarding this very mysterious country and people and doubtless with many corrections of our present knowledge about them. Let us accord Major Tanner our best wishes for a successful exploration and safe return.

I said just now that we have no account of Kafiristan and the Kafir by any European who has himself visited the country. Nor, so far as I am aware has any native author published a history of them. There are, however, some brief notices of this people and country scattered about in the works of different native historians, and they are of importance as the record of, in several instances at least, actual visitors to the country and actors in the incidents described.

In the "Zafarnáma Tymuri," which is a history of the conquests of the celebrated "Tamerlane," date about the middle of the 14th century it is stated that Tymur in one of his numerous expeditions against Badakhshan, essayed to force his way to Kabul through Kafiristan. His passage over the Hindu Kush was attended with infinite perils, and it was with the greatest difficulty and hardship that he penetrated to the dark recesses of the Farajgal valley in the very heart of the mountains. He was here surrounded by the natives, and so hard pressed by their fierce assaults that he was like to be destroyed with his whole force, so many men did he lose before, with the remnant, he asserted his invincibility.

After a desperate fight in which victory wavered from side to side for many hours, Tymur finally beat off his enemy, and by way of commemorating his victory caused a stone pillar to be erected on the site of the battle. This pillar is said to be still in existence under the name of "Tymur's Tower." A description of this expedition is also found in Farishta's history, and to much the same effect.

In the "Tarikhi Rashidi," which is a history of Kashgharia, dedicated to Sultan Rashid, the last of the Mughol Kings of that country, there is a very interesting account of several expeditions made into Kafiristan by that prince from the side of Kashghar. This book was written a little later than the middle of the 16th century by Mirza Hydar, who was a cousin of the Emperor Bábur, and guardian of the prince after whom he named his history. And he accompanied the Kashghar prince in the several expeditions which he describes, and speaks of as an eyewitness.

The Emperor Babur himself founder of the Mughol Empire in India. In his Memoirs (translated into English by Erskine from the original Turki) gives a very lively account of his conflicts with the Kafir of Bajawar from the side of Kabul, and amongst other things mentions their lively disposition and free use of wine, which they carried about with them in leather bottles called "*khig*." There are some other similar notices of this people in the pages of other native authors, and one or two of them I will refer to later on.

From the information collected and made known by modern and contemporary writers it would appear that the general tendency is to invest the people who inhabit the country now known as Kafiristan with a mystery for which there is no necessity, and to accord them a peculiarity of origin and manners to which they are not justly entitled.

All those who since the time of Elphinstone have written about this people, have done so restricting their enquiry to the narrow limits of the country and people as they now are, without regard to their former history and extent of range. And so they have come to consider them as entirely distinct from their surroundings and neighbours. Whereas it seems to me that both country and people should as I shall

endeavour to show be viewed merely as parts of a former more or less well defined whole.

That is to say, Kafiristan is but a portion of that larger area of similar country with whose systems of mountains, valleys, and rivers it is connected, and with the climate and productions if which it shares a common character. Whilst the Kafirs, are only a portion of the people of that larger country with whom they have a common origin as is evidenced by the similarity of race of characters, manners and customs (notwithstanding the variations effected by change of Government and religion), and as is evidenced also by the cognate character of the many widely different dialects spoken by their numerous tribes. Indeed in these points of divergence from each other these several tribes differ no more widely than do amongst themselves the Celts of Cornwall, Wales, Ireland and Scotland in our own country, and especially even at this day in the different dialects of Gaelic spoken by them.

To understand my meaning here, it is necessary to remember the signification of the words, *Kafiristan* and *Kafir*, as well as the origin of their application to the country and people which they are at this day respectively employed to designate.

"Kafir" is an Arabic word, and means amongst other significations an "ingrate" or one who contemns or rejects a proferred benefit, as in "Káfirnimat" one who is ungrateful for favours conferred, and "Káfir Khidmat" one who is forgetful of services rendered, &c., But in connection with religion it means an "unbeliever," "infidel." And in this last sense is applied by Mohammadans to those who either individually or nationally reject their religion, and the term generally carries with it a meaning of scorn or reproach.

"Káfiristan" is a compound term formed by the addition of the Persian particle or affix "*stan*" which denotes a place or time of the abundance or plenty of a thing, and means the "country of the Kafirs," or the place in which they are in plenty or abound above other things.

Familiar examples of a similar construction are the terms Afghanistan—the country of the Afghans, Balochistan—of the Baloch, Hindustan—of the Hindu, Kohistan—Highlands or the country of mountains, Zamistan—winter, or the season or time of cold, Tábistan—summer, or the season of heat, and so on.

But the term as emplyed to designate a country inhabited by infidels has a more precise meaning which is connected with the dominance of Mahammadan rule and the sway of Islám. And in this sense the term is applied only to such a region as both successfully repels that rule and entirely rejects that religion; and this in contradistinction to "Yaghistan" the term which is applied to such regions as repel the rule but accept the religion of Islam. For "Yághí" also is an Arabic

word and means "a rebel" or "one who maintains his own will" or independence; and "Yághistán," like the examples just now mentioned, is a compound term signifying the country of such people, or in other words "Independent territory."

In fact neither "Kafiristan" nor "Yaghistan" are geographical terms, nor are they national terms in the sense of Afghanistan and Balochistan. They are merely names which indicate the special character, which is both accidental and mutable of the regions to which they are applied by foreign and hostile neighbours of the Muhammadan religion. They are not terms of native origin, nor indeed are they generally known to or used by the people to whom they are applied, although from long familiarity with the terms some of the border tribes of either region speak of themselves as "Kafiristani" or "Yaghistani," as the case may be, when in communication with foreigners.

Kafiristan and Yaghistan then may be regarded as regions, which, in the case now under our consideration, form portions only of a more extended area known in its entirety prior to the invasion of Islam by some other name or names, such as Bakhtar on the W., Bolor on the E., Badakhshan on the N., and Dardistan on the S. Though all these countries were formerly included in Kafiristan, the precise limits of neither of them is now known. But as "Bakhtar"—the Bactria of ancient history—(and of which Bolor perhaps is only another pronunciation) is the most extensive in area we may adopt the name here to represent the limits of the country formerly included in Kafiristan—that is the network of mountains and valleys lying between the upper Oxus and upper Indus.

The old names of the different divisions of this entensive area are not now in use, or even commonly known. It would appear that under the persistent, and for the most part unsuccessful assaults which have been made against this region during the past 800 or 900 years by the Muhammadan Governments acting from the sides of the North and the South, the old names were discarded and replaced by the comprehensive "Kafiristan." And this itself, as time wore on and the outlying tribes came to accept Islam was replaced—being no longer applicable—by the native names of the several districts as they were successively either subjugated to Muhammadan rule or proselytised to that religion.

The precise limits of the "Bakhtar" country are not now very well defined, but it certainly included that great boss of lofty peaks, elevated plateaux and fertile valleys formed by the junction of the great converging ranges of Himalaya, Hindu Kush, and Bolor Tagh or Pamir range. Roughly we may reckon "Bakhtar Zamín" to have originally comprised all that mountainous tract drained by the sources of the Oxus as far west as Badakhshan inclusive, towards the north; and all that little known mountainous region drained by the Kabul and Gilgit rivers —tributaries of the Indus—towards the South. Towards the East

Skardo may be taken as the frontier, and towards the west Panjshír and Nijrao.

Nearly all this wide area during the early years of the Muhammadan conquest was designated "Kafiristan," and its people collectively "Kafir." But the region thus defined contained a number of tribes bearing different names, independent of each other, and more or less hostile in their relations. And it is the same at the present day; but the different tribes—with the exception of one or two colonies of foreign immigrants—are all of one and the same stock, speaking very dissimilar yet cognate dialects derived from the Sanskrit, and possessing a common ethnological type as regards race features, and habits of life; and more remarkable still, claiming a common descent from the Greeks brought into these parts by Alexander of Macedon more than 2000 years ago.

