[SECRET.]

(To appear in annual returns, see rules inside.)

No. 34

THE

AFGHAN QUESTION

(MILITARY, GEOGRAPHICAL AND POLITICAL STUDIES)

BY

P. A. RITTICH, STAFF CAPTAIN

OF THE

LIFE GUARD JAEGER REGIMENT

ST. PETERSBURG

GUARD AND ST. PETERSBURG MILITARY DISTRICT PRESS

1905.

TRANSLATED IN THE

INTELLIGENCE BRANCH

DIVISION OF THE CHIEF OF THE STAFF

1906

SIMLA

PRINTED AT THE GOVERNMENT MONOTYPE PRESS

1907

[SECRET.]

(To appear in annual returns, see rules inside.)

THE

AFGHAN QUESTION

(MILITARY, GEOGRAPHICAL AND POLITICAL STUDIES)

BY

P. A. RITTICH, STAFF CAPTAIN

OF THE

LIFE GUARD JAEGER REGIMENT

ST. PETERSBURG

GUARD AND ST. PETERSBURG MILITARY DISTRICT PRESS

1905.

TRANSLATED IN THE

INTELLIGENCE BRANCH

DIVISION OF THE CHIEF OF THE STAFF

1906

SIMLA

PRINTED AT THE GOVERNMENT MONOTYPE PRESS

1907

Issued by_____

to the personal charge of_____

Custody and disposal of secret documents issued by the Chief of the Staff.

1. This document is to be treated as a "SECRET" work, and will be kept in the personal custody of the official to whom it is issued or subsequently transferred, in accordance with the orders contained in King's Regulations and the Official Secrets Act.

2. When an official to whom secret documents have been issued vacates his appointment, or is transferred, or is relieved of his duties for any period, the documents in his possession must be personally made over to his successor and a report submitted to the Chief of the Staff on I. A. F. Z. 2034, showing that this has been done.

3. An officer to whom secret documents are issued will keep a list of such documents in his charge, which list will be compared when taking over the documents with the receipt form then signed. He will personally compare the documents with the list on the 1st January in each year, and will furnish a report—on I. A. F. Z. 2035—to the Chief of the Staff, certifying that he has done so. Any deficiency noticed then, as at any other time, should at once be reported to the issuing authority concerned, and immediate steps to be taken to trace the missing document and fix the responsibility for its loss.

In all cases these reports will be submitted direct.

4. Attention is directed to the letter reproduced below:—

Copy of a letter from the Adjutant General in India to the Lieutenant-Generals Commanding, No. 654-A., "Officers—Discipline," dated Fort William, the 17th March 1904.

It has come to the notice of the Commander-in-Chief that notwithstanding the very clear and precise orders which have from time to time been issued to ensure the secrecy of documents, there have been instances recently where the most reprehensible laxity has been shown in the observance of those orders.

2. This laxity can obviously only have arisen from a want of adequate appreciation of the responsibility resting upon those to whose care these important secret documents have been entrusted; and in order that there may be no misunderstanding in the future as to the serious nature of these responsibilities, the Commander-in-Chief wishes all concerned to be informed that he intends to take the severest notice of any future neglect of the orders.

3. Under His Excellency's directions a copy of this letter will be attached to all documents, the secret nature of which may necessitate their being issued for the personal information of those concerned.

SIMLA:
The 11th May 1907.

B. DUFF, *Lieut.-General,*
Chief of the Staff.

PREFACE.

AT the commencement of the Russo-Japanese war I, with many others, was apprehensive of that war leading to a conflict with England, consequently I felt morally bound to continue my investigations into the Middle Eastern Question, with which I was already somewhat acquainted, both theoretically and practically, through study and travel. I accordingly made a special study of Afghanistan as a possible theatre of operations between the two rival powers. The result of my labours which is set down in the following pages I first of all gave in a lecture to my brother officers of the Life Guard Jaeger Regiment, and at the same time was invited to repeat my lecture in an assembly of experts and other persons interested in the Afghan question. The present work has been published by me only at the particular request of those who were present at my lectures.

I consider it to be my duty to convey my deepest and sincerest gratitude to Andrew Snyesareff * for his advice and suggestions which have lightened my labours in no small degree.

P. A. RITTICH.

* This officer is one of the leading experts on affairs, and has been recently lecturing at the Russian Staff College on the present situation, in Central Asia.—(*Translator.*)

LIST OF CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

It is no secret to anyone that our situation was unusually grave during the Japanese war, because, in addition to our open enemies the Japanese who were fighting for the future of Pan-Mongolism, we had ill-wishers, not to call them by a stronger name, amongst whom our eternal rivals, the English, take the first place.

I am by no means a supporter of the opinion, obtaining at the commencement of the war, that England drew us into this struggle, as I consider that the fate of national wars does not depend on the wishes of this or that neighbour, or of any particular person, but on numerous political, psychological, economical and social factors. Nevertheless, it would be futile to deny that England's political and financial interference, by means of loans and many other ways, very much hastened the war. This assistance is to be explained by considerations of the most complicated nature, but chiefly by the fact that England fully appreciates the importance of such expenditure and loans, looking on them as an insurance premium paid for the safety of India on the one hand, and for the permanence of her Empire in the East on the other.

It was quite clear to everybody interested in the Middle Eastern Question that, had there been no Russo-Japanese war, there would in all probability have been an Anglo-Russian war, as, in spite of all our love of peace, we could not allow England to expand in Persia, Afghanistan, Turkey and Tibet at the expense of our vital interests. Now that the South African war has been ended, all these questions have been brought to the front by the English and it is we alone who have delayed their solution.

The policy of Lord Curzon and the Indian Government.

In order to substantiate my arguments I am taking the liberty of considering at some length Lord Curzon's present policy and the gigantic plan which has been conceived by him and his party, a plan that clearly shows us what we may expect in the not very distant future.

The movement of England eastwards is due not to Government but to commerce. The English are typical traders and their world-wide empire has been created entirely by merchants. The Government has merely supported these merchants, has strengthened the hold on possessions acquired by them, and only when serious political complications have arisen, or when their enterprises have attained an abnormal growth, as for instance in India, has the Government taken over the country and declared it to be an Imperial Colony.

With regard to their acquisitions, the guiding principle of the English has been the exploitation of the natives to the fullest degree, which they have, however, carefully concealed from view by putting forward the principle of the open door, that is, Free Trade.

The extraordinary growth of British possessions in the Middle East has automatically made India the centre of this vast empire, and for the last twenty years the Viceroys of India have been striving more and more to become the dictators of the policy of the Middle East. Lord Curzon, by nature the most ambitious and autocratic of all past Viceroys, no longer is satisfied with confining his attention to the Middle East, but openly declares that India will be the centre of an all-world policy.

Lord Curzon's desire to transfer the political centre of gravity to India is, of course, quite natural. He is perfectly right in considering further centralization fatal to England for history shows that the extension of kingdoms under the direction of a single centre has always led to a catastrophe.

In short, we see that Indian Imperialism is finding more and more supporters, because it is impossible to unite the Middle East to England, although it is quite feasible to tack on to India Persian, Afghan, Arabian, African and Chinese

territory, for India was united with part of Asia during the times of the great conquerors; consequently, it is no novel policy that has been evolved and it may only be necessary to repeat an old mechanical cohesion. In short, Lord Curzon's idea is to create one single territory stretching from Cairo to Shanghai.

With regard to Egypt he wishes to unite Cairo by railway with the Red Sea and Indian Ocean in order to paralyse thereby the importance of the Baghdad Railway. At the same time it is proposed to wrest Arabia from Turkey, giving her autonomy as a vassal under the suzerainty of India.

The claims of the Khedive of Egypt to the Muhammadan throne or rather to the leadership of Islam are also being supported. The idea of Pan Islamism is at present engaging the attention of the most exalted intellects of the Middle East, and apparently the Shah of Persia and the Amir of Afghanistan have resolved to use their spiritual power on behalf of the Sultan of Turkey. This dream of the leading Muhammadans is of course very far from being realized, as the mass of Muhammadans are still far too inert and undeveloped and the schism between Sunnis and Shiahs is still far too pronounced. Hence there is plenty of time left for the English; they are, therefore, anxious to strengthen the Khedive's claim by a lavish use of gold, and skilful policy, wresting first of all the holy places of Muhammadanism from the Turks.

Their plans do not, however, stop here; they desire to gain possession of the whole Arabian littoral, not only for political and commercial purposes, but also on strategical grounds so as to have bases for every front against all combinations and in all conflicts.

The railway line crossing Arabia is to turn northwards from Koweit round the Persian Gulf and from Bushire cut across Persia and Afghanistan *viâ* Shiraz, Kerman, Nasirabad and Kandahar, in order to join up with the Indian railway system, which in turn will eventually be linked up with a network of railways in China, having its outlet on the sea at Shanghai. In this manner will be acquired a huge ribbon of steel which will traverse the whole continent of Asia, and join up at Cairo with the trans-African Cape to Cairo Railway.

By cutting across Persia England will attain her cherished dream of defining the Russian and British spheres of influence, and at the same time will secure for herself a valuable belt of the Persian continent, so necessary for ensuring connection throughout the empire, and, what is of chief importance, she will be mistress of the coast line, thus definitely cutting off Russia from the sea.

Meanwhile, since the Berlin Congress our public attention has been glued to the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, where we expect to obtain compensation for the straits * we lost. We have further, in recent years, made a detailed survey of Persia with a view to railway construction and have also made ourselves acquainted with its most important ports. The plans of England, in short, touch us in our most tender spot, and all the more since our failures in the Far East can be counter-balanced only by success in Persia where lies the line of least resistance and whither, according to the natural course of history, the centre of gravity of our policy can be transferred.

* The Dardanelles.

By taking possession of Southern Afghanistan for strategical and railway purposes the English desire to make a buffer of Northern Afghanistan, that is to say, to create a state sufficiently strong, if not to finally check the advance of Russia, yet in any case to render the latter's progress extremely difficult, that is, almost impossible.

Finally the English desire, in the words of Lord Curzon, to make of Tibet the glacis of India which will give timely warning of the approach of Russia, but, as the latter has no intention of taking advantage of this route and China's military organisation is for the time being not sufficiently developed to undertake an invasion of India, it would be more correct to suppose that the Indian Government wishes to take possession of Lhassa, or rather the Dalai Lama, in order to obtain a predominating influence over the minds of the whole of Central Asia.

This is briefly Curzon's scheme which has been accepted by the British Parliament. It is now being considered in all the chancelleries of Western Europe, it occupies the columns of the press, and has called forth a torrent of controversy and comment. For some reason this scheme has passed almost unnoticed by us, although, in reality, we are the country chiefly interested, as it is aimed entirely against Russia and against her legitimate aspirations.

It would be out of place to go into the details of the whole of the scheme. I shall only say that for the permanent and complete realization of this plan the motto should be "India for India," and a complete change must be made in the whole of the political system of that unfortunate country, which out of its budget of 700,000,000 (roubles) pays over more than half to the English administration and English nation for the privileges of becoming a member of that empire and of hoisting its flag.

In order that the Empire thus created should be lasting, its centre, India, should be strong and powerful; but to attain this the English should moderate their appetites and treat their subject-races with less cynicism. At all events we can see from current telegrams the commencement of the realization of this political programme in Tibet, Afghanistan, Persia and Turkey.

The questions of railway construction are complicated; they require a great outlay of capital and therefore call for the participation of private enterprise. It will be by no means easy for the English to find capital for their railways in Arabia, Persia and Afghanistan. With the enormous extent of the country to be traversed and the great engineering difficulties, a capital of a milliard of roubles will be required to carry out the whole of the programme of construction; added to this there is an entire lack of local traffic and the receipts from the undertaking will be practically nothing. It is hard enough to obtain a guarantee for the Anatolian line; it will be harder still to obtain it for the Arabian and Persian. Private railway companies do not take up enterprises of this nature. Hence the construction of the line can only be carried out by expenditure from the Imperial exchequer, but it is very doubtful if the Government of India is in a position to spend a sum of 10 millions within a short period, and it seems more probable that the matter will be pigeon-holed for many decades.

At all events it may be taken as a fact that Russia will never permit the fulfilment of this projected scheme until reduced to the condition of a second rate power, and it is far from probable that the English will ever succeed in obtaining the supremacy of the Middle East without a sanguinary struggle with Russia.

Anglo-Russian relations, and the history of Afganistan during the past century.

The attitude adopted by England during the present war is far from being new to us—Russians. The whole of the past century has been one uninterrupted conflict, either open or secret, between us.

The centre of gravity of our relations for the past century has lain in Afghanistan, as being the state situated between our respective frontiers. It will, therefore, be to the point to say something about the history of this country, which is so intimately connected with the question of an Anglo-Russian collision. In point of fact, there is nothing very much to be said of the history of Afghanistan, because its existence as an independent state does not date back for more than a hundred and fifty years, that is, from the time of the downfall of the celebrated Empire of Nadir Shah. Up to this time Afghanistan was merely a thoroughfare, which was used, as is well known, by twenty great invaders of India.

The close of the year 1800 was marked by our rupture with England. On the 24th January, 1801, the Hetman of the Don Cossacks, General Orloff, received an autograph letter from the Czar, Paul I, in which he was ordered to advance on Orenburg and to proceed thence by three roads *viâ* Bokhara and Khiva to the river Indus. He was directed to raze all English factories and establishments in India to the ground, liberate the oppressed owners "and transfer the country to Russia under the same conditions as obtained under the English

and to divert the trade to us." The Cossacks, as is well known, marched out 22,500 strong with 24 guns, but had not reached Orenburg before they received news of the death of the Czar Paul and an order from his successor to return to their permanent quarters.

Under Alexander I we were to have taken part with the French Republic in a campaign against India, with the passive acquiescence of the Emperor of Germany, who agreed to allow the passage of the French troops through his territories. The army to be despatched to India numbered 70,000, of whom 35,000, consisting of 25,000 regulars and 10,000 Cossacks, were to be found by Russia. Astrabad was selected as the head-quarters and point of concentration of the allied armies. From Astrabad the line of advance of the allied army was to be by Herat, Farah, and Kandahar to the Indus, and it was proposed to cover the distance from Astrabad to the Indus in 45 days, and from France to the Indus in 120 to 150 days, that is leaving France in May, to arrive in India in October. In order to assure success special envoys were to be despatched from Astrabad to all the independent potentates with the object of enlisting their goodwill on the side of the Allies.

The expedition of 1801 was not crowned with success owing, chiefly to the reluctance of the Czar, Alexander I. Napoleon, on becoming Emperor, continued to entertain thoughts of this expedition. Entering into negotiations with Persia in 1808, he despatched Colaincourt to St. Petersburg with the special mission of obtaining the definite consent of the Czar, Alexander I, to his troops sharing in the expedition against India. It is a matter of history that Colaincourt did not succeed in arriving at any definite results, and nothing came of his mission. On the contrary a few years later we were in alliance with England and waged our "National war" in 1812 with funds supplied by her.

To counteract the effects of the alliance between the French and ourselves the English sent their first embassy to Afghanistan in 1808 under Elphinstone, whose remarkable work on that country is of importance even in the present day.[1] Elphinstone concluded with the ruler of Afghanistan, Shah Shuja an alliance which had the object of preventing Persia from taking any active part in the Franco-Russian attack on India.

At the time of our wars against Napoleon complete disorder reigned in Afghanistan which was, in fact, split up into three divisions, the chief centres of which were Kabul, Kandahar and Herat. It was not until the year 1823 [2] that Dost Mahommed, the founder of the present Barakzai dynasty, succeeded in uniting the greater part of the country from Kabul to Ghanzi under his sway.

Dost Mahommed, being a strong monarch, was anxious to bring the whole of Afghanistan under his rule, but, encountering opposition on the part of the English Government, commenced to toy with Russia. The chief part in these negotiations was played by our agent, Lieutenant Vitkievitch, who greatly injured English interests.

The English then determined to settle once for all with Afghanistan, to place a new Amir on the throne, and to divide up Afghanistan and bring it under her control.

In the autumn of the year 1838 an army was organized for the invasion of Afghanistan, and war was declared against that country. The army consisted of Bengal troops to the number of 9,500 men, with 38,000 followers and 30,000 camels, which were to be collected at Ferozepore, and in conjunction with 6,000 [3]Afghans who were partisans of Shah Shuja, and were, therefore, hostile to Dost Mahommed, were to move on Shikarpur where it was to be joined by a column from Bombay consisting of 5,600 men. The objective of both columns was Kandahar. A third column was to advance on Kabul. On the[4] 18th March 1839 the Bombay and Bengal columns arrived in the Bolan pass where no

---

Notes in I. B.—

[1] Shah Shuja lost his throne while Elphinstone's Mission was marching back from Peshawar.

[2] 1826.

[3] Shah Shuja's force was chiefly composed of Hindustanis.

[4] Not quite correct.

opposition was encountered, and after passing through it they proclaimed Shah Shuja Amir.[1] Then the English directed a detachment of 5,000[2] men against Ghazni which was carried by storm. Dost Mahommed then evacuated Kabul and fled northwards to Afghan Turkistan. On the [3]21st August, 1839, the English entered Kabul.

At this time our task was to strengthen and extend the frontiers of Persia, which was under our influence, and, with this object, we assisted her in her designs on Herat which were foiled owing to English intrigues. Besides this, we strove by every means to strengthen the position of Dost Mahommed in Afghanistan.

In November 1839 we determined to settle the Khivan question and despatched Perovski's expedition. At the same time the people of Afghanistan, on hearing of our advance, took alarm and espoused the cause of Dost Mahommed. A movement then commenced against the English. Dost Mahommed collected a considerable force, crossed the Hindu Kush, and inflicted a severe defeat on the English at the Pervanderakh[4] pass. Such a decided success struck terror into the English, and they did not know what steps to take. Dost Mahommed, however, came to their aid by voluntarily appearing in their camp. The English placed him under arrest and sent him into exile to India. This was followed by great unrest in Afghanistan, and the ferment which was started ended a year later, on the anniversary of the battle of Pervanderakh, on the 2nd November 1841 in a terrible insurrection. Many of the English Mission were killed. The Commander of the English force at Kabul, by his indecision, allowed the Afghans to surround him and was defeated. Then the[5] Chief of the Staff was invited to enter into negotiations by the Afghans, and was treacherously murdered, but the force of 4,500 men were allowed to retreat on Jellalabad. On the way the English were systematically wiped out by the Afghans in the defiles. Although the English had their revenge in the end, sending from Kandahar a force of 15,000[6] men which completely defeated the Afghans at Khurd Kabul, and sacked the capital of Kabul, yet they definitely evacuated Afghanistan. During the campaign of 1838–1842 the English losses amounted to over 30,000 men and 50,000 camels, while the cost of the expedition came to more than £10,000,000. Eventually the English were compelled to liberate Dost Mahommed, who was again placed upon the throne and reigned successfully till 1863.

Their own failures in Afghanistan and our advance in Central Asia were amongst the chief causes of the part taken by the English in the campaign of 1854-55. The English were forced to check our advance. During the campaign it became clear that we were too weak in Central Asia and could not carry out offensive operations against India.

However, in 1854, projects for an advance on India were made. Chikhacheff proposed the despatch of an expeditionary force to Astrabad, the occupation of Herat, and from thence the despatch of 30,000 men against Kandahar, Dera Ismail Khan and, eventually, Lahore. Consequently the plan was dependent for its realization on the co-operation of Persia and Afghanistan.

There was another scheme, formulated by Khrulieff, on very much the same lines.

The failures in the Sevastopol campaign compelled us to turn our attention seriously to Central Asia, and in the sixties we attained some solid successes. The English were seriously alarmed, and Sir Henry Rawlinson and Co. began to insist on interference in the affairs of Afghanistan, in the interests of peace, trade, and moral and material progress.

Rawlinson said that we were advancing by parallels on India. The line Orenburg-Irtish was the line of observation—the first parallel. The line

---

Notes in I. B.—

1 King not Amir.

2 The whole force, except two battalions, left at Kandahar, was sent.

3 Not quite correct.

4 The Parwan Dara Pass where Dost Mahommed with 200 horsemen charged two squadrons of native cavalry who bolted. As soon as the infantry came up, the Afghans were driven off the field.

5 The Envoy.

6 8,000 men from Peshawar. The Kandahar column arrived after the capture of Kabul.

of the Caspian Sea—Krasnovodsk-Amu-Daria was a line of demonstration—the second parallel. The third parallel was being opened by the Russians from Astrabad in the direction of Herat, Kandahar and Kabul. This, in his words, was the crowning of the glacis. Public opinion was so alarmed that the English Government entered into communications with Russia as to her aims and the limits of her conquests. Negotiations resulted in the determination of the Northern frontier of Afghanistan, and Prince Gortchakoff also communicated the information that the Czar considered Afghanistan to be outside the sphere of Russian influence. It would appear that the English might now have remained satisfied, but our further successes in the Khanates of Khiva and Khokand, filled the cup of bitterness to overflowing, and our rival did her utmost to urge Turkey into a war with us so as to put a stop to our further progress, for, after the Crimean campaign, England could not make up her mind to take active measures against us.