For several centuries after the first introduction of Islam, the Muhammadan arms made very slow progress into the Bakhtar country, and have not even yet penetrated into the Bolor region on its eastern borders. Though the Muhammadan arms have been thus successfully resisted in all the more remote and inaccessible districts, the religion has proved less resistable.

Down to only the other day when they became to some extent at least Kabul territory or Kashmir territory, as the case may be, Badakhshan and its border districts of Wakhan, Shughnan, Roshan and Darwaz —on the north of Hindu Kush—and Chitral with Gilgit, Skardo, Chilas, &c.—on the South of that range—were all indepedent little states governed by local chiefs who ruled as hereditary kings, paying taxes neither to the Hindu nor to the Musalman, and such is the case with some of them still. But it is otherwise with their religion. They have all long since been nominally Muhammadan, and are consequently no longer "Kafir," nor their country "Kafiristan." Each tribe or people is named after the country held by it, or perhaps the country is named after the tribe. Any how instead of being now called Kafirs they are Badakhshí, Wákhí, Shughní, Gilgití, Chitralí, &c. according as they are natives of Badakhshan, Wakhan, Shughnán, &c. Or with reference to their free rule they are called collectively or individually "Yaghistani" or "Independent."

How Islam has been propagated in these parts I am not able to say. It is a very interesting subject for investigation. The religion has by slow degrees penetrated into the most remote parts of the country, and is slowly even now advancing into the yet untouched corner still designated "Kafiristan."

The explanation of the check to the advance of Muhammadan rule in this region by foreigners at least is to be found in the naturally very strong and difficult character of the country, coupled with the partiotism

and bravery of the natives. Whilst the slow advance of that religion since it appears to have, in the case of several independent tribes, been accepted voluntarily and on its own merits—is to some extent accounted for by the demand that has existed from the first introduction of Islam into this part of Asia for the natives of this territory as slaves. For we must remember it is unlawful for Musalmans to hold their co-religionists in slavery or to sell them into slavery, though it is allowed them to retain as slaves those whom they have acquired as infidels even after their subsequent conversion to Islam.

The natives of the mountainous region which we are now speaking of have been held in the highest estimation as slaves and domestic servants by the neighbouring Muhammadan nations from the earliest times of their rule in these parts, on account of their handsome forms and features, their intelligent and tractable minds, and their fidelity and devotion.

Up to the latter half of the 13th century the greater portion of Badakhshan in the north, and all the country southwards down to the plain of Yusufzai and the Lughman valley, in fact down to the Kabul river in its course through these two districts, was included in Kafiristan. At the time that Janghiz Khan visited the Peshawar valley and wintered in Swat, about the year 1230 A. D. these districts were occupied by Persian troops, and in the latter at least, which was then called Swati Gabri, the "Gabr" or "Fire worshippers" religion was still practised by the natives.

They were called "Kafir" in common with all other infidels by the Muhammadans, and also "Gabr" in contradistinction to the Hindu and Budhist. And in the countries further west, from the entire predominance of infidels of this persuasim, the term "Gabr" came to be applied by Muhammadans in those parts as a term of abuse to infidels of any creed, and in the form of "Gaur" or "Giaur" as some very wrongly pronounces it, is still so used by the Musalmans of Turkey and Asia Minor.

About two centuries later than the time of Janghiz Khan the Yusufzai and Mahmand Afghans, who had been dislodged by the Ghilzais from their settlement about the upper course and sources of the Tarnak river, invaded the Peshawar valley through the Khybar Pass, and possessing themselves of the plain country up to the Indus, drove the natives partly across the Indus into Chach and Pakli or Hazára, and partly into the surrounding hills of Buner and Swat. In this enterprize the two tribes acted together and shared the conquest in proportion to their numerical strength and line of operations—the Mahmands, from the Jallalabad side, getting the hilly tract which they now hold between the Kabul and Swat rivers, and the Yusufzais the plain country from the Swat and Kabul rivers to the Indus.

The history of this migration Eastward of these powerful and important Afghan tribes is described in detail in the Tarikhi Murassa of Khushhál Khan, Khatak, and some further accounts of it are contained in the Memoirs or Tazkira-i-Akhund Darweza, and also I think in the "Tárikhi Guzída." From these authorities it is gathered that the Yusufzais on first arrival found Peshawar—at that time called Bagrám, in the possession of the Dalazák people, who with the Afridi, Orakzai, Wazírí, Mangal, Khatak, and other cognate tribes, were classed as Pathans of the Karlanri division, and distinct from the Afghans. These Dalazák had been converted to Islam in the time of Mahmud of Ghazni, and gave that conqueror a strong contingent of their clansmen for his campaign against Somnát.

It appears that, they were for a long time a powerful and important tribe but they subsequently became weak through internal dissensions, and were now when the Yusufzai came against them easily defeated and driven across the Indus. But this did not finish the Yusufzai conquest. On the contrary the new comers entered upon a very troublous time with the dispossessed natives and their "Kafir" brethern in the hills circling the northern borders of their new conquest.

For twenty years a continuous warfare was waged against them, and finally the victorious Afghans—the Yusufzais on one side and the Mahmands on the other—either by the subjugation or expulsion, with here and there some extermination, of the natives, found themselves in possession of that extensive mountain region which they now hold from the Indus to the Swat and Panjkora rivers as concerns the Yusufzai frontier and Swat to the Kabul river as concerns the Mahmands. As the Afghans by degrees advanced into the hills, so the Kafir natives retired before them into the more inaccessible fastnesses of their mountains. Here and there some small and isolated community got surrounded and was either entirely exterminated, or subjugated to slavery, or granted protection on conversion to Islam.

As the Yusufzais worked up from the plain into the hills of Buner Swat, and Bajawar, so the Mahmands worked their way into the Gandhár hills—from the Jallalabad valley on one side the Khybar and from the Daudzai valley on the other side—the Kafir retreating before them to their present inaccessible seats. And so the country was cleared of the natives who had held it from very remote times, and was peopled by new comers who call themselves "Bani Israil" and consider themselves a peculiar people.

For a long series of years after the Afghan conquest Ashreth in the direction of Chitral and Pashut in that of Kunar, with Asmar midway between them were the Kafir outposts against the Afghans, and though those districts have long since accepted Islam and passed out of the limits of Kafiristan, these towns are still the principal places through which intercourse is carried on with the Kafirs by the inter-

vention of their brethern and compatriots who have been converted to Islam, and are known by the significant appellation "Nimcha" or Half and Half," that is "Musalman Kafir."

By this conquest of the Afghans in the 13th century, which was part of that combined movement of Afghan tribes from Ghor set on foot by Shahábuddin Ghori, as a means of maintaining his power over Hindustan by the aid of these warlike military colonists. By this conquest then, the territories of Buner, Swat and Bajawar were brought under the sway of Islam and no longer were included in Kafiristan. At what period or under what circumstances the other portions of the Bolor territory exclusive of course of the present Kafiristan were converted it is not easy to say.

The western borders of the country, that is the districts marching with the Kabul limits, were very probably early converted to Islam, but so late as the close of the 16th century the eastern districts of Badakhshan, namely Wakhán, Shughnan, Roshán and Darwáz, together with all the country Southwards as far as the Afghan limits in Buner, Swat and Bajawar were included in Kafiristan.

Since that period, however, a very considerable portion of this extensive area, the greater part of it in fact has accepted Islam, and thrown off the name Kafiristan. The conversion, however, is more nominal than real, and is characterized by a very noteworthy disproportion between the two conflicting sects of that religion, between the "Sunni" and the "Shia"—the orthodox and the heterodox churches. The tribal chiefs and gentry are every where "Sunni" whilst the commonalty and serf population are everywhere "Shia"—that is to say the masters are orthodox and the servants are heterodox. This is a very remarkable fact, and, considering the circumstances of the case, appears to me to have been purposely brought about in the interests of the slave trade, for as I mentioned awhile ago, the natives of this region have, from the earliest times of the Muhammadan rule in these parts, been highly esteemed and much sought after as slaves, and as a matter of fact they have for long centuries past supplied the slave markets of Kabul, Bukhara and Khiva with their choicest specimens.