Even before the Russo-Turkish war of 1876 the detailed sketch of a plan for the invasion of India had been drawn up by Skobeleff. His proposals were:—

(1) To open negotiations with the Amir of Afghanistan, supporting these negotiations by the despatch of a Corps to Kabul.

(2) Having occupied Kabul, to enter into relations with all the discontented elements of India and to organize them.

(3) To collect a mass of irregular cavalry and to hurl it into India as Timur had done.

After the war of 1877-78, in view of the hostile attitude assumed by the English before the Congress of Berlin, Alexander II ordered a detachment under Grotenhelm to move from Petro-Alexandrovsk on the Amu-Darya to Charjui, where it was to be joined by a force from the Trans-Caspian Province. General Kauffmann was to advance through Bokhara and Samarkand on Balkh, Bamian and Kabul. General Abramoff was to move from Samarkand across the Alai range on Chitral and Kashmir; speaking generally, this was merely a demonstration, as the three columns all told only numbered 20,000 men. We wished to conclude a treaty with the Afghans, for which purpose the Mission of General Stolyetoff was sent from Tashkent to the Amir, Sher Ali Khan. The open goodwill of Afghanistan to us seriously disquieted the English, and this was one of the causes of a fresh Anglo-Afghan war. The Anglo-Indian Army, numbering 35,000, advanced into Afghanistan in three columns. The Peshawar column under Lieutenant-General Browne, 16,000 strong, advanced through the Khyber to Dakka and Jelallabad; the Afghans retreated from the Khyber without a fight.[1] The Kurram column, 6,000 strong, under General Roberts, advanced through the Kurram valley, and on the 30th[2] November, 1878, attacked the Peiwar Kotal. The attack did not succeed, and was repeated two days later when the pass was captured. The southern column under Stewart, 11,000 strong, advanced through the Bolan pass. On the 7th[3] January there was an engagement at Takht-i-Pul, and on the 8th Kandahar was occupied.

The Afghan Army suddenly disappeared. The Amir, Sher Ali Khan, our ally, evacuated Kabul, and proceeded to Mazar-i-Sharif, after transferring the reins of government to his son, Yakub Khan. Afghanistan was in a state of utter chaos, and the Afghans were torn by endless dissensions. But very soon they recovered their senses and attacked the English communications.[4] The rear of the English army was in great jeopardy. The reverses suffered in the defence of their lines of communication compelled the English to abandon their dreams of the conquest of Afghanistan, and they were forced to devote the whole of their attention to securing these communications.

Notes in I. B.—

1 One at Ali Masjid.

2 No attack took place on the 30th. The only attempt to force the Pass was the successful one of the 2nd December.

3 Not quite correct.

4 Communications were practically unmolested during first phase, except by Zakha Khel.

Fortunately for them Sher Ali Khan died in February 1879, and Yakub Khan became Amir. The new Amir did not fully understand the precarious position of the English, and hastened to conclude the treaty of Gandamuk on the 28th of May of the same year. According to this treaty (1) Afghanistan gave up to England all passes leading from India; (2) all external relations between Afghanistan and foreign powers had to be conducted through the English Government; (3) an English Resident was to be established in Kabul; (4) the Amir was assigned an annual subsidy of £60,000. Cavagnari was appointed Resident in Kabul. The people were greatly excited by the terms of the treaty, and on the[1] 30th September of that year Cavagnari and his escort were murdered.

A fresh war had to be inaugurated, and Kabul to be re-occupied. Roberts hastily collected an army and moved on the capital of Afghanistan. He was met on the way at Kushi by Yakub Khan, who begged for protection and peace. The Amir, however, was treated with scant ceremony, sent to India, and eventually removed from his throne.

Within ten miles of Kabul Roberts met the Afghan army, 7,000 strong, consisting of a badly armed militia. With a force of 5,000[2] men he routed this army at the battle of Charasiah, on the Kurram road, and on the 12th October occupied Kabul where he visited such savage reprisals on the Afghans that even the English Parliament shuddered. The Afghans were now seized with tremendous patriotism and Roberts was obliged to rapidly take refuge in the fortified camp of Sherpur, near Kabul. [3]Roberts had a force of 10,000 men and reinforcements were despatched to him, *viz.*, 12,000 from Peshawar, 9,000 *viâ* the Kurram, and 9,000 from Kandahar. But the English successes at the battle of Ghazni (? Ahmed Khel) in April, 1880, did not pacify the country, and the English were at a loss to know how they were to get out of this unpleasant dilemma. Fortunately Russia released Abdur Rahman Khan, grandson of Dost Mahommed, from her territory.

He arrived at Badakshan, where the inhabitants of the Hindu Khush proclaimed him Amir. England was only too glad to acknowledge him, and on the 5th August 1880 he was proclaimed Amir in Kabul. Roberts assisted him to strengthen his position by defeating his opponent Ayub Khan, the Governor of Herat.

The new treaty[4] of Rawalpindi was then concluded in 1880, the terms of which allowed Afghanistan a subsidy and retained for England the right of exclusive relations with Afghanistan, annulling, however, the former treaty of Gandamuk; and the English garrisons were withdrawn.

Our relations with Abdur Rahman Khan are a dark page in our history. It is humiliating, painful and bitter that we should have cherished a viper in our bosom, all the more as there was every reason to foresee that, on his accession to the throne, his policy would be such as it has actually proved to be. Even up to the present date no documents have been published with regard to our relations with Abdur Rahman Khan, and we are quite unable to impartially analyse the question without implicating Kaufmann or other persons.

I do not think that Abdur Rahman Khan personally disliked the Russians as a people; in fact, I imagine that in his heart he was absolutely indifferent to Russians and English alike. His favourite phrase is well known: "whether the dog be red or white, dog it remains all the same." In all probability he looked on both Russia and England as powerful enemies, ready to take the first suitable opportunity of possessing themselves of Afghanistan.

For the time being Russia was the stronger and more dangerous during his reign, and therefore, according to his opinion, the attitude of Afghanistan in general had to be hostile to her more aggressive neighbour, to the one who wished to traverse the country or encroach upon her liberty.

Notes in I. B.—

1 3rd.

2 3,800.

3 The correct numbers in this sentence are 7,500, 2,500, nil, and 7,500, respectively.

4 The Kabul Agreement.

It is hardly worth explaining that from the point of view of Abdur Rahman Khan this state of affairs was bound to continue until Afghanistan became strong, was possessed of a large military force, and became a civilized state. Abdur Rahman Khan considered that the one condition which would free Afghanistan from the menace of Russia would be the possession of one million trained troops. With such an army, as civilization advanced in Afghanistan, Abdur Rahman Khan would find it possible to commence the construction of railways from Kabul to the principal provincial towns at government expense and only to connect them at the last moment with the railway systems of India and Russia, thereby opening up the country to the trade and intercourse of the world.

The present Amir fully shares the ideas and opinions of his father, and, therefore, all the attempts of the Governor-General of Turkistan, General Ivanoff to establish even only commercial relations with him have so far been fruitless. The Russophobe party at Kabul is so powerful that the Amir Habibullah Khan was compelled to take under his own protection a native envoy, sent with a letter by General Ivanoff, as the Afghans present at the Durbar were anxious to put him to death.

Having confirmed my own ideas by this historical retrospect, I will now turn to Afghanistan itself, since, by its geographical position and its resources, it is likely to play a most important part in the event of a conflict with England. It seems unnecessary to explain why the lines of operation will traverse Afghanistan.

The shortest distance between Russia and India lies through this country, and the fundamental principle of strategy is, that the line of operations should be as short as possible, otherwise it necessitates too large a force for its security. This route is indeed the most convenient and the richest, as regards resources, for the conduct of military operations; consequently this route satisfies all strategical considerations. The line of advance through Persia is too roundabout, and only permits of a turning movement against Herat and Farah; the further advance on India is bound to be through Afghanistan, for Baluchistan is unsuited to operations and is devoid of railways owing to the difficult nature of the country, unproductiveness, absence of water and scanty population. This matter has been made quite clear by English expeditions and my own reconnaissances in Persian Baluchistan. An advance by the Pamirs is very circuitous, and, owing to its natural difficulty and the absence of resources, is fit for very small forces only. Therefore it is impossible to conduct extensive operations outside Afghanistan. Everyone knows this well, hence the English have always devoted their main attention to Afghanistan.

In historical confirmation of this proposition, I would point to the campaigns against India, all of which were conducted through Afghanistan, or rather over the Hindu Kush, because the present political designation of the kingdom is an outcome of the last century.

I cannot dwell on the details of the different campaigns nor do I consider it necessary, as this work has already been done by General Soboleff and others. I will only briefly sketch the characteristic features of these campaigns, because the deductions from them are very instructive and interesting for us even at the present time. Out of the twenty * great conquerors nineteen went from north-west to south-east, *i.e.*, in the very same direction as our line of operations would lie, and only the last of them, Nadir Shah, in 1735,[1] used the line of operations Seistan to Kandahar, *i.e.*, from west to east. To all these

---

* *Invasions of India through Afghanistan.*—Semiramis, twenty-third century B.C.; (2) Sesastris; (3) Cyrus, 538; (4) Darius; (5) Alexander the Great, 327 B.C.; (6) Antiochus the Great, 200 B.C.; (7) Dimetrius the Bactrian, 195 B.C.; (8) Encratides; (9) Arshak II, the Great, or Parthian Invasion; (10) The Scythians, 120 B.C.; (11) The Persian Emperor Naushirwan in the sixth century A.D.; (12) Yghuz Khan, eighth century, A.D.; (13) Sabakhtagin in the tenth century A.D.; (14) Mahmud of Ghazni, eleventh century A.D.; (15) Mahomed Guri, 1186–1195 A.D.; (16) Ghenghiz Khan in the thirteenth century; (17) Timur, 1398 A.D; (18) Abu Bakr Mirza in the fifteenth century; (19) Babar in the sixteenth century; (20) Nadir Shah the Persian in 1735.[2]

Notes in I. B.—

[1] 1737.

[2] Incomplete (*vide* Note 2) next page.

conquerors the Hindu Kush did not offer any special obstacle, and they crossed it in many directions and by many passes, not only in summer, spring and autumn, but even in the severest winter and in deep snow. (Ghenghiz Khan in the eighth century A.D., and Babar[1] in the sixteenth century.)

Having crossed the Hindu Kush, all these conquerors considered it necessary to establish a base on the line Kabul–Kandahar and to secure their lines of communication. The solution of the problem in some cases was very original. Ghenghiz Khan, for instance, literally cut off the heads of almost the whole Persian population of the provinces known at the present day as Herat and Kandahar, in order to ensure the safety of his communications. After establishing bases, preparations were commenced for the invasion of India, for which purpose the armies of the conquerors were reinforced by Afghans who were considered the finest fighting material. Simultaneously with this, emissaries were sent to India, in order to collect the necessary information, incite the turbulent races to rebellion, and make all preparations for the advent of the army.

The conquerors occupied much time in the preparations for the invasion of India, one year or even several; all this time they tried their strength in minor expeditions to the confines of the present North-West Frontier of India.

These armies of invasion varied in number from 80,000 to 200,000, and poured into the plains of India for the most part by the main passes of the Suleiman range, *i.e.*, by the Khyber, Kurram, Gomal and Bolan.

Whilst *en route* to India, most of the great conquerors had no knowledge of its strength or dimensions, and hence, after their invasion, they very soon became convinced that it was not possible to subjugate the whole country, and, if subjugated, they would have had to rule it, a task quite beyond their powers. Therefore the conquerors preferred to plunder India, to exact huge contributions from it and to leave it under its old rulers, being satisfied if it remained a vassal dependency. There was one[2] exception to all these conquerors, *viz.*, Babar in the sixteenth century A.D., a well-informed, talented and brilliant leader of men, who made the most complete preparations for all his campaigns against India, devoted all his powers to this country, and founded there the dynasty of the Great Moguls which lasted more than two centuries.

There is yet another curious side to the history of the great invasions of India. It is quite true that this is a game with figures, tinged with much mysticism, but everyone who has ever been in the east involuntarily becomes a fatalist and mystic, and I would therefore request that these lines may be read with all due allowances.

The fact is that India has been invaded by twenty great conquerors in the course of forty centuries, which makes an average interval of 200 years between each separate invasion. The last invasion of India took place in 1735,[3] and therefore it is time to expect that the historical process will be repeated during the current century, if not within the next twenty to thirty years.

On this occasion Russia will, in all probability, be selected by the will of fate to play the part of the great conqueror, as foretold by Tolstoi and other great thinkers; does not this fact, together with many others, impel one to devote serious consideration to the Indo–Afghan problem, and, if only in theory, to endeavour to arrive at the best possible solution ?

Notes in I. B.—

1 Babar crossed the Hindu Kush in August, 1504.

2 Many conquerors before Babar remained in India.

3 All Ahmad Shah's invasions are omitted. The date should be 1737, *vide* preceding page, note 1.

The Geography of the Country and its Problems.

Boundaries.

Afghanistan presents in its geographical, as in many other, relations a transitional step between Indian and Iran proper. Its frontiers are placed (Statesman's Year book, 1904) between 30° and 38° 20′ of north latitude and 60° 30′ and 74° 30′ of east longitude from Greenwich. The approximate area of the country is 215,400[1] English square miles. According to Russian information of 1891 (Brockhouse and Yefron's Encyclopædia, Vol. I) its frontiers lie in latitude 28° and 37° 15′ and in longitude 60° 55′ and 74° 45′ east from Greenwich. The difference in latitude is very large; it is explained mainly by the inaccuracy or intentional untrustworthiness of the English information regarding the Russo-Afghan frontier, as also by the changes which followed from the demarcations of the nineties on the Indian as well as the Russian frontier. Our frontier with Afghanistan is based upon the demarcations signed at Petersburg, the one on the 22nd July 1887 and the other in 1895.

The first demarcation concerns our northern frontier as far as the Amu-Darya, and for the most part the oasis of Panjdeh. The extent of the line from Zyulfikar (Zulfikar) to the Amu-Darya is 615 versts (408 miles), and of these the first 225 versts (149 miles) are fairly well watered; in fact the Murghab is a running stream the whole year round. Beyond the Murghab there are no sources of water-supply of any capacity, and, therefore, probably only the stretch of 225 versts will be suitable for the strategical deployment of our army.

So far as I know there are now hardly any frontier disputes along this portion of our frontier. The last dispute arose in 1893 in connection with the irrigation of Chaman-i-Beda, but that has been fully settled for some time. Serious misunderstandings with the Afghans over the Pamirs question arose in the nineties of the last century. The Afghans, however, are not alone to blame for them. Much of the fault attaches to us, Russians. We did not take the trouble to study scientifically the history and geography of the Kokand Khanate which had been conquered by us, and we treated this question with complete indifference. The English urged Abdurrahman Khan and the Chinese to take advantage of our neglect and to occupy several disputed portions of the Pamirs. In the hands of Abdurrahman Khan was the valuable but inconclusive agreement of 1873, which gave the widest possibility for handling the Pamirs question according to the wishes of the interested party.

Thus, by the agreement of 1873, Badakhshan and Wakhan were included in the possessions of Afghanistan. The Afghans were of opinion that Roshan and Shugnan (Shignan) were part and parcel of Badakhshan. After the affair at Samatash (Somatash) on the 24th July 1893 any arbitrary interpretation of the articles referring to the disputed tracts could not be suffered, and accordingly a demarcation was the ultimate result. By the March agreement of 1895 the Afghans evacuated the districts of Shugnan (Shignan) and Roshan that lie on the right bank of the Pyandja (Panja) and Amu-Darya, but Bokhara surrendered to Afghanistan the portion of Darwaz lying along the left bank of the Oxus. It would appear that the frontier has been finally delimitated, but, as a matter of fact, there remain in this neighbourhood many anomalies in the relations between the local tribes and the Russian authorities.

The frontier between Afghanistan and India depends principally on the treaties concluded at Kabul by Sir Mortimer Durand in 1893. By virtue of two agreements, signed by him, the frontier was determined from Chitral and the Baroghil pass to Peshawar and Koh-i-Malik-Siah. By these agreements Wakhan, Kafiristan, Asmar, Lyalpura (Lalpura) and a portion of Waziristan were finally incorporated with Afghanistan.[2] In return for this Abdurrahman Khan abandoned all claim to the railway station at New Chaman, Chagekh (Chagai), the remaining

Notes in I. B.—

1 245,000.

2 All Waziristan is inside the Durand line.

portions of Waziristan, Bulunkelia,[1] Kurram, Bajdaur (Bajur), Swat, Dir, Chitral, and the country of the Afridis. In return for all these concessions the Amir's subsidy was increased from twelve to eighteen lakhs.

The actual delimitation based on the 1893 treaties continues good to the present time. Thus, for example, in March of last year (1904) an English[2] and Afghan Commission was appointed to carry out the demarcation of the frontiers in the Momand country and in Tirah. I am unaware of its results.

The agreements of the nineties with the English have been very disadvantageous to Afghanistan. This country has been deprived of portions of real Afghan soil, which are reckoned to have a population of more than a million pure-blooded Afghans. It seems strange that such a distinguished diplomatist as Abdurrahman Khan should have thus treated a population and land which had been his for years and that too at a time when he stood out so energetically against the English over comparatively futile questions.

It seems to me that the solution of this must be sought in the following considerations. In the nineties of the last century the Afghan population of Chitral,[3] Swat and other places were wont to acknowledge the Amir of Afghanistan as little as they now acknowledge the English Government. These are mostly small kingdoms which are as hostile to the supreme power at Kabul as to that of India. They wish to have their own little Muhammadan rulers, and are ready to defend with armed forces their rights and traditions. Perhaps it was deep political calculation which led Abdurrahman Khan not to oppose the delimitation of the frontiers now in progress. It was beyond his power at that time to settle with all these petty sovereignties, and in the meantime his protest might have led to a third Anglo-Afghan war. Meanwhile the English even now have been able to do nothing with these freedom-loving races. According to the account of N. A. Aristoff they have expended up to 700 million rupees on their North-Western Frontier in the course of fifty years in wars and expeditions alone, and yet they are far from being able to say that they are masters of the country. On the contrary they have done everything possible to exasperate their subjects and have brought home to them the importance of reunion amongst themselves. The time is not far off[4] when the tribes of the North-West Frontier, like our mountaineers of the Caucasus, will become a united body. They are only in need of a spiritual chief, and, in my opinion, our proximity forces us to assist this development; thus, at least, the English are acting in Central Asia.

The fate of future history is not revealed to us, and it may be that in a not far distant future the idea of nationalism and Afghan Empire will penetrate the hearts of the Afghans; in that event the calculations of Abdurrahman Khan will be justified and the North-West Frontier will act as the main lever in the unification and future growth of Afghanistan to the confines of the Indian Ocean, which is the secret dream of all the foremost Afghan intellects.

The frontiers of Baluchistan are closely connected with the delimitation of the frontiers of India because Baluchistan is in the position of a vassal to this country.

The only place where the Persian frontier has not been definitely fixed is Seistan.[5] That dainty morsel gives no rest to the English, but, connected as it is with the policy of active defence adopted by Kitchener, the English will not hesitate from seizing it. It was not for nothing that the MacMahon Mission lingered here longer than seemliness demanded. The institution of a regular system of control of the waters in the Seistan basin was merely a stupid pretext; the real causes of that occupation are known too well to all of us.

Orography.

Four-fifths of Afghanistan are crags and mountains, wooded and barren. Amidst these there are fertile and well-watered valleys as also considerable desert tablelands, almost devoid of vegetation. The mountains are higher than those of

Notes in I.B.—

1 ? Biland Khel.

2 The British portion never got beyond Peshawar.

3 There is no Afghan population in Chitral.

4 Is very far off.

5 South of Seistan.

Switzerland and the heights decrease in a general north-east to south-west direction. In the eastern portion of the country the average elevation is 1,830 metres (6,000 feet), in the south-west 500 metres (1,640 feet).

The centre of the mountain system of Afghanistan is formed by the Hindu Kush which serves as the waterparting to the Amu-Darya and the Indus, and comprises in its eastern portion the southern outskirts of the Pamirs, known among the ancients as the Indian Caucasus or Paropamisus.[1]

The general appearance of the range is that of a tortuous crescent of great radius slightly curving away to the south. The general length of the Hindu Kush proper is 650 versts (432 miles). Its eastern portion adjoins the Himalayan system (Mustagh-Karakorum) which forms with it almost a right angle and consists of a conglomeration of strata (the Indian conglomerate), unique on the terrestrial globe, with a multitude of peaks of 25,000 feet and more. The average height of the eastern portion is some 19,000—20,000 feet and the western somewhat less.

From 74° E. longitude Greenwich westward the Hindu Kush comprises two ridges of which the northern is the line of waterparting; the southern chain[2] is ten to twenty versts (6½—13 miles) distant from the first and somewhat less in altitude.

At 69° 30′ E. the Hindu Kush forms a huge knot, the Khawak pass; across this marched Alexander the Great, Timur and others. From the Khawak subsidiary chains radiate in various directions. West of the Khawak the Hindu Kush becomes narrow and continues so as far as the Irak[3] passes where it widens considerably and forms an extremely tangled mass. The snow-line of the Hindu Kush appears to be at a height of from 14,000—16,000 feet.

The passes of the Hindu Kush attain a height of 12,000—14,000 feet[4] and more. These passes are —

(*a*) To the valley of the Indus and Chitral :—(1) Min-Teke (Mintaka), 15,420 feet; (2) Kalik (Kilik), 16,100 (15,870); (3) Yonoff, 17,100 (? Wakhjir, 16,100); (4) Gazan, 16,000; (5) Baroghil, 12,400 (12,460); (6) Khonkon (Khankon), 16,600; (7) Ishtirak, 18,900 (Sar Istaragh, 17,450); (8) Khatinza, 16,560; (9) Nuksan, 16,050; (10) Agram, 16,112 (16,630); (11) Dora, 14,800.

(*b*) To Kafiristan, and the valley of the Kabul and Kunar :—(1) Mindel (Mandal), 15,800; (2) Uaidf; (3) Khama (Kamah or Kamar Bida); (4) Katvar; (5) Kalim (? Kulam); (6) Ramgul; (7) Andjumin (Anjuman); (8) Khawak, 11,640; (9) Talor Tul (Til) (10) Shahbakh (Shahbak); (11) Perendeff or Bazarak (Parandev); (12) Arzu, 15,330; (13) Beigekh (? Bajgah), 12,300; (14) Kushan (Kaoshan), 14,340; (15) Valian (Walian), 15,160; (16) Shabdara; (17) Khabardar (Chahardar), 13,900; (18) Tawa (Tava); (19) Tadri; (20) Zak or Robat (Ak Robat); (21) Tun-Khane; (22) Shibar, 9,800.

The list of passes given above is far from complete. It is all, I may say, that is known to us of the Hindu Kush, and, with the exception of the Yonoff, Baroghil, Kalik, Min Teke, Khonkon and several others which have been reconnoitred by Yonoff, Snyesareff, Sofronski and other Russians, all remaining information is borrowed from English reconnoitrers, and much too from literature which is now somewhat old.

Apart from this even the passes reconnoitred by us, as, for instance, the Yonoff and Baroghil upon which in the nineties we based our calculations and operations, have proved now to be not altogether satisfactory, and to-day the lines of operations lead to other passes. All the prejudices in favour of this or that pass show

---

Notes in I. B.—

1 Paropamisus is usually applied to the range north of Herat.

2 The "southern chain" does not exist.

3 The Hindu Kush terminates at the Shibar Pass. The Irak pass is in the Koh-i-Baba.

4 This is true of the western section only. In the central and eastern sections the passes are from 12,000 to 19,000 feet.

that we have no exact data concerning the Hindu Kush and are groping in the dark, and, therefore, the actual conduct of operations across these passes may be fraught with disastrous consequences owing to our lack of enterprise in obtaining information about them.

The geological formation of the Hindu Kush is granite, schists, limestones and sandstones. There is but little wood in the western half of the range. The cedar, fir, pine, spruce, oak, pistachio tree, etc., grow.

Generally the Hindu Kush is so difficult that the main army will, probably, not move across it, but will prefer the more roundabout road by Herat and Kandahar. The principal obstacles to the passage of troops from the Alai valley to the Hindu Kush are to be found not only in the configuration of the ground but also in the absence in many parts of forage and fuel.

From the Khaji Kak (Hajigak) pass westwards stretches a continuation of the Hindu Kush, a range or, more truly, a knot of mountains, the Kuh-i-Babi (Koh-i-Baba), 120 versts (80 miles) long. The heights of the passes are not exactly known (9,000—10,000 feet); the highest points rise to 17,000 feet. Generally speaking, this is one of the least explored of the mountain systems of Afghanistan.

From Kui or Koi-Baba, two parallel mountain ranges branch off to the west:[1] the Sufed Koh* (Koh-i-Safed), or, Paropamisus, as it was called by the ancient geographers, and the Siah Koh.†

In the times of the Seleucids along both slopes of the Paropamisus there was a satrapy of the same name as the range with its capital at Ortopsan (Kabul). Between these ranges there lies the valley of the Heri (Hari) Rud or Herat. Besides this from Kuh-i-Baba there runs to the north-west to the Murghab the Turbend-i-Turkestan (Band-i-Turkistan) range; it gives off many branches to Mazar-i-Sharif and Maruchak. The Sufed Koh (Koh-i-Safed) and Siah Koh extend beyond the confines of Afghanistan into Persia, and serve as a link between the Himalayas and the Hindu Kush on the one side and the mountains of Elburz and the Caucasus on the other. The Siah Koh is considerably lower than the Sufed Koh.

On the east Afghanistan is bounded by the Suleiman mountains, running south to south-west; they form at first two parallel ridges and then break up, having at the river Suri twelve branches. The western portions are considerably higher than the eastern. The greatest heights of the range are situated in the northern portion. Peaks of 11,000—11,500 feet are covered with snow up to June.

There are very few transverse valleys in the Suleiman mountains. Therefore that corner is very wild, shut in, and inhabited by warlike robber tribes. Of the passes through this mountainous country the best known is the Khyber pass, length 53 kilometres (33 miles), by which the river Kabul[2] forces its way into the Punjab. Next comes the Kurram pass leading from Bannu[2] to the valley and fort of Kurram. The valley of the Kurram river is connected with Kabul by the Shutargardan pass, 11,500 feet high. Further south than Kurram are the Uzoran and Tank passes (the latter suitable for artillery).[3] In the northern portion of the Takt-i-Suleiman is the Gomal or Gulma pass from Ghazni to Dera Ismail Khan, in length 235 kilometres (146 miles); this is the great trade route from India to

* In the western portion of the Sufed Koh the passes are: (1) Kobadi (? Kashka), 7,750′; (2) Zermust (Zarmast), 7,774′; (3) Hazrat-i-Baba, 7,060′; (4) Ardevan (Ardewan), 5,250′; (5) Afzul (Afzal); (6) Sengi (Sang) Kotal; (7) Cheshme Sebz (Chashma Sabz), 2,800′; (8) Sufed; (9) Rabat-i-Shurk (?); (10) Khombau, 3,100′. The Ardevan, Cheshme and Khombau are the best passes.

† The Siah Koh range in its eastern portion is 13,000 feet high, but in its western portion considerably less. The two principal passes are: (1) the Genginisia,[4] and (2) the Maderi gorge.[5]

Notes in I. B.—

1 These two ranges are the Band-i-Baba or Paropamisus and the Band-i-Baian. The Sufed Koh is a part of the latter and the Siah Bubak of the former.

2 Incorrect

3 Non-existent.

4 Not to be found.

5 Due south of Herat.

Afghanistan. Finally there is the great pass between Quetta and Jacobabad. All these communications are well known to the English through the wars of 1839, 1842 and 1878–1880, when their columns had to traverse the country and suffer defeat, owing partly to their own mistakes and partly to the particular nature of this theatre.

It is affirmed that through the Suleiman mountains there exist as many as 300 passes, but of these very few are suited for the movement of a body of troops, even with an inconsiderable amount of transport. All the roads leading across the Suleiman mountains from east to west offer great difficulties to movement on account of the insufficiency of water, fuel, forage and supplies, and demand considerable preparation. The population is very warlike.

It is of extreme importance for us to possess an exact knowledge of the passes of the Suleiman range. All the above mentioned passes are in the hands of the English and closed by forts, and, therefore, are difficult of approach. Probably recourse must be had to roundabout routes and footpaths; practically there is no data concerning them in our geographical and military literature.

The Paropamisus and Suleiman mountains bound the Afghan tableland, which falls away from the north-east to the south-west and is cut in this direction by a whole series of mountain ridges. The greatest depression of the Afghan tableland occurs on the Persian frontier. In this neighbourhood are the Hamun lake, nearly 3,000 square kilometres (1,160 square miles) in area, and the marshy sea of Hedi-Zirrekh (Gaud-i-Zirreh).

Hydrography.

In Afghanistan the following basins are known—(1) the River Amu-Darya; (2) the River Indus; (3) Seistan; (4) the inland lake Ab-i-Stad (Ab-i-Istada). The River Amu-Darya (the Oxus of the classics, Jaikhun of the Arabs, and the Potsu of the Chinese) plays an exceptional rôle on our Afghan frontier. Its middle and lower waters were fairly well traced in the seventies by the expeditions of Zuboff, Kaulbarf, Obrucheff, Ivanoff and Stebnitzki, and in 1894 by that of Vice-Admiral Baturin.

Its upper waters became known to us in, comparatively speaking, recent years, when it was traced by our travellers on the Pamirs, though not so circumstantially as its middle waters, and thus there are still a considerable number of debatable questions relating thereto. Amongst their number the first place must be assigned to the question of the real upper waters of the river. Some consider the upper waters of the Amu-Darya to be the river Aksu flowing from the lake of Kul-i-Pamir Khurd (Chukmaktin Kul, 13,100 feet) in the Little Pamir at a height of 4,200 metres or 13,780 feet. It flows round the Pamirs, and then under the name of the Murghab traverses Roshan. The sources of the Aksu form a continuous chain of lakes along a verdant valley, in width from 2 to 5 versts ($1\frac{1}{3}$ to $3\frac{1}{3}$ miles), with many pasturages. The centre portion of the valley is 12 versts (8 miles) wide, but is entirely without any kind of vegetation. There are fords on the Bartang at Serez (Sarez), Nazar-beg (Nazir), Souk Soya, etc. At the 420th kilometre, 279th mile, from its source at Kala-i-Vamar (Kala Wamar) the river Bartang unites with the Panja. The natives and many explorers account the latter to be the main stream. The River Panja at first consists of two rivers: the Pamir and the Wakhan Darya. Each of these is considered the Upper Oxus. The Pamir river flows from the Zor-Kul (Sirikul) lake. At the kishlak * Zung the Wakhan Darya (Ab-i-Wakhan) unites with the Pamir river. From Bazai-i-Gumbaz (Bozai Gumbaz) the river Wakhan (Panja) is deep and wide; it has fords[1] only at Sarkhab and Zung. After junction with the Pamir river it is called the Panja. There is a ferry at the fortress of Kala-i-Bar-Panja (Kala Bar Panja); the width of the river here is 2 versts ($1\frac{1}{3}$ miles).

The length of the course of the Amu-Darya is 2,200 kilometres (1,270 miles). It is navigable in its middle waters (according to the explorations of Vice-Admiral Baturin in 1894) up to the mouth of the Pyandj[2] and along the latter

* A permanent resort of the nomads.

Notes in I. B.—

1 Fordable everywhere.

2 The Kokcha must be meant.

for 96 versts (64 miles) as far as Faizabad-Kala. The width of the river in its middle reaches, below the junction of the Vaksh, is about a verst (⅔ mile) and the least depth of the channel is 5 feet.

As far as the junction of the Vaksh, the Oxus runs in places through stony defiles, but below Kelif (Kilif) they cease.

The waters of the Amu-Darya are highest in August. On an average it carries 3,500 cubic metres (4,190 cubic yards) of water per second, that is, three times as little as the Volga and somewhat more than the Neva.

The crossings of the Amu-Darya from the junction of the Vaksh to Kerki are: (1) Karaul Tyubinski, one of the most convenient; the width of the river is only 1 verst (⅔ mile); (2) Takhta-Kuvat, convenient; width 300 sajens (700 yards); (3) Kubadian, width of river 1½ versts (1 mile), depth of the fairway 5–7 (?), communication between the banks very convenient; (4) Khoja Kukoldar (Khwaja Kaldar); (5) Airatam; both (4 and 5) fords at present closed, but convenient as regards locality and channel; (6) Patta-Hissar (Kesar), width of the river 1½ versts (1 mile), for boats too wide and not convenient, but good with the help of steamers and barges; (7) Kugu-Shur-ob, closed at present by the Afghans, the channel passes between sandbanks, not convenient; (8) Guzar (Chushka Guzar), width 1 verst (⅔ mile) and not convenient; the channel passes between sandbanks which lengthen the crossing, depth 1 sajen (7 feet), in the channel 3 sajens (21 feet); in spite of their inconveniences Nos. 6 and 8 crossings work well as the neighbourhood of both is fertile; (9) Kara-Kamar, not convenient, shallows existing; (10) Kelif (Kilif) one of the busiest of the crossings, width 200 sajen (470 yards), the most convenient of all the crossings; at Kelif the ferry has four boats, the others only two each; the chief trade with Bokhara passes through here; the river narrows to 167 sajens (390 yards); (11) Khoja-Salar, width 2 versts (1⅓ mile), shallows, not convenient; (12) Ak-Kum ferry, the most convenient: the river Amu narrows and the channel crosses abruptly from one bank to the other; (13) Mukri and Khotab, inconvenient.

The Amu-Darya has two sets of banks, those near the river low, the others which are outside them higher. The direction of the river's channel changes frequently, especially at high water, where the water has been shallow it attains a depth of 4–6 sajens (28–40 feet), the bank is flooded and crumbles away while in other places shallows form. The soil of the main, outer banks, is sandy, clayey and salt laden; the inundation over the low banks is very extensive. Of the affluents on the left bank, *i.e.*, from Afghanistan, to the Amu-Darya, or, more correctly, to its basin, all the rivers and streams are interesting for us not only on geographical but also on strategical grounds, because in Afghanistan, as in Persia, the rivers during the greater part of the year play the part of high-roads and not waterways, and along them pass all the lines of operations into the interior of the country; the Kokcha, Kunduz, Khulm, Balkh, Nari,[1] Andkhoi (Ab-i-Andkhui), and Murghab, these are the principal affluents. All these rivers rise in the Western Hindu Khush except the last which rises in the Paropamisus, but after a course of several hundred versts they all[2] are lost in the steppes before reaching the Amu-Darya and break up into irrigation canals. Along all these rivers pass the principal routes from the Bokhara frontier into the interior of the country.

Of all these tributaries the greatest importance for Afghanistan and for Russia attaches to the Murghab, rising in the Paropamisus in 34° North latitude. Until it issues from the mountains it runs through a narrow wooded gorge in a north-west direction, and flows past the fortifications of Bala-Murghab and Maruchak. The length of the Murghab from its source to the sands where its channel disappears is 550 versts (365 miles), of which for 220 versts (146 miles) it runs through Afghan territory. In the centre of its course the river flows in a valley, from 100 to 300 sajens (233 to 700 yards) wide, sometimes with perpendicular clayey or sandy banks. The river itself, 10–30 sajens (23–70 yards)

Notes in I. B.—

[1] ? Sar-i-pul River.

[2] The Kokcha and Kunduz join the Oxus.

wide, flows between low banks. The river is very tortuous, the water is fairly pure. Its rise commences in the middle of March and continues till June, after which it falls again. From October the level of the water rises owing to rain and snow. The depth is from ½ to 3 sajens (3½ to 21 feet), and the importance of the river for purposes of irrigation is immense. There are fords at Maruchak, Takhta-Bazar, Band-i-Nadir, Kala-Ismail and Bala-Murghab. The principal affluents of the Murghab are the rivers Kash (Kashan) and Kushk. The Kash (Babulai in Afghanistan) valley has a width of ½–1 verst (⅓–⅔ mile). The amount of water in the river varies. The water of the river Kushk is brackish and also varies in quantity; in the summer in its lower reaches there is none.

The river Hari Rud, called the Tejen (Tejend) within our and the Persian boundaries, rises in the Sidja-Koh range where it adjoins the Sufed Koh (Paropamisus). The river flows 5 versts (3⅓ miles) south of Herat,[1] being here 6 feet wide and 1 foot deep (observation of 1873). At Kusan (Kuhsan) in November 1884, General Lumsden crossed at a ford 2 feet deep. Leaving Herat it turns sharply to the north, becoming conterminous with Khorassan in Persia. At Zulfikar it passes into Russian territory. In the Herat valley the Hari Rud waters 90,000 dessiatins of country (240,000 acres) at an expenditure of about 25 cubic sajens (1,225 cubic feet) per second. From February to June the river has a capacity of 1½ cubic sajens (75 cubic feet), and in March and April 6–7 cubic sajens (300–340 cubic feet). In the summer time (3–4 months) the water evaporates and the flow ceases,[2] but water remains in places where there are springs.

From the Hari Rud the population derives everything it possibly can. The system of artificial irrigation is more highly developed here than in any other locality of Central Asia, the soil is fertile, pasturages are numerous and the climate is healthy.

The rivers are of still greater importance south of the Hindu Kush where they form the sole lines of communication, of advance, and of intercourse with India.

Of these rivers the chief rôle belongs to the Kabul Darya (River) flowing from west to east-south-east. It rises near the Unai pass at a height of 11,300 feet and discharges into the Indus at a height of 1,000 feet. The length of the river is 480 versts (320 miles), but in a straight line 367 versts (244 miles). There is a fall of 22 feet per verst (33 feet per mile).

The fall is not uniform, being dependent on the terraces which approach the river. The southern mountain chains come closer to the river than the northern. The widest places in the valley are situated on the terraces of Kabul, Jelallabad, and Peshawar. The upper reaches of the river are fordable. The Kabul Darya becomes deep on receiving the waters of the small river Logar.

Sixty versts (40 miles) from Kabul the Kabul river receives on its left bank the river Barang (Panjshir) which is formed from five streams. Thirty versts (20 miles)[3] lower down it receives on its left bank the river Alingar (Alishang, Alingar or Laghman). Thirty versts[4] lower still the river Surkhrub (Surkhab) from the Spingur range discharges into it on the right bank. Forty-five versts (30 miles) from the mouth of the Surkhrub the river Kunar or Kam flows in on the right. This has the greatest volume of water of all the affluents of the Kabul river.

Forty-five versts (30 miles) from here the velocity of the current decreases and there are many islands. From the village of Great Dakka the River Kabul flows for 50 versts (33½ miles) along a narrow bed with 32 cataracts[5] between the Khaiber and Momand mountains. It discharges its waters near the fort of Attock. At Jelallabad (there is a good ford here) the river becomes navigable[6] for rafts

---

Notes in I. B.—

1 Much wider and deeper.

2 Not true.

3 40.

4 10 miles or 15 versts.

5 No cataracts worthy of the name.

6 Navigable for light boats from Kats Muhammad Ali downwards.

and at Peshawar for boats. The river has various names according to its principal tributaries; of these the principal one is the Kam [also known as Kashkar (Kashgar) and Chitral] which has its source in the Chenab Nil (blue lake) at the very crest of the Hindu Kush, which separates its waters from those of the Amu-Darya. But this is still a matter of doubt. The length of the Kam-Kunar is 570 versts (378 miles).

The course of the Kam is very rapid; in winter there is little water, but at the time of the melting of the snows it is an impetuous and devastating torrent. In many places the river is very narrow, and there are bridges. At the village of Asman there is a waterfall. From the village of Kunar (Pushat) the river is navigable. The valley in the lower reaches is wooded.

Of the rivers of the south-eastern region mention must be made of the River Kurram whose valley was the scene of advance and theatre of operations of the English in the Anglo-Afghan war. It commences at the Shutargardan pass and the length of its course is 350 versts (232 miles) south of Kunar (? Kurram).

The River Gomal discharges at Dera Ismail Khan from the well-known Gomal pass.

The principal river of Afghanistan, the Helmand, 1,100 kilometres (683 miles) long, rises at a height of 3,070 metres (10,070 feet) in the Paghman mountains, flows in deep gorges, winds from south-west to west, and in latitude 31° falls into the Hamun lake. As far as the town of Girishk the Helmand possesses mountainous characteristics but from here it flows quietly. At Girishk the river in summer is 430 sajens (1,000 yards) wide. There are many branches, the broadest of which is 70 sajens (160 yards). There are crossings at Sendjan or Hyderabad (Haidrabad) (the[1] Yub-Khan crossing) at Girishk and at Kala-i-Bist (Kala Bist), the latter fordable. The velocity of the current is 4½ versts per hour (3 miles) and its depth 3½ feet. At the time of the melting of the snows the river causes considerable floods. It is unexplored in its upper waters. Its deepest affluent, the Arghandab, reaches the Helmand only at high water[2] and for the remainder of the time its waters are distributed over irrigation-fields. In past days the course of the Helmand was controlled by a mass of dams, but of these there remain only the ruins.