Had these Kafirs been converted, in the same manner as their chiefs and gentry, to the "Sunni" or orthodox creed they could not be sold as slaves. But as Musalmans of the "Shia" or heretic creed, they are—notwithstanding their admission within the pale of Islam (a privelege which is not without its political advantages)—on a par with the "Kafir," and consequently the lawful prey and prize of the "Sunni." By this distinction of creed the "Sunni" chief is by the law of his religion endowed with the privelege of holding in slavery or selling into slavery his "Shia" tribesmen and compatriots. Whereas were they allowed to profess "Masters" religion they could no longer be so disposed of. Hence it is that by some, otherwise inexplicable arrangement, the

"Sunni" creed is that of the master class in this region and the "Shia" creed that of the servant class. The distinction has been undoubtedly kept up by the former in their own interests, for they are practically the great providers of the Central Asian Slave markets with their own subjects and countrymen on this side, just as the Sunni Turkomans are on the other with the Persian "Shia" of their hunting expeditions.

This change of religion has no doubt worked a considerable change in the manners and customs of the converted tribes but this is not so great as one might expect, and is in reality of importance more in a political than in a merely religious sense, for however nominal the conversion may be the professing tribes are none the less securely folded in the church of Muhammad, apostacy from which is promptly punished with death.

Most of the former Kafir tribes who have thus, during the course of the last 3 or 4 hundred years, become converted to Islam have not therefore lost their independence such as it is. They are still governed by their native chiefs, and though their tendency is to confederate with States professing the faith of their adoption they are nevertheless extremely jealous of any interference with their independence, and up to the present time, with few exceptions, they have succeeded in preserving the inviolability of their mountain homes. It is in consequence of this attitude of independence and conservatism that they are styled by their Muhammadan neighbours "Yaghistáni" or people of "Yaghistan," that is "Independent Territory," for having accepted Islam they are no longer "Kafir," nor their country "Kafiristan."

And this brings us to the true "Kafiristan" and "Kafir" of the present day. I proceed to speak of the country first. Compared with its former extent the Kafiristan we now have to deal with is a very small country being only about 150 miles in length by about 50 or 60 in breadth.

Its boundaries may be taken as the Hindu Kush on the north, including both its northern and southern slopes, from Lutkoh Darra on the east to the Farájgal valley or the range separating it from Punjshir on the west.

The Chitral river down to Chaghansarae or even Kunar on the East, forms the limit in that direction.

The Southern boundary may be defined by a line from Darra Nur on the east to Tagao on the west, all along the hill-skirts north of Laghman and across the several vallies opening into the basin of the Kabul river. Whilst on the west it is bounded by the Nijrao and Panjshir vallies.

Within these limits the length of the country lies obliquely from N. E. to S. W., and its greatest breadth is due East and west across

its central part. The whole area is mountainous, and furrowed by a succession, of long winding valleys, each of which has its own system of branches and glens ramifying into the recesses of the mountains, where they are mere torrent gullies flanked by precipitous cliffs and encumbered by huge rocks and boulders. As these torrent gullies expand into glens they form sheltered nooks and corners, and present small surfaces of level ground; and lower down where the glens open into the main valley there are here and there stretches of plain and meadow land, but these are everywhere much encroached upon by the spurs projecting from the hills on either side. So much so that my informant, a native of the country from whom this description is derived, declares that there is nowhere room enough to gallop a horse.

These main vallies and their glens are the seats of the habitations of the natives, and each valley is separated from its neighbour by an impassable mountain ridge, so that the people of one valley are cut off from free communication with those of the adjoining ones, and hence their peculiarities of language and manners.

There are four such main vallies, each of which is almost entirely occupied by the bed or channel of a considerable river. The largest of these is called "Kamdesh," and with its tributary vallies and glens comprises nearly half the area of the country. It is drained by the Kama river which joins that of Chitral near the town of Kunar, and is the only true Kafiristan completely inaccessible to strangers. For the other valleys which drain into the Kabul river by the Alingar, Alishang, and Tagao streams are, in their lower parts at least, in more or less free communication with the neighbouring Muhammadan tribes. Especially in the case of Ishpidarra and Farajgal the people of which are now mostly Nimcha Musulmans, and with the adjoining vallies of Nijrao and Panjshir, further to the westward, are included in the Kohistan of Kabul.

These rivers during the summer season become swollen to violent torrents from the melting of the snows on the higher ranges, and are at times impassable for days together in their lower courses, where under ordinary circumstances they are usually crossed upon inflated skins, or "massaks" blown out with air. Higher up in the valleys and in the glens the narrower streams are crossed by rope bridges or by beams laid across from rock to rock as the case may be, much in the same fashion as in the mountainous parts of Kashmir territory.

The mountains of Kafiristan are described as extremely steep and rugged, and forming an intricate network of spurs, amongst which even the people of the country sometimes lose themselves. I suspect, however, that they do not much differ in general character from the adjoining mountainous districts of Kashmir territory, tracts which are not so entirely unknown to us.

The higher mountains such as Hindu Kush itself, and the primary spurs projecting from it, are covered with perpetual snows, whilst glaciers fill the hollows between them, at least on the southern slope of the main range. The highest hills near the snow are said to be bare of trees, as also are most of the low spurs which terminate upon the plain country or vallies of the Kabul and Chitral rivers; but the intermediate hills are described as covered with dense forests amongst the trees of which are several kinds of pine and the Deodar cedar.

It would appear in fact that the interior of the country in its general characters much resembles what we see in the vallies on the north and west of the Kashmir Basin—I mean the Wadhwan, Sind and Loláb vallies—with which it is on about the same degree of latitude, and like which it produces the same sorts of fruit and crops. In the vallies of Kafiristan are found the walnut, apple, pear, plum. and other fruit trees including the cherry and diospyros, whilst the vine abounds every where both in the wild and cultivated state. Wine is one of the productions for which Kafiristan is celebrated, and its people have long been notorious for the free use they make of it as an ordinary drink. Many years ago, when attached to the Corps of Guides at Mardan, I employed two natives—one of Swat and the other of Jallalabad—to travel in Kafiristan for the purpose of bringing me information regarding its country and people and specimens of its productions. One of them on his return amongst other things brought me a loaf of mulberry bread and two bottles of wine. The latter was in leather bottles called "khíg," which were very much of the size and shape of the caoutchuc hot-water bags we see in chemists shops, though the leather was like that of an ordinary massack. The wine was of two kinds, white and red, or rather the one was of the colour of chablis, and the other of Marsala. Both specimens were turbid and much alike in taste which was no ways inviting. To me the taste was like that of bad Sauterne with an extra smack of inkiness. Altogether there was a crudity of flavour and roughness which suggested the idea of imperfect fermentation, though the liquor was not wanting in strength, and I doubt not a tumbler full of it would suffice to make one comfortably fuddled barring of course disagreeable conduct on the part of the stomach, but with the Kafirs, probably, this long suffering organ has been schooled into complaisant behaviour. Any how it ought to be, for if the wine is not enough to try its temper the mulberry bread most certainly is. Indeed this is freely confessed by those who use it, and unlike the wine prolonged use does not conduce to a better agreement.

The specimen of mulberry bread brought to me was a heavy, dough like lump of dirty brown stuff in the shape of a dutch cheese. It was composed of dried mulberries coarsely pounded and firmly compressed into a tough cake, and had a sweet, mawkish taste.

A sort of stuff of which a very little would go a great way with one strange to the diet. It is a common article of food with the poorer

classes during the long winter months, and is said to produce various disorders of the digestive apparatus, which even the wine fails to correct.