Summarizing what has been said about the rivers, we may conclude that no systematic annual observations of them have been carried out. The observations everywhere have been haphazard, except in the case of the Amu-Darya and Kabul River, and do not give an adequate picture of the hydrography; moreover, the upper waters of many rivers are absolutely unexplored. For military purposes it is not only desirable but even necessary that this void be filled. We ought to be well informed not only about the great rivers but also about the small rivers and streams. Only under these conditions is it possible to wage a mountain war. The study should be prosecuted by means of secret reconnaissances of definite districts. The best method would be to allot to the several parties the basins of the chief rivers and their affluents, and thus form a complete chain of reconnaissances.

Climate.

The climate is continental and with little exception healthy. In the summer it is overpoweringly hot, in the winter cold and frosty. Perpetual snow lies on the Hindu Kush, Koh-i-Baba, and partly on the southern portion of the Safed Koh. Systematic meteorological observations are made in the valley of the Amu-Darya and in that of the Kabul river. The climate of the latter is without sharp transitions; in winter for several weeks (2–2½ months) much snow falls and remains in the valleys 20–25 days. In the valley of the Amu the summer is terribly sultry and the winter practically without snow. In the south-western portions of the valley of the Helmand the temperature reaches 50° Celsius, 112° F. in the shade and great sand-storms occur. In the central, mountainous portion of Afghanistan (Ghazni, Hazara, and other places) the summer is cool and the winter more severe.

Notes in I.B.—

[1] Presumably this means "where Ayub Khan crossed."

[2] Incorrect.

Although there is no definite information regarding the climate of Afghanistan, still we can say positively that the climate of the northern provinces is almost precisely the same as that of our colony of Turkistan, where we have a complete cycle of observations. The climate of the southern and south-western portions of the country is very similar to that of the Kilat Khanate and of Persian Baluchistan. Information on this subject is to be found in my work (Account of a Journey in Persia and Persian Baluchistan in 1900) as also in Zarudni's writingsi and those of the English, but of course these are not systematic observations.

The best time for the advance of our troops is the spring, from the middle of February to the end of April. In the mountains of Central Afghanistan movement is easiest in summer.

Vegetation.

The vegetation of the country is very varied and in the mountain regions of Afghanistan is particularly sharply differentiated. Among the cereals cultivated by artificial irrigation the principal are: wheat, barley and djugara (? jowari). Where there is abundance of water rice is cultivated. Near the villages are many kitchen and fruit gardens and in the mountainous portions fine meadows and pasturage. There are many of the plants of commerce, such as sugarcane, tobacco and cotton, and Abdurrahman Khan interested himself greatly in their cultivation.

Animals.

The abundance of pasture produces a superabundance of stock; sheep and horned cattle are the principal wealth of Afghanistan. No less wealth is represented by camels which, in the absence not only of railways but of good pack roads, are kept in large numbers and serve as the principal means of transport for goods. In Western Afghanistan the climate is dryer, water more scanty, as also pasturage, and therefore here camels are still more numerous, particularly in the hilly tracts. The best breed of horses is in Kunduz and Badakhshan.

Population.

According to Afghan accounts quoted by Abdurrahman Khan in his autobiography, the Afghans have sprung from the Israelites. "Their name," says Abdurrahman Khan, "they have derived from the word "Afghan" in view of the fact that some of the Afghans have sprung from Afghan who was Commander-in-Chief of King Solomon and others from Jeremiah son of Saul."

The scientific researches of Elphinstone, Burnes, Yule, Temple, and Bellew permit the conclusion that the greater portion of the Afghan tribes belongs to the family of the Iran races. The word Afghan is of unknown derivation. The Eastern tribes call themselves Pashtus or Pukhtus, in India this name is transformed into Pathan.

Herodotus, Chinese, Arabian and other sources of information, confirmed by linguistic data, show that before the tenth century the Suleiman mountains were the main dwelling place of the Afghan nation, the extreme south-eastern offshoot of the Iranian family. In the eleventh century they moved on to Lagman (Laghman) (to the east of Kabul) and then spread along the Helmand and to Kabul. Not long before Babar's time they moved into the basin of the Swat and Pyanjkora (Panjkora) rivers.

Written Mussalman records of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries divide the Afghan tribes into four groups of 405 different families, springing from the sons of a mythical Afghan, or (others) Patan, or finally from Kerlaren (? Khairul Din) (Karlarni).

The first of these four groups, the Karlarni numbers 128 khels, that is clans. This group consists of the following tribes:—Afridi, Oranzai (Orakzai), Utmanzai (Utman Khel), Khattak, Wazir, etc. They occupy all the northern half of the Suleiman mountain system from the River Gomal to the Peshawar valley and the Kabul river. These tribes are the primitive Pashtu-Afghans, and in them are clearly shown the original characteristics of the Afghan race. The occupations of the Karlarnis are cattle rearing and agriculture. They live in small villages, sometimes in caves, and a considerable portion of the community is nomadic.

The Karlarnis are breaking up into small, clannish, independent communities and are ruled by assemblies of heads of families (jirgahs). The elders of the community are elected and replaced by the jirgahs; they have executive powers. In time of war the several communities and their allies elect a dictator.

The three remaining groups are regarded by ethnographists as produced from migrations at various times of the Karlarnis who received ethnic admixtures and settled in new places as independent tribes.

The second of the groups is the Gurgusht (Ghurgasht) with the tribes of Kakers (Kakars), 20,000 souls at the head. They occupy the south-western portion of the Suleiman mountains as far as the frontiers of Baluchistan. The tribes of the Gurgusht group are administered by hereditary elders and Khans who at times have exercised despotic powers. It is supposed that the Gurgusht tribes are a mixture of Karlarnis and Baluchis; hence the prevalence of the customs of the latter tribe.

The next group is the Sarban. To it belongs the Abdalli (Abdali) Durani, and probably the Yusafzai (Yusufzai) and other lesser tribes. They occupy the southern and south-western borderland of the Helmand basin from Kandahar to Herat. The Durani up to late times have been accounted the dominant tribe. They are always on a war footing. From every plough the Amir obtains a horse and soldier. They are brave and the most civilized of all the tribes. The Barakzai (300,000) is the principal tribe of the Duranis; from them have sprung the Amirs, beginning with Dost Mahommed.

To the fourth group belongs the most populous of the Afghan tribes (one million), the Ghilzai, or Khilji (Ghilji), or Gilzi. Elphinstone divides them into Turan and Burkhan and Mason[1] into western, *viz.*, Otekin (Hotak), Toki (Tokh), Tereki (Tarakai), Enderi (Andar) and eastern, *viz.*, Suleiman Khel, ruled by independent chiefs living east of Ghazni. The Ghilzais occupy the extensive area from Kabul to Khelat-i-Ghilzai. These tribes were most hostile to the English, over whom at the time of the 1878-1880 war they more than once gained substantial victories.[2]

The actual diffusion of the Afghan Pashtuns beyond the limits of the Suleiman and Safid Koh mountains commenced after the time of Ghengiz Khan, and after the extermination of the whole of the Iranian population of Western Afghanistan by the Mongols. In the sixteenth, seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century under the empire of Baber and the Persians, the Afghans spread considerably over the country. In 1747 under Ahmed Shah the Afghans achieved political empire. They Afghanised the country not only in the west but also in the east, in those valleys of the Suleiman mountains which had been peopled from olden times by Indians and Tajiks.

The Afghan nation is very diversified; its original Pukhtu blood is strongly intermixed with Indian, Iranian, Turkish and other nationalities. Nevertheless traces of more or less Pukhtu blood are retained and these external traces, *viz.*, language, social organization, manners and customs, have strongly unified the whole country.

Generally, the majority of Afghan tribes are in the clan stage of society, with a number of variations in forms, of which the two principal are the democratic clan organization of the Karlarni tribe and the despotic patriarchal organization of the western tribes.

The Afghans are of tall stature, muscular, handsome with aquiline noses, prominent cheekbones, black, rarely reddish, long bushy beards, and long hair down to the shoulders. The eastern tribes have a darker, the western a lighter skin. The Afghans are fierce, cruel, greedy, covetous, vain, blood-thirsty, fanatical and perfidious, but, on the other hand, passionate, warmly devoted to their clan, tribe and nation, and extremely hospitable. Abdurrahman Khan says that they

---

Notes in I. B.—

1 Masson.

2 When and where ?

are brave, sensible, love knowledge and culture, are devoted to freedom and independence, very desirous of reforms and enlightenment, and neither superstitious nor prejudiced against foreigners and their ideas, as, for instance, are the Hindus; many dress smartly like Europeans.

The number of inhabitants in Afghanistan, as of all other Asiatic countries, is one of the most difficult questions for all investigators. During the course of the last forty years the majority of writers have placed the population of Afghanistan at 5 millions. Abdurrahman Khan laughs at this figure and considers all these writers ignoramuses, innocently ignorant, but rash in imposing this figure on their readers. The English Statesman's Year Book for 1904 estimates the population of Afghanistan at 4 millions. A. H. Keane in 1880 assumed it to be 6,145,000, a figure, too, taken by our encyclopædias; of this number 3,520,000 go to the share of the Afghans.

One of the last explorers of Afghanistan Aristoff ("The Anglo-Indian Caucasus"), whose investigations I have principally followed in my analysis of the ethnography of the tribes, computes in the possessions of the Amir 2 [1] million Afghans, in the independent border tribes 1½ millions, in the British possessions, including Baluchistan, more than 1 million,[2] *i.e.*, altogether 4½ to 5 million Afghans.

Of the non-Afghan tribes Keane, Aristoff and others estimate that there are 3 million souls, of whom the Tajiks number 1 million. They are descendants of the original Iranian population, are agriculturists and traders, and live principally in Western Afghanistan and Badakhshan. Turks [Uzbeks (Uzbaks), Turkomans and others], numbering 500,000, predominate in Afghan Turkistan. The Hazaras and Aimaks (they inhabit the country from Ghazni to the Hari-rud on the south-west and the sources of the Murghab) number 700,000; the Kafirs, 150,000; the Kazilbashis, 150,000; and the Indian tribes who live in the towns, 300,000. There are about 200,000 Baluchis and other races.

The existing data of the population of Afghanistan is far from sufficient. No doubt the English ethnographists and our learned writer, N. A. Aristoff, have done a very great deal, but still so far we have more or less exact ethnographical data only of the Afghan population (some 2½ millions) of that portion of the country which forms part of the Indian Empire and is consequently accessible to ethnographists. Up to the present the non-Afghan population of the country presents many enigmas. Here the great conquerors passed and settled; consequently there is a very large conglomeration of nationalities which it will take some time, perhaps many generations, to classify. For us Russians this question possesses particularly lively importance because all these non-Afghan races are in juxta-position to our frontiers and we will have to reckon with these elements first of all. Add to this fact that all these races are unreliable from the Afghan point of view and then the importance of an investigation of all that pertains to them stands out in still higher relief, and I think I am not making any mistake if I say that the solution of this problem should devolve on all our educational institutions, commencing from the Academy of Science.*

The language of the Afghans, called Pushtu, has many dialects, but the two principal are the western and the eastern. In these there are roots of the Persian, Sanskrit, Arabian, and Hebrew languages, and also words of unknown origin. The writing is Arabic with modifications. The literature is of Persian origin. The national literature only began to develop in the latter half of the seventeenth century, and the cause of culture and enlightenment progressed with such difficulty

---

* During my lecture I turned to N. A. Aristoff who was present and asked him on my own behalf and others whether it would not be possible for him to continue his investigations into the non-Afghan races of the country.

Notes in I. B.—

1 Should be 2½.

2 Pathan Population.

Districts, North West Frontier Province	..	..	846,000
Agencies " " "	..	..	1,200,000
Baluchistan	..	..	234,000
		Total	2,250,000

that before the accession to the throne of Abdurrahman Khan there was no printing press, and education was held in such contempt that only thirty clerks able to read and write were to be found in the country.* At the present time the number of educated persons is estimated at many thousands. The Kabul printing press issues a multitude of books and papers, and also postage stamps, forms of bills of exchange, etc. All the towns have schools. It appears that in Kabul there are colleges for teaching various sciences and methods of education on the European system. There is also issued a semi-official gazette in Kabul.

According to law every official, mulla and other government servant must undergo a suitable examination prior to entering the government service, but as a matter of fact this law is circumvented.

The population is engaged in agriculture, stock rearing, handicrafts and trade. Of late years a portion of the inhabitants have been attracted to the newly created manufacturing industries in Kabul and other towns.

Occupations.

There are two harvests in Afghanistan: a winter-crop sown, as with us, in the autumn and harvested in the summer (the principal cereals are wheat, barley, beans and peas) and a spring-crop sown at the end of the spring and harvested in the autumn (rice, millet, maize and others). However, this is under exceptional conditions; under normal conditions there is but one harvest. The cultivation of kitchen gardens and fruit farming are secondary industries. Abdurrahman says that he introduced the cultivation of the sugarcane into Kandahar. Orange trees, bananas, etc., have been brought from India.

The Afghan by nature does not evince a leaning towards trade and industry. Therefore both local and external trade are in the hands of Tajiks, Hindus, etc. Abdurrahman used to encourage his subjects to take up trade themselves, advancing money from the State treasury, free of interest. But a $2\frac{1}{2}$ % duty was levied on imports and exports.

External trade in 1900.—The trade of Afghanistan with India was, according to *Statistical Abstract* —

	Rs.
Exports from India to Kabul	27,23,000
Imports to India from Kabul	18,70,000
Exports from India to Herat and Ghazni	42,000
Imports to India from Herat and Ghazni	71,000
Exports from India to Kandahar	23,00,000
Imports to India from Kandahar	45,26,000

According to the Statesman's Year Book for 1904 the general import into India in 1903 amounted to Rs. 46,00,000 and the exports into Afghanistan to Rs. 83,23,000.

Exports of cotton stuffs to Afghanistan were Rs. 13,75,000; indigo, dyes and colours Rs. 1,20,000; sugar and tea Rs. 3,16,000.

From Kabul to India: horses Rs. 29,000; fruit and vegetables Rs. 7,85,000; cereals, beans, peppers, Rs. 1,49,000; miscellaneous food supplies Rs. 2,89,000.

To Kandahar in 1900 were sent nearly 2,000,000 (? roubles worth) of cotton stuffs. Of the exports from Kandahar to India $\frac{3}{8}$ are wool and the remainder fruit and nuts.

The trade on our frontier, according to customs returns for 1899, consisted of:

	Roubles.
Imports to Afghanistan	981,000
Exports from Afghanistan	2,209,000

The principal articles of trade in our exports were in 1899:

	Roubles.
Flaxen and hemp fabrics	334,000
Cotton stuffs	315,000
Linen, cloths, etc.	111,000
Sugar	38,000

Besides raw silk, iron work, chinaware, etc.

* Several specialists affirm that this is an invention of Abdurrahman Khan.

Our imports from Afghanistan were:

	Roubles.
The lesser horned cattle	365,000
Wool and furs	275,000
Raw hides	241,000
Raw hides in 1898	1,040,000
Untanned hides	132,000
Fruit	109,000
Woollen carpets	93,000
Utensils, almonds, pistachios, etc.	

The question of our trade with Afghanistan is an extremely important one, and it is extremely injurious to us that up to the present we have not put our commercial relations with this country on a systematic footing. We are not rich in markets, therefore for us the increase of our external trade by a few million roubles is of real importance. For the conquest of the Persian markets we did not hesitate to make use of substantial protective subsidies, and have, in fact, increased our turn-over to a matter of 50,000,000 roubles (1904), and yet there was a time, fifty years ago, when our trade with Persia was even less than it is to-day with Afghanistan. The English, apparently, entertain serious fears of our competition in this direction, because not only do they hinder the settlement of the question, but also, as may be seen from their press, they commissioned the Dane Mission, which has just returned from Kabul, to insist on the grant of still greater privileges by demanding that the conduct of the external trade of Afghanistan should be reserved for the English and British-born Afghans.

While on the subject of the external trade of Afghanistan we cannot but touch upon that strange and striking anomaly, presented by the contradictory statements of our official and foreign summaries of this trade. For instance, in such a serious annual as the Statesman's Year Book of 1904 the trade of Afghanistan with Bokhara alone is shown at 8,000,000 roubles. It is hardly necessary to say that the statements of the English Annuals are not supported by evidence, and we may hope that those given in our summary are more accurate. In any case we ought, as a matter of principle, to enquire why in many cases the official information supplied by foreigners concerning our external trade does not coincide with Russian sources. This remark applies to a recent case on the German frontier, where the trade with Russia, according to German official sources, was shown to be considerably greater than that given in statistics published by our Customs Department. In Persia, again, the official returns of trade with Russia, published by the Persian Minister of Finance, M. Naus, considerably exceed those of our own report as issued by the Customs Department. These anomalies are inexplicable, and I really do not know whether they are due to the system or to the mistakes of the Customs Department. In any case it is much to be desired that some light should be thrown on the matter as soon as possible in our official and non-official literature.

Main Trade Routes.

(1) From Persia through Meshed to Herat.

(2) From Bokhara through Merv to Herat.

(3) From Bokhara through Kerki and Mazar-i-Sharif to Kabul.

(4) From Afghan Turkistan through Chitral to Jelallabad.

(5) From India through the Khaiber to Kabul.

(6) From India through the Gomal Pass to Ghazni.

(7) From India through the Bolan Pass and Sind Pishin to Kandahar.

For manufactures and kindred industries a very great deal was done by Abdurrahman Khan.* There is a special department of government under a secretary (the Mir Munshi) in which are collected and verified the accounts, drawn up by foreigners in the government service, of all the workshops. Here are translated into the Persian language books relating to manufacture, chemistry, physics, mathematics, and so on.

* Information as to the history of Afghan industries is taken mainly from the autobiography of Abdurrahman Khan. Several consider its statistics to be exaggerated.

Abdurrahman Khan concluded contracts with Englishmen, Hindus and other foreigners on the condition that they could give up their employment only when their pupils were in a position to carry on their work without the assistance of their masters. Thanks to this system many of the several branches of industry are now wholly in the hands of Afghans.

At first the manufacturing industry which was entirely built up in the reign of Abdurrahman Khan was solely taken up with ensuring the supply of warlike stores. Therefore at first were purchased machines for turning out cannon, rifles, and ammunition. For the erection of mills and factories there was selected in 1885 a piece of land, Alam Ganj, not far from Kabul, on the river of the same name. Here were erected buildings for machinery and in them were placed appliances for turning and drilling, instruments for casting, for striking coins, cutting machines for iron foundries, and engines of 3, 6, and 8 horse power. All these machines were purchased in Calcutta and for their service were appointed twenty-two Hindu mechanicians. The factories, as they at present exist, were organized by three English engineers, and especially by Mr. Pyne. Little by little the manufacturing industry grew, the workshops were extended and new ones erected. Thus machines were set up for the manufacture of Martini-Henry and Snider rifles and cartridges for them, also machines for boring cannon and gun barrels. A steam engine of 100-horse power with boilers, steam hammers with boilers, machines for sewing leather, preparation of gun powder, soap, candles, coining of money, and sawmills were erected and machinery was laid down for joinery. Machines were instituted for the dressing and tanning of hides, for the output of agricultural and gardening implements, and for the smelting of the ores of various metals for the purpose of casting big guns. Then followed machines for the manufacture of swords, side-arms, etc., and cartridge cases, and for loading cartridges; for the casting and manufacture of projectiles, for mortars and heavy ordnance and other machines. From year to year the supply of machines increases, as also the number of operatives, occupied in State industries in mills, factories, mines, buildings and roads. Five years ago the number of State employés in the above-mentioned categories was as much as 100,000.

In 1894, owing to the restrictions imposed by the English authorities who retained Q.-F. Hotchkiss guns ordered by Abdurrahman from abroad, the Kabul factory began itself to manufacture them from designs. Later rumour got about that they had begun to manufacture Maxim, Gardner and Gatling guns. In the last ten years electric lighting and telephones have been introduced. In the mint at Kabul a daily output of from 80,000—1,00,000 rupees can be attained. Here too are produced postage stamps and engravings.

For rifles of each pattern the Kabul workshops can produce daily up to 10,000 cartridges and, in case of necessity, twice as many. The manufacture of rifles has been organized by Mr. Kasheron [1] who served in the government factories in India. Five years ago in the factory fifteen Martini-Henry rifles could be turned out in a day. Latterly (since 1899) they have been making Lee-Metford rifles of the newest pattern. The gun factory was built and organized by an English engineer, Stuart, for which purpose were sent to Kabul huge machines, boilers and lathes, 28 feet long, and that too in spite of the absence of railways.

Besides those for military necessities there are factories for every other speciality (distilleries, tanneries, soap and candle factories, etc). There are also thriving industries which produce all sorts of articles from telescopes, range-finders for artillery, heliographs down to architectural and carpenter's work, etc.[2]

Method of government.

Turning now to the form of government and state institutions, we see that at the head of the country stands the Amir Habibulla who from an early age was trained by Abdurrahman Khan for the occupation of the throne. He is the eldest son of Abdurrahman Khan and his concubine (a Wakhan Tajik, Kabul-ma), and was born in 1872. He is of average height, very corpulent and dark. His exterior is

---

Notes in I. B.—

[1] No such person.

Notes in I. B.—

[2] All this is taken from the so-called autobiography of Abdurrahman, and is, therefore, unreliable.

pleasant, but he is afflicted with stuttering. He is neither a spendthrift nor a miser; he has eight[1] wives and one hundred boys, and generally spends half his time with the latter.[2] He rises very early at daybreak, and after breakfast he receives people, various representatives, and petitioners. Then he is occupied with State affairs with his officials. At mid-day he dines; every dish is served under lock and key. He then reposes till two o'clock, and after that discourses with his mullas and wisemen. On Thursdays Habibulla sits in the State Council, then visits the jails and schools, but he does not evince particular zeal in affairs of State. The priests possess great influence over him and he allows them in fact great freedom in religious instruction. Englishman, *e.g.*, Noyce, considers him a man of talents. In 1897 the Amir Habibulla was entrusted with the control of the State treasury, and also with the appointment and removal of military and civil officials. In addition to this he was given supreme authority over the religious and commercial assemblies, the collection of revenue and the magistrature.

In Afghanistan great power is possessed by the various Khans and families, and with these the Amir has to reckon; therefore, Abdurrahman Khan endeavoured to ally his son by matrimonial ties with the most important families of the country. Thus the eldest wife of Habibulla is a daughter of Muhammad Shah Khan, head of the Taghkab[3] tribe and a niece of General Muhammad[4] Khan, former Commander-in-Chief of the Kabul troops. The Taghkab is the principal tribe of the powerful Ghilzais. His other wives are either of very well-known families or connect Habibulla with the most important tribes. These then are the true causes of his safe accession to the throne and of his tranquil rule, an exceptional fact in the history of Afghanistan. Habibulla knows several words of English, and he has studied history, geography, mathematics, astronomy, etc., besides the subjects ordinarily taught in Muhammadan schools.

The nearest and most important assistant of Habibulla is his brother Nasrulla Khan, who, it would appear, is the successor to the throne and a year ago was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces of Afghanistan. This was the same Nasrulla Khan who was sent by Abdurrahman Khan at the end of the nineties[5] on a mission to London to conclude a treaty and to obtain various concessions. The business did not succeed; he did not make a favourable impression on the English; they deemed him an utterly incapable person; and, indeed, owing to his failure, his father was not very well disposed to him. He is, it seems, a sombre man but a strenuous worker. He was born of the same mother as Habibulla. The nation consider him cunning and passionate.

The third[6] son of Abdurrahman Khan, Omar Khan, was born in 1889; he is the offspring of a legitimate wife, and, therefore, it was thought that he would be an aspirant for the throne. Now he is so enervated that nothing is heard of him.

The form of government in Afghanistan is considered to be an absolute monarchy, hereditary in the race of Dost Mahommed since 1862. As a matter of fact the power of the Amir is very shaky; he has to be a very skilful politician and has ever to reckon with all the republics which in Afghanistan are called tribes.

Abdurrahman Khan declares that he made the first step for the introduction of constitutional rule into Afghanistan. For this he created under himself a Chamber for the consideration of military and general State questions. To this Chamber were admitted:—(1) the Sardars or the aristocracy, who hold their positions by right of birth, subject to the sovereign's ratification; (2) "Khavanin-Mulki" or National Representatives, elected from every village or town agreeably to a special classification. These elected maliks choose from their midst one man of their province or district and call him Khan or chief; he is confirmed by the Amir, provided he has the necessary qualifications; (3) Mullas

---

Notes in I. B.—

1 Four.
2 Absolutely false.
3 Tagawi. Not Ghilzais at all but Safis.
4 Amir Muhammad. He is still Commander-in-Chief.
5 1895.
6 Fourth surviving.

(spiritual representatives), they have the privilege of a seat in the Chamber after passing a special examination.* The Chamber does not as yet enjoy legislative or other powers.

All Government departments and institutions are divided into two categories, military or Nizami and civil or Mulki. Of the more important civil institutions mention must be made of the Kazan (treasury) which makes all payments. It is divided into the State treasury and the Amir's private treasury. There are branches of the treasury in all the principal provincial towns. Every province has its own budget and conducts its own operations, which at the end of the year are brought into the common total and deficits are liquidated by the Kabul treasury. The balance in the treasury is made up daily. The principal sources of revenue are :—

(1) taxes on the land and fruit gardens;
(2) customs duties on articles of import and export;
(3) post office revenue;
(4) stamp duty;
(5) revenue from the State lands;
(6) rents of Crown houses and shops;
(7) fines;
(8) confiscations;
(9) the English subsidy, 18 lakhs (18,00,000 rupees).

The total revenue is reckoned by some at 15,000,000 roubles; in 1876 it was said to be 7,000,000. That is the money budget, but taxes are paid in kind as well as in money; those in kind are delivered direct to the troops and to the Amir's household. Adding the contributions in kind, the budget may be put at 35—50 million roubles. The revenue and expenditure of the treasury are under the superintendence of the local government secretariats, the priesthood, the municipality and the chambers of commerce, as also of the secretariats of the criminal courts, customs, post offices, various offices and a general board of control. As a rule the collection of taxes gives poor results. Abdurrahman Khan said that a ¼ of the taxes is paid willingly, ¼ has to be extracted by force, ¼ sticks to someone's fingers, and ¼ the population do not know to whom to pay.

Besides the treasury establishments there are the judicial institutions and a department of public works, which has done a great deal for the country. This department has begun to erect stone buildings, and has laid out, it is rumoured, fine[1] roads from Kabul to Mazar-i-Sharif and to our frontier, as also from Kabul to Herat, and from Herat to Kandahar, Ghazni and Kabul. Roads have also been made from Kabul to the Khesaradjat (Hazarajat), from Jelallabad to Asmar and Kafiristan, and from Kabul to Peshawar through the Tang-i-Karun (Tangi Gharu defile). The last-named road was constructed in ten years and on it there worked 10,000 labourers. This road avoids the difficult mountain road between Jelallabad and Kabul. All these roads are inspected and repaired yearly. The local population is responsible for the upkeep.

There are also a medical department and a department of mines (ruby mines, *lapis lazuli*, gold, silver, copper, lead, coal, asbestos and salt). Many of these mines, particularly those at Jelallabad (ruby), are being worked. It is hardly likely that this work will be handed over to foreigners.

The post goes regularly only from Kabul to Peshawar, 285 versts (190 miles). The British mission arranged that the post should do this journey in three days. In all other directions the post is very irregular.

Armed Forces.

I now pass to the most important subject of my lecture, *viz.*, the armed forces of Afghanistan, and an appreciation of this factor from a military point of view. The subject is one of the greatest difficulty because all such information is naturally

* Several experts consider all this a fabrication of Abdurrahman Khan's.

Notes in I. B.—
[1] Not yet.

kept secret by the Afghans. Foreign annual compilations estimated the regular Afghan army in 1890 at 35,000 men, for which they were ridiculed by Abdurrahman Khan. This figure for years remained unchanged, and only quite recently, *viz.*, in 1904, have publications increased it to 44,000, including 7,000 cavalry and 360 guns. According to Russian information of the eighties (Soboleff) the strength of the Afghan regular army, which was instituted by Amir Sher Ali Khan, reached in 1878 50,000 men, comprised in 68 battalions of infantry (600 men each) and 16 regiments of cavalry (500 men each), with about 300 guns of various types, but, generally speaking, from our point of view, these were not one army but a mob, in some cases, it is true, under good control. Besides this there was the militia, numbering as much as 80,000 horse and 60,000 foot.

In the present year (1905—*Translator*) the total of the regular troops of Afghanistan is estimated, according to Russian sources, at more than 90,000 men of all arms. The latest and most reliable English investigators also are inclined to put the regular army at the same number.

As for the estimated numbers of irregular troops (militia) and armed militia, they have all the same characteristic that they are entirely the results of guess work. Abdurrahman Khan estimated that his country might consider itself secure from its neighbours only in the event of its having 1,000,000 trained men. It can be fearlessly asserted that Afghanistan cannot furnish this number of trained combatants at present and will hardly be able to do so in the immediate future.

The composition of the militia can be approximately calculated in the following manner. The adult classes, fit to bear arms, according to statistics, are placed at $\frac{1}{10}$ of the whole male population of a country. Counting only the male Afghan population we have from 125 to 150 thousand men. Adding thereto the same number for the non-Afghan population we have about 300,000. To this figure we must also add the Afghan militia of the North-West Frontier, at least a part of which, in the event of a holy war, would come to the help of their co-religionists. Military experts put the assistance from the North-West Frontier at 100,000 men. The total of the whole militia may, therefore, come to 400,000 men.

The central administration, under the Amir at Kabul, consists of several departments which superintend different branches for the administration and supply of the troops; but, as a rule, these departments are not sufficiently specialized, and they have also to deal with civil work.

The treasury concerned with the military budget is the only specialized department; into it up to the accession of Habibulla the subsidy of 1,200,000 roubles (18 lakhs—*Translator*) was paid in full.

The brother of the Amir, Nasrulla Khan, is the Commander-in-Chief of the Afghan armies and is called Sardar Salar (or Sardar). The command of the troops in the four [1] administrative provinces, into which Afghanistan is divided [Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif (Char Wilayat), Kabul, and Kandahar] is entrusted, subject to the Amir's approval, to a special commander for each province, except the Kabul province where the Commander-in-Chief himself commands.

The Regular Army consists of infantry, cavalry, artillery, engineers and troops for auxiliary purposes. The infantry or nizam is grouped into paltans, that is battalions or regiments, of 700 [2] men each, but there are four Guards regiments with an establishment of 1,000 men each; Englishmen, (*e.g.*, Chirol) and our own experts estimate that there are 80 [3] infantry regiments or battalions. The paltans take their names from the provinces from which they are drawn (the Herat, Kabul paltans, etc.) or from the tribes. The paltans are divided into companies of 100 men each, and therefore the number of companies in a regiment varies from 7 to 10. The companies are further sub-divided into two half-companies (Kambu); and half-companies into sections (paira) of six men each. The commander of a paltan is called a Colonel, the commander of a company "kiftan" (captain), and of a "paira" havaldar, that is a non-commissioned officer.

Notes in I. B.—
1 Six.
2 600.
3 112.

The mulla performs an important duty in a regiment, reading the *Quran*, instructing the men in writing and the officers in the language of regulations and in words of command.

The Afghan regular cavalry or sowari is grouped into rissalas or regiments of 400 men each, besides 3 Guards regiments with an establishment of 800 each. The regiments are sub-divided into turps (? troops—*Translator*), *i.e.*, sotnias, of 100 men each, and sotnias into half-sotnias,* and these again into sections (paira) of 6 men as in the infantry. We and the English estimate that there are 40 [1] regular and 3 Guards regiments. The horses are provided at their own expense by the soldiers and of course are exclusively stallions.

The artillery is divided into (1) jelavi or field artillery with guns drawn by six horses; (2) katiri [2] or mountain pack artillery, drawn by or carried on four horses; (3) fili [2] or heavy 9–10 pounders, drawn by horses or bullocks; and (4) gavi [2] or fortress. At the present time it is estimated that there are in Afghanistan 100 [3] batteries (top khana) of field and mountain artillery, each of 6 guns. The batteries are divided into sections of 2 guns each. In each gun detachment there are 6 gunners. The personnel of field, heavy, and fortress artillery is organized into paltans, each numbering 700—1,000 men.

There are two [4] paltans of engineering troops, safar-maina or sappers and miners, numbering 1,000 men each and organized like the infantry. The engineer companies, it would appear, are distributed by detachments in various towns.

In time of peace the regular troops of the three arms do not form any large tactical units, but in time of war detachments, variously constituted, are formed from two or more of the several arms. For the command of separate detachments and garrisons in time of peace there are generals who have constant practice [5] in the handling of the three arms in manœuvres and in expeditions for the suppression of revolts and disorders.

In time of peace the regular army is quartered in the points which are important owing to their population or on strategical grounds. On our frontier strong garrisons are maintained at Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif and Faizabad. The mass of the troops is quartered in Asmar, Jelallabad, Kabul, Ghazni and Kandahar.

To the troops of an auxiliary nature belong the non-combatants employed in offices and in the store-houses of war material, supplies and transport. All these non-combatants are mainly recruited from the Tajiks.

I find some difficulty in saying anything concerning the numbers of the militia (? under arms). In 1894 Artamonoff estimated it at 23,000.[6] It is known that the militia is sub-divided into infantry (Khassadari ?) grouped in Bairaks (banners), each of 100 men, and into horse (Surkari-Sur) [7] also grouped into sotnias (turps). From a military point of view the force is unsatisfactory; it would be more correct to call it a force of armed irregulars rather than a militia, and indeed experts describe it under the first of these names. In time of peace there are maintained small cadres of militia units which serve in frontier posts and act as police with the Governors of provinces and districts.

(*a*) *Total numbers.*

(1) Regular troops in time of peace	90,000
(2) Militia (under arms in peace)	?
(3) Reserve	?
(4) Militia or armed Irregulars	400,000
Total	500,000

* In the Badakhshan troops they are called rojdmata.

Notes in I. B.—

1 35 in all.

2 Katiri=mule, fili=elephant, gari=bullock.

3 50.

4 4.

5 No practice in manœuvres and no revolts for many years.

6 32,000 Khassadars and 2,600 Khawanin sowars.

7 Khawanin Sowars.

(*b*) *Regular troops in time of peace.*

(1) Infantry, 80 battalions (paltans).

(2) Cavalry, 40 regiments (rissala).

(3) Artillery, 100 field and mountain batteries.

(4) Engineer troops, 2 regiments (20 companies) of sappers and miners.

(*c*) *Establishments of units of the Afghan Regular Army in peace time.*

Name of unit.	Officers.		Rank and File.		Non-combatants.
	Field.	Company.	N. C. O.'s.	Other ranks.	
Infantry Battalion	2	12	66	over 600	3
Cavalry Regiment	2	12	66	over 300	18
Artillery Battery	..	1	11	92	2
Engineer Company	..	1	9	74	2

The recruitment of the army, on the system of universal liability to military service to the late Amir, has apparently not been successful, although Abdurrahman made a serious attempt in 1895 to force the assembled Khans to adopt this system. However, the question of the recruitment of the regular army and the militia infantry is fully assured, but the methods in force in the provinces and in individual tribes vary so much that one can hardly say there is any definite system.

In the province of Herat contingents of recruiting are furnished by villages or ariks in proportion to the number of inhabitants. The distribution of recruits takes place in the presence of witnesses from the population and of specially appointed officers and civil officials. The buying out (bribe) of a recruit is allowed, and therefore the liability to military service falls on the poorest classes of the population only. In the other provinces there are varieties of this system.

It is believed that military service is compulsory for all subjects with the exception of the Uzbeks who are recognized to be worthless and pay a tax in lieu. Men who are not allotted to the standing army are included in the reserve, lists of which are maintained in time of peace ; they receive a little pay or, in lieu thereof, rations in kind.[1]

The age at which men are liable to enlistment varies from 18 to 35 years, although it is placed at 21 by law. The period of service is now fixed at 18 years, which excludes the possibility of having a reserve of young men.[2]

The regular army is recruited principally from tribes of the Afghan race, and the militia from the remaining tribes who render military service. The regular troops are not quartered usually in those provinces from which they are recruited, but the militia remain in their tribal localities. The militia infantry is recruited similarly to the regular army, but the recruiting of the mounted militia is carried out under the supervision of the Khans, who are obliged to perform this duty.

The armed irregulars include all men capable of bearing arms between the ages of 16 to 70. In order to strengthen the regular army and to have a first line reserve, the late Amir in 1896 ordered that out of every 7-8 members of a family 1 recruit should be supplied to the army for a short period of training ; in return for this the recruit was given the right to take his rifle away with him to his village. The Amir Habibulla ordered that those recruits who remain in their villages should be inspected and be practised in musketry. All this information about reservists appeared in the Indian papers, but our experts declare that all this exists only on paper, and, in reality, the state of the reserve is unsatisfactory.

Officers.

The most inefficient part of the Afghan army is its corps of officers. The Amir Abdurrahman Khan complains of them in his autobiography. The army is officered (1) by men of birth ; (2) by the lower ranks, as a reward for military

Notes in I. B.—

1 No.

2 No fixed age for enlistment, and no fixed period of service.

merit or in return for special services rendered to the Government and also for long continued and faithful service; and (3) by those who pass the prescribed examination at the Military School[1] in Kabul or who go through the course at the school. These measures up to now have not furnished promising officers, and educated officers are very rare. Many of them a few years ago were scarcely able to read and write. Foreign regulations have been translated into the Afghan language. And much trouble is taken with officers and they are taught a variety of subjects, but of reliable commanders and leaders there are very few.

The officers' ranks * in the Afghan Regular Army are:—

(1) Sunakhdar[2]—the first officer's rank in the infantry.

Jemadar „ „ „ „ „ cavalry.

(2) Kiftan—the commander of an infantry company.

Rissaldar „ „ „ a turp in the cavalry.

(3) Kumadan—assistant to officer commanding regiment.

(4) Korneil—officer commanding a paltan.

(5), (6) Birgit generals who have under them two or more military units or are staff officers to the commander of the troops of a province.

(7) Naib Salar—assistant to the commander of the troops in a province.

(8) Sipah Salar—the commander of the troops in a province.

(9) Sardar-Salar—the commander-in-chief.

Promotion depends to a considerable extent on bribes. The higher commanders are appointed from the Barakzai tribe.

The regular Afghan troops in the large towns are quartered in barracks. To live in barracks is not obligatory, as there is no such thing as a mess and everyone receives a separate issue of rations or money in lieu and feeds himself.

Daily, except Fridays, there is instruction in the open. Instruction is given in musketry, marching, turning, running, bayonet exercises, piling and unpiling arms, in extended order and manœuvres with blank cartridges. Ammunition is also allowed for field firing.

The soldiers show considerable keenness. The life of the young, poverty-stricken officers differs but little from that of rank and file.

Discipline.

Discipline according to our notions does not exist. Tribal differences frequently find expression in civil war between individual regiments quartered in the same town.

The relations of the men to the junior officers are simple and familiar, but on service there is blind obedience. The expense of living and small pay lead to abuses and frequently serve to sever the reins of discipline. The punishments which obtain are imprisonment, fines and, in serious cases, capital punishment.

Besides training there is garrison duty in the towns; and the troops are employed in strengthening fortresses, constructing roads and erecting Crown buildings, and also sometimes help to collect taxes and recruits. Mutinies frequently occur[3] and their suppression serves as a good school of war for the men.

---

* Information compiled by the staff of the Turkistan Military District, Part L, 1904.

Notes in I. B.—

1 No military school as yet.

2 Subedar.

3 No.

Armament.

Since the year 1899 the Kabul workshops have been turning out annually over 3,000[1] 5-cartridge magazine rifles of English pattern. In addition to this England sent a considerable number of ·303 magazine rifles with several million cartridges for them, and, therefore, one may conclude that half the regular infantry regiments are armed to-day with magazine rifles.[2] The remainder of the regular army is armed with rifles principally of the Martini-Henry system (Hoberu ?), some manufactured locally, others imported. Similarly there are regular regiments with Snider and Lee-Metford rifles, a certain reserve of which is maintained by the Afghan Government.

The militia infantry (Khassadars) is armed mainly with percussion and other old pattern rifles, because the breech-loading rifles, with which the regular army were armed, are kept in store as it is feared to issue them to the militia.

The regular cavalry is armed with the shortened Martini-Henry rifle as well as with rifles of other systems, and also with sabres, pistols (revolver), and daggers.

The militia cavalryman (khavalsar)[3] has to furnish a complete equipment for himself (flintlock-gun, sabre, pistol). In some cases the flintlock-gun is replaced by a percussion or even by a breech-loading rifle.