Cultivation of the land owing to the nature of the country is very imited, but every available bit of ground is taken advantage of and carefully terraced into narrow slips of field against the steep hill slopes, much after the fashion of what we see in these hills, or more elaborately in those of Little Tibet. Tillage and field work generally is for the most part carried on by women, and the task is rather a laborious one, the soil requiring much preparation and liberal manuring. Where the surface admits of it, and this is generally the case in the lower vallies, the plough is used, and according to some accounts women are not unfrequently coupled with the oxen, but this I suspect is a libel on the gallantry of the "Kafir." Any how let us acknowledge that he deserves the approbrious name by which he is known should he really be guilty of such very brutal treatment towards the sex. The real state of the case appears to be this. The men are so constantly engaged in fighting, either amongst themselves or against neighbour tribes, and it is necessary for them to be so constantly on the watch against surprise by the enemy that they are required to devote their whole time to the prime duty of self defence, and hence the onus of all domestic duties, both house and field, is delegated to the women. But it is not to be supposed from this that they are habitually treated as drudges or on a par with their own domestic cattle. Rather they share with their lords the hardships of their common lot in life as well as its pleasures, and the division will, on examination, be found not to be an unjust one. For if the time of the men is fully taken up with warlike occupations and attention to the subordinate arts of carpentry, smith work and house building, and so forth, it is no great hardship, and far less a sign of degradation if household duties and field work such as this is amongst them be left to the women, and there is no ground for supposing that they on their part consider themselves unfairly treated, and this I think will become apparent when I come to describe the manners and customs of this people.

The principal crops raised in Kafiristan are wheat and barley, millet and Indian corn. Rice is also cultivated in the lower valleys. And in the more elevated glens where corn is raised with difficulty the "Amaranth" or "cock's comb" is cultivated for its seed which is ground into meal and used as a bread stuff for winter use. Besides these corn crops the Kafirs subsist largely on dried fruits, such as the walnuts, almonds, apricots, mulberries, pinenut, &c. together with the produce of their cattle such as milk, curds, cheese, and ghi, and they eat also freely of flesh without any prohibition of kinds, though fish, fowls, and eggs are never eaten. Their domestic animals are the same as those of the neighbouring countries, with the exception of the horse and camel which are unknown in the more inaccessible parts of the interior, and only rarely met with in the lower valleys bordering upon Kabul and Chitral. They possess great numbers of cows and sheep

which are mostly kept in the lower valleys, whilst higher up the country are found the domestic "yák" and vast flocks of goats.

The principal wild animals of the country are the bear, leopard and wolf with the fox and other such animals. In the hills are found the Ibex and Markhor, the musk deer and a species of wild sheep probably Ovis Ammon The common hill monkey is also met with on the wooded ranges.

These details give us a tolerably fair idea of the animal and vegetable productions of Kafiristan. The geology of the country is not so well known. The main ranges are probably of granite overlaid by various metamorphic strata, such as gneiss, amygdaloid trap and slate, with schists, and shales, whilst sandstones and limestones probably constitute the lesser ridges. From a description I have received of the rocks on the top of a hill on the eastern border of the country I conclude they are granite. They are said to form the circumference of a lake situated on the top of a mountain ridge the far end of which is occupied by a glacir.

Gold is said to be found in the country, but apparently in no great quantity, whilst nothing is known of its other mineral wealth. In some parts of the country landslips are of very common occurrence, and it is said that occasionally the narrower glens are quite blocked by masses of fallen rock; whilst many of the hill paths are at all times dangerous from the rolling debris of the bounding ridges which is set in motion by the wind or rain or the passage of some wild animal. This is entirely independent of the earthquakes, which too are of frequent occurrence, and sometimes very violent in their action. From this description of natural accidents observed in the interior of Kafiristan it would appear that that part of the country is similar in its physical characters to those parts of little Tibet or Ladak in which the like accidents are observed to occur, as in some parts of the Dras and Nubra valleys and their accessory glens and gullies.

With these data to go upon we may fairly conclude that Kafiristan in its general physical characters resembles that tract with which we are familiar where the Kashmir country joins that of Ladak, though of course on a smaller scale. In this view of the case the southern portion of Kafiristan will be a forest region with fertile vallies and sheltered glens, whilst the northern will be a glacier region with narrow inhospitable defiles and inaccessible snow bound gullies and ridges.

And this view is supported by what we are told of the climate of the country. In the lower vallies the winter, though severe, is hardly rigorous, and by no means longer than ordinary; whilst the spring and autumn are delightful seasons; with an intervening summer the heat of which is at times actually complained of as oppressive. In the higher and more northerly parts of the country including the Hindu Kush itself the case is different. Here there are properly only two seasons—

winter and summer—the autumn and spring being of very short duration and quickly passing into the longer season each respectively heralds. In these parts the winter and summer lasts fully five months and is during most of the time a rigorous season, the people as a rule being shut up in their houses for half the time. The summer too is equally severe in its own way, the sun's rays beating into the deep and narrow defiles with a force which is oppressive and quite enough to brown the skins of the natives.

We now pass to the Natives themselves—to the "Kafir." I explained at the outset what is the meaning of the term and how it came to be applied to the people, or rather peoples, of whom those we are now thinking of form but a very insignificant fraction. However convenient the term may have been to the Muhammadans who applied it, guiltless as they have always proved of any weakness for archaiological or ethnological patronage, not to mention their depth of guilt in the opposite direction—and however applicable it may have been to the relative condition of the people thus vilified—though unhappily for themselves they were either ignorant of or indifferent to the true import of the term and the consequences of its ownership. However convenient and applicable, I say, the term "Kafir" may have been as a designation for this people under the circumstances of their situation with respect to the dominant Muhammadan natives that had sprung up around them, and fenced them in in their inaccessible retreats amongst the mountain fastnesses of their native country with a ring of implacable enemies, it does not in any way help us to a knowledge of who they are, or what is their origin. On the contrary the use of the worthless term during long centuries has tended to throw into oblivion the national name of the people and to cover their past history in a shroud of mystery.

And so it is that we find, within the ring fence of mountain country which I defined in the early part of this lecture a number of contiguous tribes who, after a long endurance as "Kafirs," have gradually one after the other thrown off the opprobrious title by the adoption of Islam, and merged into the church of Muhammad with the loss of all but the most meagre traditional accounts of their origin and early history.

This is especially the case with the people we are now thinking of, and who still retain the title of "Kafir." Their congeners of the cantons of Badakhshan and Chitral, including Gilgit and Skardo, have legends of a common descent—the chiefs from Alexander himself, and the people from his Greek soldiers; and their claim to this ancestry is not without some foundation for we are told by the historians of Alexander's Asiatic conquests that the king married the fair Roshána, a noted beauty, the daughter of a noble of the district which is now known as Roshan; whilst from the same authorities we learn that 10,000 of his Greek soldiers had taken to themselves wives of the country. But apart from these records we learn from history that the Græco-Bactrian rule

flourished for four and a half centuries in the mountainous region lying between the Indus and the Oxus, and it is fair to presume that during this period there was free communication with Greece.

It is in connection with these historical records that the "Kafir" people we are now speaking of, though they do not themselves advance any such claim, are by some considered to be the descendents of Alexander's Greeks by native wives; and certain of their customs have been adduced in support of the idea on the ground of their being of European origin.

The sitting on stools and benches and the drinking of wine are habits by no means confined or peculiar to this "Kafir" people alone. Many of the neighbouring mountain tribes use benches and stools, and drink wine too, when they can get it though since their adoption of Islam the indulgence is strictly prohibited. But as these people claim the same descent this argument does not perhaps carry weight; though if advanced on behalf of the "Kafir," who do not themselves pretend to any such descent, it should be the more freely accepted in the interest of those who do.

The "Kafir" people. so far as I can learn, have no national name either for themselves as a collective people or for their country, though those dwelling on the borders of the territory held by Musulmans, from constantly, hearing themselves so styled, have adopted the term, and in communication with strangers speak of themselves by the name "Kafir" without any sense of the meaning the word bears.

In the early centuries of the Muhammadan conquest the country on both slopes of Hindu Kush from Balkh to Kabul was called Bakhtar or "Bakhtar Zamín," the Bactria of the Greeks, but this name does not appear to be known to the Kafirs of the present day. I have sometimes heard their country spoken of as Kámdesh, which is the name of one of their villages, if it be not their capital town. The name Katár is also sometimes applied to designate Kafiristan, though more correctly I believe it belongs to the upper part of the Chitral valley. Both these terms are well known to the "Kafir," and are applied to their countries by the Nimcha Musalmans and natives of Bajawar.

As before stated the "Kafir" have no national name, but distinguish themselves by the name of their proper tribe. The principal tribes in the northern half of the country, and in communication with Badakhshan and Chitral are, 1 Sangalí, 2 Gambír, 3 Katár, 4 Gomá, 5 Tarí, 6 Mairahgal, 7 Damrú, 8 Káma, 9 Chanesh, 10 Goshta, 11 Ding, 12 Wái, 13 Welí Wái, 14 Kámojí, and 15 Katoz. Those in the Southern half towards Lughmán and Tagáo are 1 Isphí, 2 Linshí, 3 Jamga, 4 Sanoí, 5 Iskalk. 6 Parúní, 7 Yúní, 8 Pútoz, 9 Khullum, 10 Desh, 11 Wámá, 12 Ayrat, 13 Amishor, 14 Chímyá, 15 Kastúr, 16 Pím, 17 Pashágrí, 18 Mandí Gal, 19 Minchyásh, and 20 Aurang. From these examples it will be observed that the names bear a very Indian Sound.

Of all these tribes Kámojí is the most important, and is sometimes used to designate the whole Kafir people. In fact all the others are reckoned as merely branches of it. For according to the "Kafir" accounts their people were originally divided into only four tribes, viz: Halúr, Salár Kámoz, and Kámoj. The three first succumbed to the Muhammadan arms, and were converted to Islam, whilst the fourth, which they themselves now represent, adhering to the religion and customs of their ancestors, were forced to flee from their own country of "Gandhár" to the mountain retreats they now occupy. The "Kafir" trace the descent of these four original tribes from a common ancestor whom they call "Goráshí."

From the similarity of sound some Muhammadan writers have conjectured them to be Arabs of the "Curesh" tribe. But there is nothing whatever to support this idea. Others again consider them to be the descendents of the Persian tyrant of antiquity "Zohák."

Whatever their ancient lineage and history, however, there is one tradition of the "Kámoji," or "Kafir" people as we must still call them, which is of some importance and deserves our special attention as it gives us a clue to their antecedents before expulsion from their original seats. The tradition I refer to is that the "Kámoj tribe of Kafir" fled from their native country "Gandhar" before the hostility of the Musalman to their present seats on the Southern slopes of Hindu Kush. This is much the same account as that Elphinstone heard at Peshawar in 1809, and which led him after careful enquiry on the spot to the conclusion that (I quote his own words) "the most general and only credible story is that they (the Sigah Posh) were expelled by the Musalmans from the neighbourhood of Candahar, and made several migrations from place to place before they reached "their present abode."

Of the date of this expulsion there may be some doubt, but of the locality there is not the same difficulty. The "Gandhar" of the "Kamoji" "traditions is not the "Kandahar" Elphinstone speaks of, but a country very much nearer their present abode. It is the "Gandhára" of the Greeks, a district which apparently included all that portion of the Peshawar valley which lies between the Kabul and Indus rivers; that is the tertitory now occupied by the Yusufzai and Mahmand Afghans.

The term "Gandhára" has long since ceased to be used as the name of this extensive tract of country, but it still exists as the name of a part of it which lies between the Swat and Kabul rivers, and is now occupied by the Mahmands. As the word is used at this time by the Mahmands, it is apparently limited to that hilly tract only which lies at the Southern base of the Kohi Mor and Sapari mountains and the range connecting them. And it is probably this very spot which the Kámoji Kafirs refer to as the country from which they were expelled by the Musalmans, for their migration thence across

the Kunar river and the Káma district to their present retreats in the vallies and glens drained by its principal river (which is an affluent of the Kunar stream) is much more easily understood than their conjectured migration from the far distant Kandahar.

In the early part of this lecture I referred to the invasion of the Peshawar valley by the Yusufzai Afghans, and mentioned that they were joined in the enterprise by their kinsmen of the Mahmand tribe. This invasion occurred at some time during the 14th century and occupied some twenty years of constant warfare before the Afghans finally secured themselves in their conquest of the country. The Yusufzai with some of the Mahmand clans in coalition with them, (they now hold that part of the country between the city of Peshawar and the Khybar), came through the Khybar Pass, and spreading over the plain which now bears their name gradually possessed themselves of the hill country bounding it between the Indus and Swat rivers. The Mahmand on the other hand, advancing through the Jallalabad valley, crossed the Kabul river below the confluence of the Kunar or Chitral stream, and forcing their way into the Gandhár country drove out the inhabitants and took their place—their tribesmen who went with the Yusufzais through the Khybar supporting the move from the side of the Peshawur valley. The inhabitants thus dispossessed were, it would appear, the "Kamoj" people, who fleeing from their homes sought refuge with their kinsmen settled in the Káma valley adjoining, and thence spread up the course of its river to their present retreats in the inaccessible glens of its head waters.

This being the case the "Kámoji Kafir" of the present day are the "Gandhárí or Gandharians of 500 years ago, and, barring any previous dislodgment of the tribe are the Gandharidœ of the Greeks. That they are an Indian people is proved by their language and religion, though both present strange divergence from their originals as the consequence most likely of centuries of isolation and barbarism.

Some years ago when I was with the "corps of Guides" at Mardan a squad of eight natives of Kafiristan was brought down to the Regiment as recruits. Only two of them, however, were genuine Kafirs from the interior of the country, and they were named "Gara" and "Kachok." The rest were from the border districts and were considered "Nimcha" or half and half neither true Kafir nor true Musalman.

These men in general appearance no way differed from the men of the "Afridi" company amongst whom they were enrolled, so much so that one personally unacquainted with them would fail to single them out of the ranks. None of them were fair complexioned, as are the Kafir slaves kept by the nobles of Kabul, whilst two or three were really dark, more so in fact than the Pathan of the plains. The natives of the higher parts of the country, however, are generally fair, more

especially in childhood and youth. These are called "Súr Kafir" or "Red Káfirs" by the people of Kabul and are in great request as slaves. Those of the low country are more or less dark, some of them very so, and are called "Tor Kafir" "Black Kafir."

The men whom I referred to just now as having been brought down to Mardan were simple minded, good natured fellows, and thoroughly unsophisticated in their ways.

They arrived highly elated at the prospect of meeting with fellow "Kafirs," for they had never heard us spoken of by any other name, and were evidently pleased with the cordiality of their reception by the officers. The novelty of the situation, however, soon wore off, and no more port wine forthcoming—for which, by the way, they evinced a remarkable partiality to the very serious lengthening of our mess bills—the monotony of drill with the restraints of discipline, and the tedium of garrison life in the hot weather palled upon them, and produced a longing for the cool air and free life of their native hills, a longing which oppressed them and rendered them discontent with the service. After some months they got leave to visit their homes in parties of two or three, and once away across the border they were never heard of again. During their stay at Mardan I endeavoured to get some information regarding their country and language but for want of a common medium of speech the task proved tedious and not very reliable in its results. A while later, however, I came across another Kafir at Peshawar and as he had a fair knowledge of the colloquial Persian I essayed to verify my former notes and prepare a vocabulary and grammar of his own language. The work proved a most difficult task, owing to constant misunderstandings and loss of temper on both sides and I finally gave it up as a hopeless job. I have no intention of inflicting upon you a Kafir vocabulary, but venture to give you instead an example of the affliction encountered in the preparation of such, merely premising that it is an Indian dialect closely similar to that spoken by the Pashái tribe, and also easily understood by the kindred Lughmání and Degání. With my "Kafir," a poor man of the labouring class, our lessons were something in this wise.