The material of the artillery has undergone the same metamorphoses as the small arms, and, therefore, there is no uniformity of armament. It would appear that the Afghan Government wished to acquire a universal pattern at least for the mountain artillery. Therefore in 1903 there were sent out to it from Essen to Peshawar 12 Q.-F. mountain and 18 field guns, and 2 howitzers[4] with a sufficient quantity of ammunition. With this consignment were also despatched a great number of steel blocks cast in Germany[5] from which the Kabul factory was to manufacture Q.-F. mountain ordnance according to designs that had been supplied. But the English, owing to distrust of Afghanistan, up to the present have not allowed the consignment to pass through; consequently the Afghans have no Q.-F. artillery. For the armament of the regular army there are guns which load at the breech called Dumbalia-Nur,[6] manufactured in Kabul workshops according to designs sent from England.

(*a*) The Yak Cobbs[7] (?) system: 3 and 4-pounder mountain and 13-pounder field howitzers, drawn by 10 horses. One trunnion underneath the guns. elevating screw, breech block, vent along the axis of the gun. The body of the gun consists of a muzzle portion with a jacket screwed on to it.

(*b*) The Pana-pur[8] system: 1-pounder mountain, 3-pounder mountain and field and 6-pounder field; wedge breech-block. Fortress guns are for the most part smooth-bore, but some are also rifled. Thus at Kabul there are 6 fortress guns of 10-inch calibre. They are mounted on platforms and move on rails. In Herat and Deh Dadi (?) there are similar guns.

All B. L. guns are supplied with fixed ammunition. The 6 and 13-pounder field are believed to have case shot. The carriages are made of iron.

Finally, there are the following M. L. guns of earlier manufacture:—

The Dakhan Pur[9] system consisting of 3 and 4-pounder mountain guns, 6-pounder field and 9—10-pounder heavy; the Cobbs-pach (?) [10]system (screw) 3 and 4-pounder mountain. For convenience of transport the gun is divided into 3 parts.

Notes in I. B.—

1 No. Perhaps a total of 5,000 L. M. and Mannlicher up to the end of 1905.
2 Not yet.
3 Khawanin Sowar.
4 30 field or mountain guns and 6 howitzers.
5 England.
6 Dumbal-pur means "breech-loading."
7 Yakgabza " "one-handle."
8 Fana-pur " "wedge-loading."
9 Dahan-pur " "muzzle-loading."
10 Qabza pech " "screw."

All these guns of both systems are rifled and have 3 groves. The second system has elevating screws, and the first has elevating quoins.

With the muzzle-loading guns are used cast-iron shrapnel with a time fuze in the apex of the shell. All breech-loading guns are supplied with fixed ammunition. Cast iron shrapnel with base time fuze. Besides these there are single-barrelled (120 shots per minute) and double-barrelled machine guns.[1]

There are three arsenals in the country. The chief one is at Kabul, next comes one at Herat (for the repair of guns and manufacture of small arms), and Mazar-i-Sharif (for the repair of guns and small arms).

Of powder factories it would appear that there are two, *viz.* :— at Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif. Latterly in Kabul smokeless powder has been manufactured. In the Kabul ordnance and small arm factories there were at work 4–5 years ago as many as 3,500 men, under the supervision of Englishmen and of 100 Indian foremen.

The dress of the regular army (officers and soldiers) is on some system, but it is exceedingly complex and difficult to describe. Uniform is only worn on duty ; at other times all wear plain clothes which are their private property. For the government uniform a deduction is made from the men's pay. Accoutrements are also State property.

[2]Infantry and sappers carry in time of peace a cartridge pouch containing 30 cartridges across the shoulder, in time of war this is increased by three wallets on the belt holding 12 cartridges each, that is in all 66 cartridges.

Every infantryman has with him a bag for bread with a 3-day ration and a tin flask for water.

The sappers carry a spade and axe. Shovels are carried in the transport.

The pay[3] of the regular troops in the various provinces is not the same. The scale of monthly pay, it would seem, depends upon the cost of living in the several provinces, *e.g.* —

The Province of Herat.

	Infantry.	Artillery.	Cavalry.
	Rs.	*Rs.*	*Rs.*
Sepoys	4	..	8
Havaldar	5·60	..	12
Sunadar	8	9·60	16
Kiftan	14	..	16
Kumaindan	36	..	24
Colonel	60	..	..
Birgid	120	..	..
Garneil	160	..	..
Naib Salar	..	..	..
Sipah Salar	400	..	..

Mazar-i-Sharif.

	Infantry.	Artillery.	Cavalry.
	Rs.	*Rs.*	*Rs.*
Sepoys	5·20	5—85	13
Havaldar	6·50	8—25	..
Sunadar	14·95	..	39
Kiftan	22·75	39	52
Kumaindan	58·50	..	..
Colonel	71·50	..	130
Birgid	130	..	..
Garneil	38	..	..
Naib Salar	650	..	..
Sipah Salar	975	..	..

For an infantry soldier to maintain himself and his family on roubles 5 kopecks 20 (10*s.* 10*d.*) and for a cavalry soldier on roubles 13 (27*s.* 1*d.*) is a matter of great difficulty, if not an impossibility, especially with the system of fines that obtains, and this is one of the principal causes of insubordination among the troops. The pay of a company officer, *viz.*, 8 to 14 rupees in the infantry and 16 to 52 rupees in the cavalry, compels officers to fine and to take bribes from the lower ranks and, while on detachment, even from the inhabitants. The Kandahar province, Hazaristan and several other districts assist the recruits[4] drawn from them in kind and money. The pay of the militia is even less than that of the regular troops.

Notes in I. B.—
[1] Not true.
[2] No.
[3] All incorrect.
[4] No.

Pack transport is the only kind that exists. In every paltan 100 pack horses are allowed. Thus to every 5-6 men there is one pack horse.* However, there are regiments in which there are no pack horses, and in such cases for the movements of the battalions pack animals are furnished by the population according to a fixed scale. In the cavalry pack transport is not kept up by the State, and only pack horses are provided privately, on a scale of 1 horse to 7 men. In the artillery 1 pack horse is allowed per gun (6 men).

By way of precaution Abdurrahman Khan instituted a general army reserve of transport. Up to quite recently this consisted of 24,000 Government horses, a large number of elephants and mules, and about 60,000 camels. In[1] Kabul there is a stud farm with 2,000 brood-mares and 80 stallions. There are several horses of pure English and Arabian blood. There are also stud-farms in other places.

Commissariat supplies.

The commissariat arrangements for the troops in time of peace do not present any particular difficulties, for the troops are responsible for their own supply of food.

For the supplies levied by the troops receipts are given and these are presented for payment at the time of the collection of taxes. These receipts then go to the audit department. In some cases the inhabitants have to provide at their own expense food for the troops.

In time of war special reserves and magazines are established which are used in time of peace for purposes of turnover and sometimes also for the regulation of prices; they thus exercise political influence. The largest and most important depôts are in Kabul, Herat, and Shadian.[2]

Fortresses and fortifications.

The next subject to be dealt with is the question of the fortifications of Afghanistan with which we, Russians, will have to reckon first of all in the case of an offensive campaign. We ought to be well acquainted with the Afghan fortresses; otherwise we run the risk of losing much precious time over them; and in modern warfare the question of time is no less important than that of money.

The whole of the defence of Afghanistan is based on the national physical attributes of the central portion of the country, namely on the triangle, whose apex is situated in Herat, whose sides are the Hindu Khush and Herat-Kandahar, and whose gorge is the inaccessible Suleiman range. The three sides of this triangle are bordered by plains, *viz.*, the Turkistan, Herat and Helmand, or the glacis of which Lord Curzon is so fond of talking.

The plan of defence of Afghanistan worked out by the English consists in blocking by forts and fortifications the main entrances or roads and passes into this triangle from the northern side, in preparing within it a whole series of advanced guard and rear-guard positions, and finally in closing by means of forts along the rear face the exit from the triangle on to the plains of India. The left glacis, an open plain, will serve for the offensive movements of the Afghan-Anglo Indian troops.

Public opinion considers Herat the strongest fortress of Afghanistan. Although this opinion is out of date, for the fortress of Deh Dadi is a more serious obstacle than Herat, still the plan and strength of the latter may be considered first, as this fortress lies on the probable line of advance of our main army.

Herat, as being the most important strategical position in Central Asia, has been considered the key to India from ancient times. It is situated on the frontier of two powers and is linked by trade routes with all the large towns. The capture of this town by Alexander the Great, Ghengiz Khan, Timur, Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah was accounted the principal step for the conquest of India. If to-day Herat is not the key, still it is the door, because through it pass the principal and easiest routes to India. As long as this door is in the hands

---

* This is for the personal effects of the soldier, but for Government property special horses are allowed.

Notes in I. B.—

1 Exaggerated. There is no regimental transport, and there is not more than 2,000 ponies, 1,000 camels and 20 elephants in reserve at Kabul.

2 Not known.

of the Anglo-Afghans, so long will all other operations on Kabul be of little importance because the rear is in danger. Hence Rawlinson, Vambery and MacGregor always insisted that Herat should be occupied by Anglo-Indian troops.

The English are particularly anxious about the fortification of Herat, and, therefore, many English engineers have submitted projects for building and rebuilding the fortress.

The plan drawn up by Major Sanders in 1840 is more particularly well known. In 1880 the English, who have always been advisers of the Afghans but have never been the executive controllers of their proposals, succeeded in inducing the Afghans to carry out some reconstruction of the fortress. This reconstruction was limited to filling in the small, old ditch and to excavating a new deep and wide ditch in front of the old one; a second tier of rifle and gun defence was constructed and also ravelins of European profile on the four faces. The front of the western and northern faces was levelled.

In 1884[1] the English proposed to construct a girdle of forts, but this proposal was declined; the heights, however, of Tali Bengiya[2] and Mossuda were mined. Thus it appears there are even now no forts, although in 1903 and 1904 some sort of new fortifications were erected. Rumours were in circulation that the Dane Mission succeeded in persuading the Afghans into building the girdle of forts.

Herat stands on an artificial mound from 40—60 feet in height. In shape it is almost square: the northern and southern faces are each 570 sajens (1,330 yards) and eastern and western faces each 575 sajens (1,342 yards) in length, measured along the main rampart. The area of the town is more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ square versts ($\frac{2}{3}$ of a square mile). The earthen rampart which forms the faces is about 50 feet high above the ground level; its thickness at the base is 280 feet. The eastern and southern faces are 5 feet higher than the others. On the top of the rampart has been erected a wall of sun-dried bricks, 25 feet in height, with a thickness at the base of 14 feet and narrowing towards the top. On the wall there is a 6-foot crenellated parapet for the protection of the infantry firing line. At the salient angles are placed round, salient bastions (burj) of brick for field guns. Between the bastions along the face of the wall are placed 100 semi-salient massive contre-forts (flanking-towers). On the outer slopes of the rampart are two faussebraies, one lower than the other, so that with the fire from the main wall there is formed a triple-tiered defence. Along the foot of the rampart there is the ditch, 16 feet deep, 21 feet wide at the bottom and 45 feet at the top. The covered way is more than 7 feet wide and the glacis which has a long slope is 4 feet in height. The ditch can be filled with water.

The fortress has five exits, and the Afghans consider these to be its weakest places; consequently, every[3] entrance is covered with a ravelin of European profile which is 50 sajens (117 yards) in front of the main rampart and is broken in the form of a lunette with faces of 30 sajens (70 yards) and flanks of 50 sajens (117 yards).

Within the centre of the fortress is the citadel in which a distinction is made betweeen the new construction and the old citadel. The latter commands the new citadel and the surrounding neighbourhood.

The works of Herat are recognized by experts as massive, with a strong natural command and with 3 or even 4 tiers of gun and rifle fire. The long faces are acknowledged to be great defects, exposed as they are to long-range enfilade fire. The walls and towers are not protected by earthen embankments; there are no caponiers in the ditches; and there is much dead ground and cover for the attacker.

The strength of the Afghan garrison was 6,000 men in 1894, at the present time it is estimated at 10,000. The number of guns in the fortress in 1894 was reckoned at 80 of various calibres. During the last ten years some few more new

---

Notes in I. B.—

[1] 1886.

[2] Tal-i-Bhangian mound was entrenched and the Musalla, a building, was destroyed.

[3] Only the western (Irak) Gate.

[4] 7,500.

siege[1] and field guns have been sent from Kabul. There were 4,000[2] Magazine rifles in Herat in the year 1904. The reserves of supplies were very large and would last the 6,000 men of the garrison for some years. The powder factory is outside the fortress. The war reserve of money in Herat in 1901 was 200,000 roubles.

The strongest fortress in Afghanistan is said to be Deh Dadi situated 56 versts (37 miles) to the south of Termez on the Amu-Darya and 8 versts (5¼ miles) to the south-west of Mazar-i-Sharif, which is the seat of government of the province of Afghan Turkistan. This is what captain Korniloff of the General Staff writes of it who personally reconnoitred it in 1899.*

[3] "The fortress is situated," says Korniloff, "on a long declivity which descends abruptly from the foothills of the Hindu Khush northwards towards Balkh, Takhta pul (Takhti-pul) and Mazar-i-Sharif. The field of fire is excellent in every direction, even to the limits of long range artillery fire. In plan Deh Dadi presents a series of bastioned fronts, laid out on the lines of a polygon, which is more nearly a square than anything else, with sides of 300 sajens (700 yards). The defensive *enceinte* on the north front consists of two bastioned faces, with the middle bastion somewhat thrown forward. The eastern and western faces have also a bastioned trace, but the southern bastions are more strongly constructed than the northern. Finally the southern face forms a long curtain, divided in the centre by an erection which flanks the gate of the fortress.

"The fortified *enceinte* throughout nearly its entire length consists of an earthen embanked rampart with its exterior slope at a natural angle. The rampart is crowned with a crenellated parapet with loopholes for rifle-men. The northern bastions have a quite different profile. Here is a perpendicular rampart of rammed clay, perhaps revetted with brick, on which there is a parapet with open embrasures for guns. These bastions, considerably smaller than those of the southern face, are, strictly speaking, towers designed for flanking neighbouring portions of the fortified *enceinte*. In order to adapt them to the ground the Afghans have reduced their dimensions, and, on the other hand, have increased those of the southern bastions so that they project outwards to each flank and support the northern front with their fire. The breastwork is 6 feet high and the earthen rampart is four times higher; thus the average height of the profile is about 30 feet; in front of the rampart is situated the ditch which can be made a wet ditch, as local conditions are favourable, or at least could be made so, if a system of sluices were provided."

The garrison of the place consisted in the year 1899 of 4 battalions of infantry, and the artillery armament of 21 guns, but it is now considerably more.

"The strong features of the fortress," says Korniloff, "are the absolute command of the works over all the country lying in front of the most threatened faces, the solidity and thickness of the earthern rampart, the possibility of developing from the works of the northern face, supported by the southern bastions, a strong frontal gun and rifle fire, and, finally, the possible, though weak, defence of the near approaches by cross fire."

Amongst the fortress' defects Korniloff places (1) the existence of the parapet which can be destroyed by the long range artillery fire of the attack, and (2) although separate portions of the *enceinte* support one another, nevertheless the fire is divergent and its concentration, particularly in firing through the closed embrasures, is possible only within extremely narrow limits.

From the year 1899 up to the present work on the construction of the fortress of Deh Dadi has been continuous, and, therefore, it is supposed that here we will meet with wet ditches, with flanking defences, provided by casemated caponiers and demi-caponiers, with traverses on those faces which are exposed to enfilade fire, and, finally, with advanced forts and batteries.

---

* Information relating to the country conterminous with the Turkistan Military District, published by the Staff of the Turkistan Military District, Vol. XLVII, 1903, No. 11.

Notes in I. B.—

1 No siege, but some field.

2 No Magazine rifles.

3 This is the first detailed description we have ever received of Deh Dadi.

Besides Herat and Deh Dadi, the strongest of the Afghan fortresses, there must be enumerated some other fortified points, *e.g.*, Maruchak, Bala-Murghab, Kala-i-Nau (Kala Nao), Gurian (Ghurian), Sebzevar (Sabzawar), which, so to speak, cover the fortress of Herat from the north, west and south, but do not deserve any special attention.

Maruchak (Kala Maruchak), the nearest fortification to our frontier, is rectangular in shape. Height of the *enceinte* 3 sajens (21 feet), ditch 10 arshins (23⅓ feet) wide, 10½ arshins (24½ feet) deep. Citadel on a mound, 3 sajens (21 feet) high, springs within the fortress. Garrison, 100 infantry.

Bala-Murghab, 33 versts (22 miles) above Maruchak on the right bank of the Murghab. The fortification is in the form of a square of sides of 35 sajens (82 yards). The wall of the fortification is of brick, is 2 sajens (14 feet) high, and has a double tier of rifle fire. The mound is surrounded by a ditch, and, in addition, the approaches from the west, north and south are protected by a stream that runs by. Garrison, 1 company of infantry.

Kala-i-Nau (Kala Nao), wall of dried clay, 2 sajens (14 feet) high. The whole defence lies in its massive round towers. Garrison, 1 company and 1 sotnia (squadron of 100 men).

Gurian (Ghurian), 62 versts (41 miles) west of Herat. A regular square with equal sides of 135 sajens (315 yards). The walls of rammed clay have a double ditch. Garrison, 1 battalion infantry, 2 sotnias (squadrons) Militia and 4 guns.

Sebsewar (Sabzawar), 110 versts (73 miles) from Herat. Sebsevar stands on an elevation commanding the Adraskan valley. Fortified area; northern face 260 paces [1] (200 yards), eastern 211 paces [1] (160 yards). In the centre there is a citadel. Garrison, Militia.

All the fortifications enumerated above are in need of extensive repairs.

Outlying works on one flank of the fortress of Deh Dadi are provided by the fortress of Taktapul,[2] 8 versts to the north-west of Mazar-i-Sharif. It is square in shape, with rammed clay, perpendicular walls about 3 sajens (21 feet) high; on each face of the square there are 12 towers. The defence is confined to rifle fire.

The crossing of the Amu-Darya at Chushka-Guzar is closed by a recently constructed fortification, the blockhouse Shor Tepe (Shor Tapa), a square with sides 90 paces (70 yards) long. Walls of rammed clay, 6½ arshins (15 feet) high and not less than 1½ arshins (3½ feet) thick. I do not know the actual depth of the ditch. Garrison, 100 men.

The fortifications of Maimene (Maimana) have apparently been razed.

Besides all the fortifications described above, it must be remembered that in Afghanistan every inhabited point is fortified (qila). But the fortifications are of puddled clay, and against an attacker provided with mountain or field artillery they cannot offer much resistance. The fortress [3] of Faizabad is of more importance, as also are the fortifications along the river Panja. Apparently the Afghans intend to convert Faizabad into as strong a fortress as Deh Dadi, for this neighbourhood strategically is most important. There are no details of the fortress of Faizabad. It is known [4] that important works are in progress here, and we must be ready for all eventualities.

As regards fortresses in Southern Afghanistan, up to the present there is nothing at all like Deh Dadi and Herat. There are many fortified points of an Asiatic type and that is for the present the limit of fortifications in this quarter. However, in last year's Pioneer Mail the information was allowed to appear that the Amir is engaged in examining a project for an entrenched camp at Dakka and Islamabad [5] between Kandahar and New Chaman.

Notes in I. B.

1 A Russian pace=28 inches.

2 In ruins.

3 An open cantonment.

4 Not to us.

5 Islamabad is the official name of Baldak Fort.

Lines of operations.

The approaches from Russia to India or routes of advance or lines of communication may be classified into 4 groups:—

(1) Routes from the Trans-Caspian Province to Herat, Kandahar and Quetta.

(2) From the Amu-Darya (Samarkand) to Mazar-i-Sharif, Kabul and Peshawar.

(3) From the Amu-Darya *viâ* Faizabad, Zebak to Chitral or to the River Indus, avoiding the Khaibar Pass.

(4) Routes from the Alai valley across the Pamir to the banks of the Indus and thence to Kashmir.

First Group.

From our Frontier to Herat.

On our frontier there are two strategical points of possible concentration of troops: (1) [1] Ak Rabat (Ak Robat) and (2) the Kushk post.

From Ak Rabat there are two roads to Herat, one the western, across the Khombou (Khombao) Pass, and the other across the Sebz (Chashma Sabz) Pass, 20 versts (13¼ [2] miles) to the east of the first.

The road across the Khomb or Khombau pass is fit for artillery and wheeled traffic.[3] The ascent to the pass is not difficult. Its height is 3,100 [4] feet. The descent from the pass is easier than the ascent. The approximate length of the road is 219½ versts (7 marches) (145½ miles); the marches average 30 to 45 versts (20—30 miles).

From Robat to Herat across the Sebz is 201 versts (133¼ miles), the height of the pass is 2,800 feet.[5] The ascent and descent are easy. Altogether 8 or 7 marches. The road is fit for wheeled transport. This route is better supplied with water than the first mentioned.