"Now you clearly understand you are to repeat to me in your own language the words I speak to you in Persian."

"By my eyes. Certainly, I understand. You speak in Persian and I say the same in my language."

"Very well. Thats exactly it. Now begin. "Gosh" what do you say for "Gosh."?

"What do I say for 'Gosh,' why 'Kain' of course, what else?" "All right" and down goes "kain" for "ear."—"Chashm," what's that in your language?

"Achch,"—and down goes "Achch" for "eye."

"What do you say for "Bíni." ?

"Nós."

"That's odd. We also call it Nose."

"Of course you do. We are brothers, aint we ? You're a Kafir and I'm a Kafir, and we have the same word for the same thing. Where's the oddity ?"

"Very well, perhaps you're right. Now let's count. You begin on your fingers and I will write it down."

"One, 2, 3, 4, 5" on the fingers quickly, and then a turn over to the other hand.

"Hold hard ! Gently ! Give me time to write them down. I've got "one, two, three, now go on."

"Four, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10," with a pause between each, and then a drop of the hands and a look of self satisfaction at the successful enumeration, on his part. On mine, writing—"Nine, ten—that's all right. Now go on."

"Go on ! Where to ? " With blank surprise.

"What comes after ten ? "

"After ten ?" with a somewhat puzzled look of enquiry.—"Why I've given you the whole ten; what more d'you want ?"

"Can't you count more than ten ?"

"Count more than ten ? What d'you want more than ten ? I've given you the whole lot 1, 2, 3," counting them over his fingers again.

"I see you are getting tired and confused. We will leave the numbers for another day. Meanwhile here's some snuff to clear your brains a bit. Presently we will try the conjugation of a verb."

I left my teacher a few minutes to enjoy the liberal pinches he had snuffled up with great gusto and snorts vigorous enough to have searched out the innermost recesses of his very ugly nose, whilst I arranged the words already written down. This done we resumed our lesson.

"Well ! *Damàghat chàgh.* Are you ready to go on ? "

"*Ba chashm.* Yes ! I'm ready. What is it ? "

"You remember what I told you? You must repeat in your own language the words I speak to you in Persian."

"Yes, yes! I understand," taking up another pinch of snuff with play of finger and thumb preparatory to further refreshment.

"Very well! Now listen!—"I am."

"Yes! I see you are."

"No, no! that's not what I want. I want your words for it. Listen again!—"Thou art."

"Of course I am. Ain't I talking to you?"

"Bother your stupidity! Try once more. Now look here! Listen to what I say."—"He is."

"Is he! Who is?"

"Oh! you intolerable blockhead! Now drop that snuff," with a slap knocking it out of his hand.

"Don't you know your own language!"

"Blockhead! That's good! Don't I speak straight to every thing you say, and if you can't understand, why am I the blockhead?"

"Now don't lose your temper! Take another pinch of snuff, and compose yourself, then after a pause, "Now go home for to day. Next time we will start with a better understanding. But you're a sorry blockhead all the same."

This was enough for the day, so after some amicable explanations I dismissed my barbarian, with a small present.

"When shall I come again?" For the bright rupee was a thing my Kafir had rarely handled and to him was a very handsome retaining fee, and hence his eagerness to renew the contract.

"I'll send for you when I have leisure. Meanwhile go to my servant 'Hassan' and he'll feed you"

Of the manners and customs of the Kafirs we have no very detailed accounts though what information we have justifies us in classing them with the people of India.

The people have no settled form of government conducted by one acknowledged chief or king, and are entirely illiterate, without books or writing of any kind. They have, however, certain chiefs or heads of families who exercise a sort of patriarchal control over their

dependents, and have the power of keeping the poorer members, especially orphans and widows, in bondage, and of selling them into slavery.

These clan leaders or chiefs are called "*Sàbonnash,*" and are usually appealed to for the settlement of family disputes, which as a rule are adjusted by amicable arrangement. On the whole the power of the chiefs in matters affecting the common interests of the family or tribe is strictly limited, and mostly dependent on the will of the people. Practically in fact, each man is independent so for as his power goes, and subordinates his will only to the common interest of the society of which he is a member. It would appear in short, that in their social condition these people (making allowance for the effects of changes in religion) are very much on a par with their former neighbours the "Afridí," with whom they have many points of resemblance, especially in respect to features, complexion, mental character and moral qualities. They are extremely jealous of their honor as they understand the word, keep the stranger out of their country with even more jealous vigilance than the Afridi, and are as fickle, revengeful and treacherous as the Afghan. On the other hand they are brave in fight, and hospitable and gay in their social gatherings and superstitious to a degree.

I have likened them to the Afridi, their ancient neighbours, and may here state that Herodotus mentions the Aparytœ and Gandarii as being included with the Sattagydœ and Dadikœ in one satrapy. The Aparytœ of Herodotus are the Afridi of to day, there is no doubt. With the identity of the two last we are not just now concerned. But this much I think we may consider as certain, with regard to the others, namely, that the "Kamoji" people, or Kafirs of the present Kafiristan, are the same people as were driven out of Gandhár by the Mahmand Afghans who now hold that country, and that they were so driven out into their present retreat about 500 years ago. And further, in default of record of any previous dislodgement we may conclude that they were the ancient inhabitants of that country, and the same people as are mentioned by Herodotus under the name of Gandarii or Gandarians.

In further support of this view I may mention that the Sápi tribe which is reputed to be the most recently converted of the Kafir tribes is also known by the name Gandhárai, which is more properly the name of one, the chief one, of its five divisions. The Sapi tribe is reckoned at 12,000 houses in all, but is much scattered in small settlements all over the country from Tagao to Kunar and Bajawar. Almost every village in Swat has one or two or more Sápi families, and they are also found amongst the Mahmands and Utmankhels. The celebrated Akhond of Swat was a Sápi of the Gandhárai section or division. The Sápi count themselves Saraban Afghans, but are not Afghans at all.

The "Kafir" are by no means destitude of all semblance of civilization in the midst of the barbarity of their surroundings, though

they have undoubtedly fallen from a former higher level than that they at present show any signs of. And this we may fairly conclude from a consideration of their religion and mode of life at the present day, so far as the accounts we receive enable us to judge.

The time alloted to me is, I see expired, and I will therefore not further trespass on your patience, more, than to say that the Kafir, of to-day have evidently, from the character of their religion and customs, been mixed up with the tribes around them from very early times.

They live in small village communities, scattered about in the sheltered nooks and commanding spurs of their hills. In their lower valleys some of the villages are of considerable size and contain from 200 to 500 houses many of which consist of 3 or 4 stories. These are described as commodious and substantially built of wood and stone, and tastefully decorated with wood carving of elaborate workmanship. In the higher parts of the country the villages are sometimes built up the slope of some steep bank rising above a torrent stream. And in such situations the houses rise in terraces one above the other, the flat roofs of one row forming the street in front of the row next above.

The names of the principal villages are as follows, and they are so called after the tribes inhabiting them. Those in the northern half of the country are Kámdesh (after the Kama tribe) Wáigal (after the Wái tribe), Gambir (after the tribe of that name), and so on with Katár, Gúmá, Merahgal, Chanesh, Damrú, Sangal, Goshta, Díng, Kámojí, Káigal, Rachgal, Dóigal, Nisigrám, Sonandesh, Pandesh, &c., Those in the southern half are Wainá, Pashágri, Pímichgrám, (after the Pím tribe), Ishpí, Sanoí Iskilk, Linshí, Yúnì Parúni, Deshá, Patoz, Ayrat, Khullum, Ameshor, Chumyá, Kastúr, Manchgal (from the Manchyásh tribe), and so on. The terminations desh,—gal, and —grám it will be observed are purely Indian and equivalent to des,—garh,—gámo.