From the Kushk post to Herat the two best known routes are: (1) across the Hazrat-i-Baba Pass and (2) across the Ardevan (Ardewan) Pass. The first route is 137 versts (91 [6] miles) long or 6 marches of from 20—28 versts (13¼—19 miles) each, but wheeled traffic, without preparation of the road, is impossible. Troops will be more or less assured of a supply of fuel, water and forage. The pass is easy.

The second route of 114 versts (75 miles [7]), 6 marches, is the shortest to Herat, marches 12—26 versts (8—17¼ miles). The roads are very well adapted for wheels. The road over the easy Ardevan Pass stretches for 12 versts (8 miles) along a narrow corridor; here it is in need of preparation for wheeled traffic. There is a sufficiency of water as also of forage but there is a dearth of fuel. The roads across the Ardevan should play a great rôle in the Herat operations.

From the Kushk Post there is a road *viâ* the Sebz Pass, 209 versts (138⅔ miles) long.

From the Trans-Caspian Province to Herat there is a circuitous road from Takhta Bazar *viâ* Kala-i-Nau (Kala Nao), the Zermust (Zarmast) Pass, and Kurrukh (Karokh), 222 versts (147 miles [8]) long or 8 marches. For wheeled transport it is unfitted, but, on the other hand, the road is quite suitable for a small mounted detachment. In the spring there is a plentiful supply of grazing.

Notes in I. B.—

1 25 miles east of Zulfikar.
2 About 30.
3 Not at present, but probably the best alignment for a cart-road.
4 3,900.
5 4,840.
6 74.
7 72½.
8 184 miles by Kala Nao, and 134½ by a shorter route that does not pass through this place.

There are pack roads [1] west of the Khombau Pass but information regarding them is insufficient. The question of the reconnaissance of these passes is an urgent one.

Roads from Herat to Sebsevar (Sebsora).

From Herat to Sebsevar two roads are known: (1) *viâ* Adraskan (the Adraskand river) and (2) *viâ* the defile Sengua-Kissakh,[2] to the west of the first.

Across Adraskan, through the Shah-Bid (Robat-i-Shahbed) defile is 151 versts (100 miles[3]) or 8 marches of 12—32 versts (8—21 miles) each. The road is level and fit for wheeled traffic. The water-supply is sufficient, grazing scanty, forage procurable only at inhabited places, no fuel.

Across Sengua-Kissakh (according to Khanikoff) is 125 versts (83 miles) or 5–6 marches; the road [4] appears to have been now abandoned; commercial traffic goes across Adraskan. The ascent to the pass at Sengua is more difficult than the descent.

Roads from Sabzor and Jembran to the River Farrakh (Farad)-Rud.

From Sabzor and Jembran [5] to the Farrakh Rud two routes are also known: (1) Sabzor to the town of Farra and Jambran (2) to Doulatabad (Daulatabad).

From Sabzor to the town of Farra is 111 versts (73½ miles [6]) or four marches. The road is fit for wheeled transport. The neighbourhood of the road is fairly well cultivated, populous, and consequently well provided with water.

From Jembran to Doulatabad is 125 versts (83 miles [7]), the road is fit for wheeled traffic with the exception of the march over the Katal-i-Zord (Zard) Pass. The ascent to the pass is gradual, the descent steep, but its preparation would not be difficult. The neighbouring country is deficient in population and water.

Roads from Farrakh-Rud to Girishk.

From Farra the line of operations goes to Dilaram and Girishk, and from Doulatabad *viâ* Vashir (Washir) and Girishk.

The first road is 224 versts (149 miles [8]) or 6 marches. The first half of the road as far as the river Kash (Khash) Rud traverses a country in which inhabitants are to be found only at the halting places. There is a sufficiency of water and provisions, and it would seem that wheeled traffic is possible. The second portion of the route, *i.e.*, east of the river Kash-Rud, lies through a veritable desert.

The route from Doulatabad to Girishk is 258 versts (171 miles [9]) or ten marches. The first portion of the journey as far as the river Kash-Rud passes through uninhabited country. From the Kash-Rud *viâ* Vashir and Girishk the roads run through a well-populated country; forage and provisions are found in sufficient quantities. Wheeled traffic would be possible after a little preparation.

The best course would be to make simultaneous use of both these routes.

In spring and autumn the Kash-Rud offers difficulties in the matter of crossings, but in summer there is no difficulty.

Roads from Girishk to Kandahar.

The principal route from Girishk to Kandahar crosses the Kushk Nakhud, 108 versts (71½ miles [10]) or five marches. The most difficult march is the first, a waterless one of 30 versts (20 miles). The remaining marches are not difficult; the country is populous and has plenty of water. The route entails a passage of the Helmand which is easy [11] in the summer. In June the width is 430 sajens (1,000 yards); there are several branches, the widest of which is 70 sajens (160 yards); the depth is 3½ feet, the current 4½ versts (3 miles) an hour. There are fords.

Notes in I. B.—

1 Viz. Karez-Berat and Rui Khaf-Berat.
2 Not to be traced.
3 74 miles.
4 This is perhaps the road to Juwain.
5 ? Ziarat-i-Khwaja Uria.
6 88 miles.
7 67½ miles.
8 164½ miles.
9 152½ miles.
10 76½ miles
11 Extremely difficult in summer, minimum depth is 3½ feet.

The second river is the Argandab, 2½ feet deep and 17 sajens (40 yards wide. North of the Helmand-Girishk route there are two others, but they are more difficult, and south of it there is one *viâ* Bala-Khaga,[1] 121 versts (80½ miles).*

From Kandahar to Quetta is 220 versts (146 miles[2]) or 12 marches, of which seven as far as the Khoja (Khwaja) Amran range are over a road fit for wheeled traffic and require but little preparation. Beyond Chaman (fortified by the English) traffic runs over the English military road. On the first two marches water is sufficient, but on the remainder, up to Chaman, water is of indifferent quality and there is but little of it. Provisions and forage can be found only on the two first marches and within the English frontier. This road is closed by the Chaman[3] fort, which can be avoided by the road *viâ* the Gvai (? Gwazha) Pass, which lies to the west of the route described.

The route appears to have but little water, but the Spitana[4] Kotal Pass is fit for the passage of field artillery and is recognized to be the best[5] across the Koja Amran range.

The Second Group of Routes.

From the Amu-Darya to Kabul.

To Mazar-i-Sharif from the Amu-Darya routes lead from the crossings at Kerki, Kelef (Kilif) Chushka-Guzar, and Patta Hissar (Kisar):—

(1) From Kerki the route runs *viâ* Akhcha (Akcha), Balkh and Mazar-i-Sharif. Total length 227 versts (150½ miles[6]) or 10 marches. The route is suitable for wheeled traffic only. An inconsiderable amount of work would be required, *viz.*, from the well at Oglanchi to the well at Tash Kuduk (strata of sand). [7]The best route between Herat and Kandahar passes through the following places:

Herat to—	Versts. (Intermediate.)	Miles. (Intermediate.)
Ruz-i-Bagh (Rozabagh)	17	11·25
Mir Duab	9	6
Sutlan-Bekva	45	30
Koja-Ibrahim	15	10
Rabat-i-Shakh (Robat-i-Shakhbed)	18	12
Mir-Alla	18	12
Adraskan (? Adraskand River)	25	16·60
Khaja-Uriya (Zt. Khwaja Uria)	12	8
Jembran	20	13·25
Sebzor (Sebzawar)	32	21·20
Imoret	26½	17·60
Jeje	32	21·20
Kala-i-Sefid	32	21·20
Farra (Farah)	21	14
Khormalik (Khurmalak)	30	20
The river Kash (Khash)-Rud	42	28
Vashir (Washir)	36	24
Biabanak	36	24
Zirak (? K. Sadat)	24	18
Girishk	36	24
Khaki-Chonan (Khak-i-Chopan)	30	20
Kushk (River Khushk)-i-Nakhud	15	10
Khouz-i-Medat-Khan (Hauz-i-Madat)	24	16
Sinjari (Sinjiri)	21	14
Kandahar	18	12
Total—Marches 26.	634½	424·3

*The rivers on the route are for the greater part of the year so easy to cross that for any of them 70 sajens (163 yards) of bridging material will be ample.

Notes in I. B.—

1 Perhaps from Kala Bist along the right bank of the Arghandab.
2 150 miles.
3 ? Khojak position.
4 Spin Tizak, another name for the Ghwazha.
5 Not now.
6 186½.
7 Stages rather mixed.

The road is supplied with water, (admirably so) on the 1st march and from the 5th to the end of the 10th march, but from the 2nd to the 4th inclusively water is scanty, and it is necessary to take apparatus for raising it. There is sufficient fuel. Supplies and provisions are indifferent, and where these can be had little water is procurable.

(2) From Kerki the second route leads along the Amu-Darya to Kelif and thence on to Mazar-i-Sharif, in all 196 versts (130 miles) or 9 marches; consequently, the route is shorter. Wheeled traffic is quite possible; water sufficient; abundance of fuel; provisions and forage can be obtained almost everywhere.

(3) The route from Chushki-Guzar to Mazar-i-Sharif is 72 versts (48 miles [1]) long, of which the first march 32 versts (21¼ miles) runs through desert and has but little water, but afterwards the country is inhabited. This route joins the last mentioned route at the 52nd verst (35 miles). Wheeled traffic on the first march would be difficult owing to the sand.

(4) The route from Patta-Hissar (Kisar) is the shortest (to Mazar-i-Sharif), 86 versts (37 miles) or two marches. Wheeled traffic is possible. There is little water. There are practically no provisions or forage.

From Kerki routes also run to Maimene (Maimana) and Shibirkhan (Shibarghan). The first route from Kerki is 220 versts (146 miles [2]) or seven marches long, of which on the first 73 versts (48¼ miles) wells, sometimes unfit for drinking, are passed. On the concluding marches there is sufficient water. Wheeled traffic on the first 40 versts (26 miles) is difficult on account of the sand. This route is important as it is the link between the Herat and Kabul lines of operations. The second route, from Kerki to Shibirkhan, is 132 versts (88 miles [3]) long. It is fit for wheeled traffic. Water is scanty and means for raising it must be carried, as also provisions and forage.

From Mazar-i-Sharif the main road to Kabul goes through Tash-Kurgan, up to which is 62 versts (41 miles [4]) or 3 marches. The road is fit for wheeled traffic, but the surrounding country is scantily populated. It is better not to reckon on finding provisions and forage. Water can be found only at the halting-places.

From Tash-Kurgan the road goes in a southerly direction to Bamian and thence in an easterly one to Kabul. The road has a total length of 496 versts (329 [5] miles) or 20 marches. The whole of the country traversed is mountainous. The road either follows the narrow gorges of the rivers Khulm, Gorbend (Ghorband), and the tributaries of the latter, or, leaving the narrow valleys, runs across passes. It is reckoned that on this route are 12 [6] important passes, there are 2 on the sixth march from the village Khurram to that of Rui (Chambarak, 1st and 2nd passes); the ascent to the 2nd Chambarak pass is very difficult. There are also 2 on the 8th march from the village of Doab (Doab-i-Shah Pasand), to the settlement of Maduri (Madar), *viz.*, the Kizil-Kutal and especially the Kara-Kutal (Kara) passes, both rocky and almost the most difficult of all the passes on the whole march to Kabul. On the 18th march near Bamian there are 3 passes, *viz.*, the Ak-Rabat (Ak-Robat), Pelu (Palu), and Cheshme Pelu. On each of the 10th, 14th, 15th, 17th, and 19th marches there is 1 pass.

All these passes are more than 9,000 feet high and attain 13,000 feet on the 10th march across the Great Irak [7] pass [the ascent is steep and 1½ versts (1 mile) long]. Wheeled transport could not pass along this road 15 years ago; field artillery could be hauled with great difficulty. Water is everywhere good and abundant. There are many inhabited localities. Provisions and dry forage are procurable, but there is no grazing. The best time for movement is summer, from the beginning of June to the beginning of September. Rivers are fordable in the summer on this route. There are many defensible positions favourable for the Afghans. The total length

---

Notes in I. B.—

1 55½.
2 152½.
3 96.
4 32.
5 319½ or 28 marches.
6 14 passes in all.
7 The road now crosses the Hajigak Pass, 12,000 feet and not the Irak.

of the road from the banks of the Amu-Darya to Kabul (Termez, Mazar-i-Sharif, Bamian, Kabul) is 118 [*sic*] versts (78 [1]miles) (? 1,110 versts or 736 miles). For the first 614 versts (407 [2] miles) the route lies along a plain and is fit for wheeled traffic. The remaining 496 versts (329 [3] miles) to Kabul is a difficult pack road, but, on the other hand, the supply of water and provisions is amply secured. Resistance on this line of advance would be stubborn. In the last ten years the route has been much [4] improved and along it passed the artillery which now forms its armament to the fortress of Deh Dadi. But there is no precise information available with reference to its present condition. Besides this route, McGregor, who was Chief of the Staff of the Indian Army, quotes another route from Mazar-i-Sharif southwards *viâ* Dar-i-Yussuf (Dara Yussuf), Valishan (Walishan), Bend-i-Chor-Osman (Chahar Usman), the Katal-Muglak (Baghlak) Pass across the crest of the Kin-i-Baba which debouches on the aforementioned road at Gardan Diwar (Gardan Diwal). The information given by McGregor is very incomplete and inexact; the total length of the route is 431 versts (286 [5] miles) or 20 marches, that is, 127 versts (84 miles) shorter than the Bamian route, but the nature of the road is unknown; it traverses a country mainly inhabited by Khezaritz (Hazaras).

The routes joining Mazar-i-Sharif to Herat are those *viâ* the towns of Balkh [6] (4,000 houses), Shibirkhan (Shibargan), Maimene (Maimana), and Kala-Nou (Kala Nao), but to Shibirkhan there is also another, more southerly, route which does not pass through Balkh and Akhcha and is therefore shorter than the first.

Along the first route through Akhcha it is 136 versts (90 miles) to Shibirkhan and 185 versts (123 miles) to Sar-i-Pul, or 9 marches. The route is fit for wheeled traffic, inhabited, and has water, but the climate is unhealthy.

The second, the direct route to Sar-i-Pul through Shibirkhan, is in all 137 versts (91 [7] miles), but the country is scantily populated and waterless. From Sar-i-Pul to Maimene is 126 versts (83½ [8] miles) or 6 marches. The route is difficult and requires work in places; water sufficient; country little populated.

From Maimene to Bala-Murgab is 161 versts (107 [9]miles) or 8 marches. There is an insufficiency of water, fuel and provisions, but forage is good when in season.

From Bala-Murgab to Herat is 274 versts (182 miles) or 13 marches. The route is fit for wheeled traffic only along the river Murgab to Maruchak and further to Tash-Kepri and the Kushk Post, but the shortest route to Herat from Bala-Murgab, *viz.*, through Kala Nou (Nau) and Zirmust (Zarmast) 228 versts (151 [10] miles) is probably not fit for wheeled traffic.

The total length of the route from Mazar-i-Sharif to Herat is 774 versts (491 [11] miles) or 36 marches. For wheeled traffic it must be prepared from Sar-i-Pul to Garshambe (? Chahar-Shamba), 202 versts (135 miles). The rest of the road is quite suited for wheeled traffic.

From Kandahar to Kabul the route runs through Kala-i-Gilzai (Kalat-i-Ghilzai) and Gazni (Ghazni).

From Kandahar to Kala-i-Gilzai there are 3 routes: (1) along the Argandab (Arghandab) valley through Jamadin, Selim, Maidan, 154½ versts (101½ miles) or 7 marches; (2) along the Argastan valley through Mundi (Mandi), Hissar, Nogul-Khel, 183 versts (121 miles) or 8 marches, and (3) along the Tarnak valley, 132 versts (88 [12] miles) or 7 marches.

Notes in I. B.—
1 355½.
2 68.
3 287½.
4 Very little.
5 326½.
6 Ruins.
7 114½.
8 117½.
9 91½.
10 14?.
11 400¾.
12 97.

The Tarnak route is the middle one of the two above mentioned. This Tarnak route is the most convenient, for the country is level and fit even for siege artillery. There is plenty of water and a sufficiency of provisions and forage. From Kala-i-Gilzai to Gazni is 11 marches or 216 versts (143 [1] miles) and from Gazni to Kabul another 6 marches or 126 versts (84 [2] miles). The country is partly hilly, partly level, and there is plenty of water.

The whole journey from Kandahar to Kabul is 474 versts (292 [3] miles) or 23 marches. There are no particular physical obstacles, while there is much water and there will be no want of fuel, forage, and grazing. A force of 20,000, as proved by the Anglo-Afghan wars, can live exclusively on the country if it organizes before hand an adequate system of supply.

This route is accounted the best in Central Asia.

Generally speaking, all the routes mentioned under the 1st and 2nd groups are now in better condition than I have described them. There is information of some important work having been done on several of the routes enumerated.

The Third Group.

Roads from Samarkand to Faizabad and the Chitral Valley.

From Samarkand a road leads across one of the passes of the Hissar Range through Karatag, Hissar, Kafirnigan, (Kafir Nihang), Kuliab (Kulab), Faizabad and Zebak to Chitral.

In the Bokharan Khanate the road is mountainous and for wheeled transport almost impracticable, but, on the other hand, it traverses very populous country, well provided with water and supplies. The passage across the Amu-Darya is at the so-called Chubek crossings. From the crossing the road goes to Faizabad by the valley of the Kokcha river. The road is good and convenient, and the surrounding country is well inhabited. The length is 126 versts (83¼ [4] miles). From Faizabad to Zebak is 90 versts (60 [5] miles) of very difficult road, but the country is rich [6] and supplied with every necessity.

From Zebak it is possible to move direct on Chitral across the Dora, Agram or Khatinza Pass. Ten years ago these passes were considered almost inaccessible, and, therefore, it was proposed to move troops along the circuitous route *viâ* Ishkashim (Ishkasham) and the valley of the River Pyandj (Panja). To-day it is considered possible to carry on operations straight across the aforementioned passes, selecting the one considered best according to the time of year. The length of the route from Zebak to Chitral is less than 150 versts (100 [7] miles). The total journey from the Amu-Darya to Chitral is 366 versts (242 [8] miles).

There is a roundabout route from Zebak to Ishkashim and thence along the Pyandj (Panja) to Sarkhad (Sarhad). It passes through an inhabited country, but the road is a difficult one for pack animals. It debouches on to the Barogil (Baroghil) Pass which is open all the year round and is most convenient. But further on along the River Yarkhun to Chitral in summer (4 months) movement is out of the question on account of the high level of the waters of the Chitral—a very deep and turbulent river. In all the distance from the Amu-Darya to the Barogil pass is 510 versts (308 [9] miles).

From Samarkand one can march to Faizabad *viâ* Karshi, Kelif (Kilif), Mazar-i-Sharif, Kunduz and Faizabad. But on this route there is a waterless stretch of 70 versts (46½ [10] miles), *viz.*, from Tash-Kurgan to Kunduz. From Kunduz to Faizabad is 145 versts (96 [11] miles).

Notes in I. B.—
1 154.
2 89.
3 310.
4 Hazarat Imam-Faizabad, 91 miles.
5 94.
6 No.
7 92½.
8 278½.
9 Zebak to the Baroghil, 150.
10 70.
11 120.

Fourth Group.

Route from the valley of Alai to the valley of the river Indus (Pamirs).

The best route from the valley of the Alai is *viâ* the Kizil-Art Pass, Ak-Baital, Pamirski Post, Kizil-Belès Pass, Benk [1] Pass, and thence *viâ* the Kallik (Kalik), Men-Teke (Mintaka), or other passes. From Alai to the Hindu Kush is 500 versts (330 miles), from the Hindu Kush to the Indus 180 (120)[2]. Grazing is very limited and in places non-existent.

The passes are easy of access and quite fit for pack transport. The preparation of this road for wheeled traffic does not offer any particular difficulty.[3]

CONCLUSION.

A consideration of the strength and resources of Afghanistan leads to the conclusion that this country is of itself a formidable opponent with whom we shall have to reckon very seriously. After being reinforced by the Anglo-Indian forces, Afghanistan will compel us to put forth our whole strength and concentrate an immense army on its frontiers. In this connection it is interesting to glance at the existing plans of the English for the defence of India, for they are intimately connected with the Afghan theatre of operations.

The Defence of India.

A defence may be either passive or active, and for the last 30 years a controversy has been in progress amongst the English between the supporters of both plans. The supporters of passive defence include such authorities on Afghanistan as [4] Lord Roberts, Lord Lawrence, Lord Napier of Magdala, Sir W. Mansfield and Lord Chelmsford. They maintain that it is impossible to place any reliance on Afghanistan, that it is a wild and hostile country,* and with its occupation the lines of communication will be very lengthened, while the army will be moving away from its reserves and supplies.

Moreover, according to their arguments, the North-West Frontier, that is the country between the Indus and the Kabul-Ghazni-Kandahar line, is very strong from a defensive point of view, while the country near Kandahar and Kabul is very weak for this purpose. By advancing the defensive line, the Anglo-Indian army would find itself amongst intricate defiles, which, in case of a reverse, might lead to its defeat, while even in the event of success, they would still greatly hamper communication, *i.e.*, the transport of supplies to the army.

The Russian armies would have to cross a vast extent of country to reach the River Indus, an operation would require a large number of troops for the communications, would greatly hamper the transport of supplies, and render the rear of the army very vulnerable to attack by the Afghans. Consequently, the army that reaches the Indus will be considerably weakened and frittered away in numerous detachments.

This party demands the development of communications along the North-West Frontier with a view to rapid concentration of troops at the necessary or threatened point. In addition to the construction of most formidable fortified areas near Quetta and Peshawar, they recommend the safeguarding of the approaches to the crossings of the Indus between Kalabagh and Dera Ismail Khan, and the blocking up by permanent fortifications of the exits of the valleys of the Kurram, Tochi and Gomal rivers.

---

* The supporters of passive defence are mostly people who were in Afghanistan during the 2nd Anglo-Afghan war and are irritated by their failures there. Hence they cannot honestly believe in an alliance with the Afghans, and are not the victims of any such optimism; they, therefore, are in favour of passive defence, *i.e.*, on Indian territory.

Notes in I. B.—

1 ? Bayik.
2 Gilgit to the Kilik, 143.
3 An amazing statement.
4 Curious concatenation.

With regard to the defence of the northern frontier, this party advises meeting the Russians as they debouch from the mountains; they, therefore, are averse from the occupation of the advanced positions of Chitral and Gilgit and the construction of military roads to these points, and urge that the country will suffice to stop the advancing foe. The bulk of the army should be at Lahore-Rawalpindi.

The critics of passive defence (*i.e.*, within the limits of India) say that the defensive on the far side of the Suleiman range, along the line Peshawar–Bannu–Dera Ghazi Khan–Jacobabad, would enable Russia to occupy Afghanistan, consolidate her position there, prolong the line of railway from Kushk to Herat and Kandahar, and also to Kabul, and thereby remove all the difficulties in the supply and concentration of the troops. The defensive line is too long, and, therefore, it is possible for the Russians to break through it once the ranges and passes of Afghanistan are in their hands, and, consequently, their actions would be screened from the observation of the English. In this manner it would be the defensive that would suffer from uncertainty and the dissemination of its forces, whilst the initiative, concentration of troops and freedom of action would rest with the Russians.

The critics of passive defence beyond the Suleiman range, but with one flank advanced to the Khwaja Amran range, consider this plan unsuitable:—for (1) the defence of fortifications at Peshawar, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, Sukkur, and Quetta would bring about the passive cordon system; the armies would be scattered, tied down to widely separated points, condemned to inaction and weakness, which undermine the *morale* of the defence, and (2) the situation of the English forces on the Peshin position would be jeopardized on the Russians occupying the greater part of Afghanistan, as they could cut the English lines of communication and march round their rear.

In short a plan of defence, such as the above, would give Afghanistan into the hands of the Russians and put her on the stronger side, as well as enable the Russians to stir up all the warlike races of North-Western India against the English. At the present time Kitchener is the supporter of the active defence, the plans of which have been worked out in detail by Macgregor, Bell, and others. They call for the firm establishment of British sovereignty over Afghanistan, or, at least, an extension of the civilizing influence of Great Britain amongst the Afghan people, and after that require urgent insistence on the construction of a close network of carriageable roads and railways in Afghan territory. At the same time the defence should be advanced, in their opinion, up to Herat itself, and for operations against the Russians in this neighbourhood it will be necessary to act against the Russian rear from the direction of Khorassan. The defence of Kabul and Kandahar should be conducted in advance of these points. In fact, according to Bell, Afghanistan should play the part of an advanced fortification, or glacis, to use the favourite word of English political essayists. Apparently these plans have entirely gained the day, as the present Mission to Kabul was guided by the above principles, proposing, amongst other things, to create a formidable line of defence on the River Helmand.[1] At all events, one cannot but suppose that, in case of war with us, the English would try to anticipate us in seizing the line Kabul–Kandahar (300 miles), which would considerably shorten the existing line Peshawar–Kandahar or Sukkur (480 miles).

Whether the English will be satisfied with this middle course, or move to the line of Herat, will depend on many factors, but chiefly on the energy and success of our actions, and also on the personality of the Anglo-Indian Commander-in-Chief, who, even if he does not believe in the Anglo-Indian Army, must at least believe in himself as a distinguished leader of men.

Is a campaign against India through Afghanistan possible?

In conclusion it is necessary to add a few words on the possibility of our campaign against India.

Notes in I. B.—

[1] The Russians appear to have heard of the Afghan proposals.

Of course nothing in the world is impossible, and, if all the great conquerors of olden times were successful in such campaigns, there is no reason to suppose that we should not be likewise successful. But, in any case, it is beyond dispute that an advance on India is by no means an easy task. By a single corps, as was considered sufficient in the 'seventies,' nothing will be achieved. It is better not to count on a rebellion in India; such an event will only be possible at the end of a campaign, if we have gained important successes; moreover, a rebellion would require serious preparation in time of peace, a project to which we have given neither practical nor theoretical consideration.

The chief difficulty of the campaign is the length of the line of communication, which will require large forces for its security.

Thus, in the campaign of 1879-80, the English were obliged to employ 20,000[1] men to guard their line of operations, Peshawar-Kabul, whilst the force employed in active operations against the enemy only amounted to 5,000. The question of supplies and military stores in Afghanistan will be no light matter, the armies will have to depend on supplies sent up from the rear, and this will require the construction of railways and adequate equipment for them; at the same time this circumstance will seriously react upon the celerity of operations.

Our operations will be preceded by diplomatic negotiations with Afghanistan, in order to bring her over to our side. But such questions, as an alliance with another power, can only be guaranteed long before a war, during the calm of peace, and, therefore, we could hardly succeed at the commencement of military operations in drawing Afghanistan into an alliance with us. It is more probable that Afghanistan will be hostile to us, and, with the opening of military operations, we shall succeed in obtaining in her an ally only in the event of our gaining decisive and rapid success, for Afghans are Asiatics and bow to force.

But in any case we must try our fortune in negotiations with them, and purchase their alliance and co-operation by a subsidy in money and by a promise of extending the frontiers of Afghanistan at the expense of the North-West Frontier of India. Granted an alliance with Afghanistan, operations against India can make rapid progress and the war may be finished in a single year. But we must not count upon this, but rather consider that the alliance will not be concluded. On our side, probably, many initial errors will be committed, hence we must be prepared to make great exertions, and shall require an army as strong as the Manchurian army, which will advance slowly, establishing its communications on a firm basis. Most probably the collision between us and the Anglo-Indian Army will take place in the Kandahar valley. The war will drag out for a long time, possibly about two years.

It is uncertain when our campaign against India will take place, but every one is fully aware that, as long as Russia and England exist, everlasting contention is inevitable between them. On six separate occasions in the course of the past century relations between the two powers have been so strained that they led either to open rupture, or to participation, behind the scene, of England in wars against Russia.

We assiduously tried on these occasions to march on India. In reality we proved to be so weak that we were compelled to confine ourselves to demonstrations (1801 and 1879), or, what is still worse, limited ourselves to paper projects and academic arguments.

Taught by bitter experience, after each war, open or secret, with England, we tried to obtain a firm footing in Central Asia, and thought that it was possible to render England amenable to reason by territorial expansion. As a matter of fact it turned out that there was still too much territory between us in India, and India appeared to be invulnerable to attack.

Presumably, now that the Japanese war has been fought, we at last understand that we can threaten India not by territorial expansion at the expense of Afghanistan, but by our actual readiness for war in Turkistan.

Notes in I. B.—

[1] Figures nearly correct for December 1879. Later the proportion was more like ⅔ on lines of communications to ½ at Kabul, and after Sir D. Stewart's arrival at Kabul ½ to ¼.

If we desire a genuine peace with England, or rather that she should be more complaisant and amenable in Europe, we have no other alternative open to us except to prepare for war with her and for a campaign against India. Only by this means can we guarantee for ourselves peace in Asia, and can occupy ourselves in quiet with questions of internal politics and progress.

One of the fundamental principles of military readiness is complete and accurate information about neighbouring powers. In this respect in Turkistan, as in Manchuria, we are, so to say; bankrupt, *because we know nothing about Afghanistan and India, nor do we wish to know.* Probably taught by bitter experience, we shall henceforth change our opinions on this matter and we shall try to thoroughly study Afghanistan and India. For this purpose we must obtain and prepare some thousands of officers, with a knowledge of the English, Afghan, and Indian, *i.e.*, Hindustani languages. Presumably in the Tashkent and Orenburg Army Corps, as also in the civil middle schools of the Turkistan educational district, a reform in the method of teaching languages will be effected, and, instead of French and German which are quite unnecessary there, English and one of the eastern languages will be introduced. Of course a reform of the study of languages concerns not only Turkistan but affects all our frontier districts, and it seems to me that the oriental faculties in our universities should bear this in mind, and at once busy themselves with the creation of an adequate cadre of teachers.

But, at the same time, this reform in the matter of languages cannot be expected to show great results for some time, *e.g.*, ten years. The language question is, however, so important that we cannot afford to wait so long. It is necessary to have recourse at once to the system of learning languages that exists in the English Army.

The learning of languages in it is quite voluntary, but officers receive additions to their pay, varying with the language from about £50 to £80 a year.* Perhaps in our Army it would suffice to limit the extra pay to £30 a year which would be a very substantial increase to the salaries of senior officers. If, at first, the number of officers for each of the frontiers, Japanese-Chinese and Indo-Afghan, were limited to 1,500, *i.e.*, 3,000 in all, then this would increase our annual military budget by only about £90,000, which is an inappreciable outlay compared with the valuable results to be obtained. Having such a large cadre of officers knowing the local and English languages, we shall be in a position to send fully reliable agents into Afghanistan and India, and we shall be effectively prepared for all eventualities. Of course, for work of this nature, for instance in Afghanistan, it would be necessary to distribute St. George's crosses and substantial pensions, as it will entail the loss of the lives of many officers. However deplorable these losses may be, it is better to sacrifice a dozen officers in time of peace than to lose hundreds of thousands in war.

One of the questions for consideration is the employment of native agents. Amongst them there are always to be found a few scores of capable men who could be trained for work of this nature. A typical example of the advantages to be obtained from such agents is furnished by Tsibikoff, a common Buriat, who received a middle class education at Irkutsk or Chita. On the recommendation of our celebrated and learned Vesselovski, he entered the oriental faculty of the University of St. Petersburg, where the Imperial Russian Geographical Society took a deep interest in him and undertook to prepare him gradually for an expedition to Tibet. The result of this was that Tsibikoff returned from Lhassa not very long ago, and brought back valuable information regarding Tibet, such as not even N. M. Prjevalski succeeded in obtaining.

The experiment of the Geographical Society is well worth imitating. It would be possible to make admirable use of natives, for military purposes as well by putting a certain number of them through military schools and academies.

---

* This information was imparted to me by an Anglo-Indian officer [1] during my visit to Bombay in 1900.

Notes in I. B.—

[1] Who, it may be hoped, was equally inaccurate in any other information he may have imparted.

The English, with all their contempt for natives, nevertheless consider it necessary sometimes to employ them for political purposes. Thus, for instance, the English maintain as Political Resident in Kabul, a Mahommedan native, who discharges his task excellently, and even carries out a policy of the most intricate nature.

We Russians have all the less reason to hesitate about employing a few score natives in our military secret service. With us there has never been a separation of Russian subjects into white and black; on the contrary, we have always accorded natives the full rights of citizenship and have even given them a privileged position with regard to taxes. This policy in Asia has been of sterling service to us and has contributed to the blending of the Russian and Native elements, and surely now, in return for the privileges conferred upon them, we may ask a few score natives to discharge their lawful obligations to their native land.

The military readiness of a State is likewise estimated by the rapidity of the strategic deployment of the army at the required points.

With the construction of the Orenburg–Tashkent line we have achieved a great deal, but our task is far from complete. The next question for consideration is the laying of a railway line from Samarkand to Termez on the Amu-Darya. Here on the line of operations towards Kabul lies the formidable fortress of Dahidad Deh Dadi, and this fortress, as well as that of Herat, should be taken rapidly after the fashion of Zanerovski, a procedure that will require consideration in time of peace, so as to bring up a siege park against the fortress without losing a minute of time after the declaration of war. *

The question of the laying of a railway line from Tashkent to Tomsk has also been under consideration in the press.

In addition to new railway construction, it will also be necessary to pay attention to augmenting the carrying capacity of the existing lines: the Trans-Caspian and Orenburg–Tashkent Railways, in order to fully cope with the requirements of the transport of a large number of troops, the more so, as, owing to the conditions of the theatre of operations, the Turkistan railway lines will have to work at much higher pressure than the Siberian line does now, for the Afghan theatre of war is poorer than the Manchurian and a considerable portion of the supplies will have to be brought from Russia.

Sufficient reserves of railway material should be collected in the Turkistan Province in order to have this material at hand when it is necessary to lay the railway in Afghan territory.

In conclusion I must state that I am no advocate of war at any price with England, as I have taken Bismark's axiom to heart, *viz.*, that "a bad peace is better than a victorious war." But, on the other hand, the issue of peace or war is far from resting with us, and, if, as experience shows, wars are inevitable, then it is better that it should be a campaign against India than any other war with another power.

A campaign against India, if seriously prepared in time of peace, will undoubtedly be crowned with success, and, at the same time, it is the one war which will guarantee an immense indemnity for Russia and secure her a lasting peace in Asia.

---

* Would it not be advisable to transfer the Caucasus Siege Park to Turkistan if funds do not admit of the formation of a new one ?

THE MOST IMPORTANT WORKS ON AFGHANISTAN.

"A" in the Russian language.

"The Afghan Question," by Staff Captain Rittich.

Autobiography of Abdur Rahman Khan, edited by Sultan Mahomed Khan. Translation by M. Gruleff, 1903.

N. ARISTOFF.—"The Anglo-Indian Caucasus," 1900.

Do. —"Notes on the Ethnography of Turkish (?Turkoman) tribes and peoples, and information about their numbers," 1897.

Do. —"About Afghanistan and its inhabitants," 1898.

P. VON HERIKH.—"Afghanistan and its political significance," 1902.

V. GRIGORYEFF.—"Kabulistan and Kafiristan," 1867.

V. LEBEDYEFF.—"Into India," 1898.

LESSAR.—"South-West Turkistan."

GRAF NOSTITZ—"The rebellion of the Mountaineers on the North-West Frontier of India in 1897."

E. REKLUS.—"The Earth and People. Afghanistan."

RITTER.—"Iran."

L. SOBOLYEFF.—"The Anglo-Afghan Conflict," Vols. I, II, III, and IV, 1882.

L. H. SOBOLYEFF.—"Is a compaign against India possible for the Russians?" 1901.

Information relating to the countries bordering the Turkistan Military District issued by the Staff of the Turkistan Military District from 1898 to 1905 inclusive.

M. P. FEDEROFF.—"The rivalry of commercial interests in the East."

YAVORSKI.—"The journey of the Russian Embassy in Afghanistan in 1878-1879."

"B" in Foreign (non-Russian) languages.

BELLEW.—Afghanistan and the Afghans, 1879. The Races of Afghanistan, 1880. An Inquiry into the Ethnography of Afghanistan.

BURNES.—Cabool, 1843.

CURZON.—Russia in Central Asia. London, 1889.

FORBES.—The Afghan Wars, 1839-42, 1878-80. London, 1892.

GORE.—Lights and shades of hill life in the Afghan and Hindu Highlands of the Punjab. London, 1896.

GRAY.—At the Court of the Ameer. London, 1901.

HANNA.—The Second Afghan War, 1878-80. Vol. I., London, 1899.

HENSMAN.—The Afghan War of 1879-80. London, 1881.

HOLDICH.—The Indian Borderland, 1880-1900. London, 1901.

KAYE.—History of the War in Afghanistan, 1878.

MACFALL.—With the Zhob Field Force, 1890. London, 1895.

MACMAHON.—The Southern Borderlands of Afghanistan. London, 1897.

MAHOMED KHAN.—The Life of Abdur Rahman. 2 Vols. Constitution and Laws of Afghanistan. London, 1900.

MALE.—Scenes through the Battle Smoke. London, 1891.

MALLESON.—History of Afghanistan, 1879.

MUTCHMORE.—Moghul, Mongol, Mikado, and Missionary. 2 Vols. New York.

NOYCE.—England, India, and Afghanistan. London, 1902.

OLIVER.—Across the Border, or Pathan and Biluch. London, 1890.

ROBERTS.—Forty-nine Years in India. London, 1897.

ROBERTSON.—The Kafirs of the Hindoo-Kush. London, 1896.

THORBURN.—Asiatic Neighbours. London, 1895.

WEIR.—From India to the Caspian. Bombay, 1893.

WHEELER.—The Ameer Abdur Rahman. London, 1895.

YATE.—Russia and England face to face in Asia. London, 1887.

YATE.—Northern Afghanistan. London, 1888.

ELPHINSTONE.—Account of the Kingdom of Cabul, 1815.

VIGNE.—Narrative of a Visit to Ghuzni, 1843.

NEIMAN.—Das Trauerspiel in Afghanistan, 1848.

LANGLOUA.—Herat, Dost Mohammed et les influences politiques de la Russie et de l' Angleterre dans l'Asie centrale, 1864.

SPIEGEL.—Eran, das Land zwischen dem Indus und Tigris 1863. Eranische Altertumskunde, 1871-1873.

DORNS.—Grammatische Uebersicht 1840, and Chrestomathie, 1847.

LICH.—Grammar of the Pushtu or Afghanee Language.

RAVERTI.—Grammar of the Pukhtu, Dictionary of the Pukhtu, 1860. Notes of Afghanistan and part of Baluchistan, 1881.

RODENBOUCH.—Afghanistan and the Anglo-Russian Dispute, 1838-1842. London, 1879.

ABBOT.—The Afghan War.

MACGREGOR.—Journey through Khorassan in 1875. Wanderings in Baluchistan.

BIDDULPH.—Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh.

WOOD.—Journey to the River Oxus.

A. CUNNINGHAM.—Ancient Geography of India.

MASSON.—Various Journeys in Balochistan, Afghanistan, the Punjab, and Kalat.

FERRIER.—Voyage en Perse, dans l'Afghanistan, le Beloutchistan et le Turkestan.

LADY SALE.—Journal of the Disasters in Afghanistan, 1841-42.

BURNOUF.—Commentaires sur le Jaçna.

GRISEBACH.—Memoirs of the Geological Survey of India.

GOLDSMID.—Eastern Persia.

BERESFORD LOVETT.—Eastern Persia.

O'DONOVAN.—Merv Oasis.

BLANFORD.—Eastern Persia, Vol. II., Zoology and Geology.

BAKER AND GILL.—Clouds in the East.

EUAN SMITH.—Eastern Persia.

DORN.—History of the Afghans.

LASSEN.—Indische Alterthumskunde.

HENRY.—Etudes Afghanes.

VIVIEN DE SAINT-MARTIN.—Etude sur la geographie greque et latine de l'Inde.

TRUMPP.—Grammar of the Pacto.

A. CONOLLY.—Journey to the North of India.

DE GOBINEAU.—Trois ans en Asie.

ROWNEY.—The Wild Tribes of India.

MIR ABDUL KERIM BAU KHARY.—Histoire de l'asie centrale, publiée par Ch. Schefer.

ANDREW.—Our Scientific Frontier.

C. T. VIGNE.—Visit to Ghuzni, Kabul, and Afghanistan.

TANNER.—Notes on the Dara Nur, Northern Afghanistan and its Inhabitants.

LEECH H. JULE.—The book of ser Marco Polo.

MINAIEV.—Notice sur les contrées du haut Amou Daria Exploration, 1831.

A. VAMBERY.—Voyages d'un faux derviche.

BARBIET DE MEYNARD.—Dictionnaire de la Perse, par Jakout.

KHANIKOFF.—Memoire sur la partie meridonale de l'Asie centrale, 1861.

SECRET WORKS.

I. Collection of Information about Asia issued by the Headquarter Staff, Parts V, IX, XV, XVI, XX, XXV, XXIX, XLVI, XLVII, L, LIII.

II. CAPTAIN V. ORANOVSKI.—" Afghanistan," 1895. Askhabad.

III. Lieutenant-Colonel Artamonoff.—" The Herat Province," 1895. Askhabad.

G. M. Press, Simla.—No. 114 Q. M. G. I. B.—25-7-07.—00.—P.B.S.