The main occupations of the " Kafirs" are the tillage of the soil and the care of their flocks, but these are at times much interrupted by the constant state of hostility they live in either amongst themselves or with their neighbours, so that they are for the most part left to the women. Sometimes the war is so prolonged and so actively waged that the men are entirely occupied in its pursuit and unable to quit their posts for days or even weeks together. On these occasions the women carry them daily supplies of food and other necessaries.

But this is not the unvarying state of affairs, and even with the " Kafir," life has its pleasures, and from all accounts they are enjoyed as freely as by other people less unfavourably situated. They are said to be extremely sociable in their habits, and when not more seriously employed, devote themselves with lively energy to a round of music, dancing and feasting in which all join alike without distinction of rank or sex, and usually with the greatest good humour and friendliness.

Patriotism and hospitality are considered the two highest virtues, and he who has slain most of the enemy (always the Musalman) and given the greatest number, of feasts is the most respected during life, and the more surely deified after death.

The arms of the "Kafir" are a hatchet and bow and arrow, with one or two daggers which are always worn in the waist belt. Of late years some of the border people have become possessed of fire arms, but they are not commonly in use.

Their dress is of much the same kind for both sexes, and differs in material only according to the rank of the wearer. The clothes of the better class are of cotton or woollen stuff, and consist of a loose shirt and drawers, with a sash wound about the waist. They also wear a round cap which sometimes is set off with a band of red cloth for the women. In the cold weather they wear over these either a fur coat or chogha or a blanket. The poorer people in the northern parts of the country wear garments of goatskin with the hairy side ontwards, and these generally being of a dark colour they are called "Siyah posh Kafirs" or "Black clad Kafir."

The men wear the hair in long ringlets at each side, but have the top of the head shaved. They also wear rings of gold or silver. The women, are said to wear the hair plaited over the temples, and in long braids down the back. They wear rings and bangles of pewter or brass, and necklaces of cowrie shells and beads of glass or stone. They are in fact fond of finery of all sorts, but very little is known of the kind of ornaments they wear.

The Kafir women have a world wide reputation of being very beautiful creatures, and are said, by those who know them best, to surpass in fineness of features, delicacy of complexion and turn of limb. This estimate, however, I suspect is a mere matter of comparison, an opinion formed according to the lights. I am sure that any body who stands where I am now, would not again speak of Kafir beauty!

There is so much to be said about the manners and customs of this interesting people that it is impossible to compress into the short limits of a lecture all that belongs to the subject. But rather than leave it incomplete by the omission of such important matters I will, with your permission, before concluding, describe very briefly the main characters of their religion and the rites observed on the occasion of "Domestic Occurrences," Marriages, Births, Deaths.

Of the religion of the Kafirs we know very little. But from that little it appears to be an odd mixture of the three great religions that have successively flourished in the country of which they are the natives, that is to say of Brahmanism, Budhism, and Zoroastrianism. They believe in a supreme God whom they call "Dágon" or "Dogán," but they worship idols of which they have a great number, and sacrifice to

them as intercessors with God. They recognize a heaven which they call "*barí lábalá*" and a hell called "*barí dugar balá.*" They have priests whose office is hereditary, and whose principal duty is to superintend the rites observed at sacrifices, at births, marriages and deaths, but they exercise no influence or control over the people, nor do they prescribe any special form of worship, nor times and seasons of worship and sacrifice.

In these matters the people follow their own inclinations and are much given to prayer and sacrifice before their idols. On these occasions it is absolutely necessary that fire be present, and it is also essential that all offerings presented to the idol be first passed over the fire.

The animals most commonly sacrificed are the ox and goat, but with the exception of the dog and cat, fowl and fish which are never eaten, there is no prohibition of any kind, and the flesh is always eaten by the family and friends of the sacrificer, a portion being the right of the priest. The animal is killed by striking off its head with a large knife or an axe, and its blood is sprinkled over the idol. Some idols are worshipped in the open air and others in temples called "Imráomá."

The Kafirs know by name and worship the Hindu Gods, Indra and Mahádeo, and they have besides many others the principal of which are "Bágesh." the God of water, "Máni"—the destroyer of all evil, or the Preserver, Ges, Maraz, Púrám, Atrám, Parádik (this idol is a group of 7 brothers made of gold and set together in front of a tree of gold), Dóni, Súríjú, Nishi, Kunú (who is supposed by Musalmans to be the wife of Adam), Disámí (who is the wife of the Hindu God Ganesh), Murmít, and others. These idols are generally carved out of wood, but they are often of stone, and some of them carry a trident (or trisúl) like the Sadasheo of the Hindus. Each tribe has its own patron idol which is called "Dágon" in addition to its own name.

Besides these idols the Kafirs are said to have numerous statues and figures of deceased ancestors. These are described as representing male and female figures in various attitudes standing, sitting, riding &c., Allowing that they do make images of their ancestors as is done by some Hindú hill men, still I am very much inclined to consider these as merely relics of Budhist sculptures similar to those with which the Yusufzai country abounds, and of which our museums now have many specimens, more or less damaged though they are by the destructive fury of the Musalman conquerors.

The Kafirs sacrifice to their idols at any and all times, the flesh being always eaten with festivity. But there are some sacrifices appointed for special seasons. The most important of these is at the Vernal Equinox and the festival lasts ten days. It is followed by a carnival in honor of Mahadeo, when amongst other pranks the Kafirs pelt each other with earth, as do the Hindús one another with "*gulál*" in the "*Holí.*"

Such are the general characters of Kafir worship, some other peculiarities will be mentioned in connection with their funeral rites. But before we come to that we must speak of their marriage customs.

Marriage amongst the "Kafir" is apparently a very simple business, and the tie rather a loose one, very liberal if not latitudinarian views being entertained in respect to the moral obligations of the married state. On the other hand chastity before marriage is carefully guarded, and any *faux pas* brings disgrace upon the girl and her family. But it does not appear that *laches* in these matters are visited with the exemplary punishments so rigorously enforced by Muhammadans for the like kinds of dishonor.

The marrying age amongst "Kafirs" is from 20 to 25 for men, and from 16 to 20 for women. There does not appear to be any period of courtship, the betrothal and marriage being settled in the following business like manner.

The suitor, or would be Benedict, takes a goat, plump and free from blemish, to the house of his "intended" and offers it to the father or other guardian in the name of the maiden of his choice. If the donor is approved of, his gift is accepted, and the father of the maiden forthwith strikes off the head of the goat preparatory to the family feast, which clinches the bargain, and the "accepted" then sets about his wedding arrangements.

Before the goat is accepted, however, sundry preliminaries have to be adjusted, such as the price of the bride and the amount of her dower, and in these particulars the maiden is always consulted and allowed to decide according to her own free choice. In cases where the important question is not at once decided by the acceptance or refusal of the proferred gift, the goat is retained a certain number of days pending further consultation. If after the expiry of this period the goat is returned to the donor his suit is considered as rejected and the "match is off." But its retention is considered a token of encouragement, and, negotiations proceeding smoothly, its final sacrifice, as just stated, confirms the bargain.

After the feast upon his goat, in which he participates as one of the family, the bridegroom elect returns to his own house, and next day, himself following later, sends to the house of the bride elect the various articles of her dower. These consist of a suit of clothes, jewellery, some lengths of colored cotton (from Kabul), and a set of cooking utensils. The last are used in the preparation of the feast, which is that day given by the father of the maiden; and on the arrival of the bridegroom, the bride is clothed and decked out in her new suit and jewellery and presented to him; the father at the same time presenting her with a silk scarf and some jewellery, and giving a cow, and if he can afford to do so, a slave also to his son in law.

After the feast, or "wedding breakfast," as we should say, the bride is attired for her departure, and as she steps out of the house a basket, crock or "khalta" is fixed on her back by shoulder straps, and into it are put a quantity of dried fruits, almonds, walnuts, &c., conserved in honey, and, if the parents can afford it, a silver wine cup. With this load the bride walks to the house of her husband escorted in procession by the whole village with music and song.

The wedding guests here serenade the newly joined couple with music and songs for awhile, and then after the distribution of fruits and wine disperse to their own homes.

A day or two later the bridegroom pays to the father the price of his wife, which is called "*shírbahá*" by the Musalmans and sometimes amounts to as many as thirty cows.

This completes the marraige so far as the parents of the girl are concerned. The priest throughout having nothing to do with the ceremony except as a wedding guest. But it occasionally happens that the bride, much to the disgrace of the family, is returned to her parents as "disapproved." In this case she is deprived of her dower or wedding gifts, and the "Shírbahá" is of course withheld.

Divorce is not known, as amongst Musalmans, but it is said to be a common occurence for married couples to separate by mutual consent, and contract fresh alliances at their pleasure.

Polygamy is allowed but is not much practised, except by the wealthy who, also, keep slaves both male and female. These are always poor or friendless Kafirs, either captured in war from their neighbours or seized from the weaker sections of their own tribe. Musalman slaves are never kept, all such captives being invariably put to death. These "Kafir" slaves are called "*bárí*," and include in their ranks all the servant, artificer, and labourer class. In fact the term "*bárí*," may be held to mean "Serf" in opposition to "*síyál*" which means "noble" and is applied to the free and wealthy classes.

The ceremonies observed by the "Kafirs" on the birth of a child are very curious and interesting. The expectant mother is removed to a house outside the village especially appropriated to the purpose, and kept there till 24 days after the birth of the child. Then all being well the mother and child are conducted back to the village with music, and songs and dancing.

After some weeks a feast is given for the naming of the child, and the name is selected in the following curious manner. The mother holds the infant in her arms ready to feed it, whilst the names of its grandparents for several generations according to sex are successively repeated over it. And Baby, as babies generally do in the like situation, very soon helps itself to what it wants, and the name which

happened to be mentioned at the moment of its doing so thereafter becomes its own.

The common names for men are 1 Chandalú, 2 Demú, 3 Hazár, 4 Tyúzar, 5 Mírah, 6 Budel, 7 Bastí, 8 Gárá, 9 Garnásh, 10 Azar, 11 Káchuk, 12 Kimrak, 13 Pakhola, 14 Dronás, 15 Kohaki, 16 Chodar, 17 Trímú, 18 Dabdíng, 19 Palak, 20 Udúr, 21 Zâzai, 22 Kamar, &c.

Those of women are 1 Málí, 2 Júnbalí, 3 Masánki, 4 Janúkí, 5 Dilerí, 6 Zorí, 7 Spáí, 8 Páglí, 9 Biyás, 10 Urárí, 11 Málakí, 12 Pakúkí, &c.

The list is varied, and may be perhaps profitably consulted by the "paterfamilias" blessed with more quivers to his bow than he can well find names for.

We fail to trace the early years of Kafir life. Perhaps they are a period of natural innocence and happiness, only disturbed by the raids of the slave hunter, and the kidnappings of his vile agents—either Kafirs themselves or their renegade kinsmen, the "Nímcha"

We hear of no schools or lessons to worry the youthful mind, of no priestly restraint, nor social discipline to guide the conduct of the man. We only hear of their doings and actions as men and women—of their household duties and domestic cares, coupled with religious exercises and worship; of their frequent feasts and merry makings with music, song, and dance; and of their tribal wars and family fights, with a never ceasing vigilance and self defence against the common enemy, the Musalman foe. And then the end of all, their funeral rites.

The funeral ceremonies observed by the Kafirs are very peculiar, and indicate the former connection of the people with the "Gabr" or "Zoroastrian" religion—the practice of the Fire worshippers. The Kafirs neither burn their dead as do the Hindú, nor do they bury them like the Muhammadan. They dispose of them in the following manner.

The corpse is arranged in the deceased's best suit of cloths, and laid out on a charpoy, and if a man, his bow and quiver, daggers and knives &c. are laid by his side.

The relatives then take up the charpoy and carry it round the village accompanied by all the people, who sing and dance as the procession advances. At length the corpse is set down opposite some idol whilst the men of the village wearing their arms dance round it with wild shouts and gestures, and grotesque attitudes and boundings. The women then take their place and for a while lament over the corpse filling the air with their wails and sobbings. Finally the corpse is removed from the charpoy and laid in a wood box and shut up. The coffin is then carried away to the top of some hill or other solitary place

and deposited there under the shelter of some rock or shade of some tree and so left. This concludes the funeral which is then followed by a feast given by the deceased's relatives.

In the case of wealthy or well known men the deceased's heirs, once a year hold a feast in his memory, and a portion of the food is set aside outside the house for the refreshment of his soul, the guests the while calling on him by name to come and eat.

Another curious custom the Kafirs are said to observe in connection with funeral ceremonies is the following. When a friend, a few days after the funeral, calls upon a mourner to condole with him in his bereavement, he announces his arrival at the door of the house and on admission, removing his cap throws it with a violent gesture on the floor at the entrance to the room in which the mourner is seated. He then draws his knife or dagger and stepping up to the mourner takes him by the hand and raises him to his feet. He then kicks him all around the room, sets him down in his former place, sheaths his dagger, and picking up his cap goes his way. If this be strictly true and generally practised, the unfortunate "Kafir" mourners must endure a double affliction and have a hard time of it till the days of mourning be over, and may well cry "Save me from my friends!"

I mentioned before that the Kafirs made images of their defunct chiefs and heroes, and considered them as Gods. But it is not many who are thus deified owing to the difficult qualifications required during lifetime.

The best passports to deification after death are profuse liberality and public hospitality during life, or the erection of a roadside gateway. This last it appears has no practical utility, but always endows the builder with a certain sanctity and celebrity which entitles him to deification after death. These gateways or portals are simple constructions at the side of public roadways near the entrance to a village, and consist merely of two upright pillars, of stone masonry supporting beams of pine wood which are covered over with plaster and lime cement. It is not stated whether they ever contain any idols, but from the general similarity I suspect they resemble the like roadway arches seen on the outskirts of Budhist villages in Little Tibet.

"General Robert's speech."

Ladies and gentlemen. Dr. Bellew has given us a very interesting lecture, and I would on behalf of all here, offer him our best thanks. Very few men are so well qualified to treat the subject which he has selected for his lecture; very few men have mixed so much with the races of Central Asia; and few men have travelled so far in the countries beyond our Frontier. Dr. Bellew has mentioned that Major Tanner is about to visit Kafiristan, a country hitherto quite unknown to us all, and inhabited by people almost equally unknown. We have learnt

a good deal of both this afternoon and I hope that after Major Tanner's visit, we may learn still more.

Great progress has been made during the last few months in our knowledge of the countries and tribes of the North West Frontier. It cannot, of course, be expected that we can travel without risk, in this country, all at once; or that the people will prove loyal subjects, or friendly allies. The traditions of the Pathans, a bigoted and fanatical race for the most part, are all against permitting their pride of country to be levelled without a struggle, or admitting us into their country. But I am not very sure whether the Afridis, Mangals, and other tribes are much worse than the forefathers of some of us were. The Highlands of Scotland were not certainly always safe; and, though I am bound to admit that nothing but what is good can come from Ireland now, and one can travel from one end of that country to another with perfect safety, it was not always so. I am, however, sanguine that our whole frontier will very soon become peaceful, and that the tribes on becoming accustomed to our rule will settle down, those that live far away will visit us, and will let us visit them.

When they do, I hope that some of us will explore Kafiristan, and that Dr. Bellew may be with us to introduce us to the people he has told us of this evening.