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A PERSONAL NARRATIVE OF A JOURNEY FROM HERAUT TO OURENBORG,  
ON THE CASPIAN, IN 1840, BY CAPTAIN SIR RICHMOND SHAKESPEAR.

[This is a narrative consisting of the journal taken by the author upon his route in 1840. Being a subaltern in the army of the Indus after the taking of Ghuznee, he was employed upon an important diplomatic mission, the object of which was to obtain the withdrawal of the Russian army, which was at that period advancing upon, and within three days' march of, the city of Khyva. Sir R. Shakespear, having marched from Heraut to Khyva, was successful in the arrangement of a treaty between the Khan of Khyva and the Russian General, the prominent conditions of which were, on the part of the latter, that he should withdraw the Russian army within the limits of the Russian empire; on the part of the former, that the Khyvans should restore to the Russians all the Russian prisoners who had been taken and held in slavery by the Muscovan subjects of the Khan of Khyva. The detention of these prisoners had always formed the pretext of Russia for its advance against the Khan's dominions; and, in order to destroy this effectually for the future, Sir R. S. guaranteed to the Russians the restoration of *all* the prisoners within the Khan's dominions—and for this purpose, personally undertook to collect and march them in safety into Russia. He accordingly liberated and took charge of these prisoners, upwards of 500, and with the whole number crossed from Khyva to the Caspian. He left the prisoners at Ourentzurg, passed through Russia, being every where received with enthusiasm by the countrymen of the prisoners, and on his arrival at St Petersburg obtained a ratification of the treaty from the Emperor, and had the honour of receiving his thanks publicly.]

On his arrival in England, he received promotion and rank for his services, and is now Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief of the Bengal army, at present in the Khyber pass on its way to relieve General Sale.]

On the 11th of May 1840, a packet arrived at Herant, from Sir W. H. Macnaghten, with important instructions for Captain Abbott. As this officer was absent from Khyva, Major Todd considered it advisable to de-

pute me to carry out the wishes of Government, and on the evening of the 13th I made my farewell call on the Vuzeer, Yar Mahomed Khan, who insisted on accompanying me to my halting-place, a village about two

miles from the city. This is certainly a delightful part of the world to one fond of excitement. A fortnight ago, I was thinking of putting coloured glass in my windows, and making other alterations in my quarters, as there appeared every prospect of my remaining at Heraut for many a day; it was then decided that I should go with despatches to Cabool, and, just as my arrangements were completed for this trip, I received instructions to move towards Khyva! If I fail in getting to Khyva before the Russians drive the Khan Huzarut from that city, I have every chance of being carried away in the uproar; the whole country will be in confusion, and, though my party is a respectable one, it is any thing but invincible; the chances, however, are in my favour, as all the chiefs through whose country I pass are in friendly correspondence with us, and each of them knows that civility to me is sure to be profitable to him. In short, the chances of distinction are so great, and the hazard so slight, that the heart of even a wren would be gladdened by the prospect. I halted until the evening of the 14th to take leave of all my native friends, and the party of Englishmen with whom I have been so long and so intimately associated. The farewell of the Affghans is full of ceremony; prayer follows prayer, and one unacquainted with their character could not believe that the man who in the most solemn manner calls upon God to bless you—to take you into his keeping—who prays that your journey may be propitious—it is difficult for an Englishman to believe that, while so doing, a native of this country, if he does not mean any thing worse, means only the performance of a mere ceremony. But such is the custom of the country, and in sooth, on every occasion they have the name of God on their lips, though their hearts are far from him. How different was the parting with my English friends and companions! Ah, well! good-luck to them, and may I again fall amongst such worthy and gentlemanly men. An old Persian gentleman was, I think, sincere in his good wishes, an old Hajee, who, one way or another, has received some favours at my hands. He appeared much distressed, and talked about the dangers of the road, &c. Wishing to cheer my

old friend, I told him I should study the art of mule-driving on the journey, so that, when sold to the Incomans, I might be able to make myself useful. He was much horrified, and when he had finished his hurried exclamations of "God forbid!" &c., he said he hoped better things, though he confessed that the hour of my departure was far from favourable, and much similar to the one on which Colonel Stoddart started for Bokhara! I urged, that though there was much sense in his remark, still I hoped we had outwitted the evil fates by leaving the city by the Maleek, instead of the Kootubchak gate, which would have been the direct road. His reply was made in a solemn voice, "Colonel Stoddart, though going in the same direction as yourself, made a much greater circuit than you, for he left the city by the Candahar gate, and yet you see the result." This was a very pleasing and gratifying remark of the old gentleman; but not wishing for any more such consolation, I turned the subject on his own affairs, and then bade him good-by.

My party consists of the Cazee, Moollah Mahomed Hassan, who, from his being somewhat of a conspirator, we have been in the habit of calling "Brutus"—his son, Mahomed Daood, an active young fellow, who is so fond of adventure that he cheerfully leaves his young wife to come with us—Khoda Woardee Khan, a man of old but ruined family, who ought to be faithful, if there is such a thing as gratitude in this part of the world;—and lastly, Fasil Khan, a fine specimen of the troopers of the irregular horse of India, true as steel, fearing neither man nor devil, and obeying the orders of his immediate superior to the very letter. Brutus, I should say, is about 60 years old; he is a man of considerable rank, a Moollah and Cazee, whose family in former years possessed great influence and wealth in the valley of Heraut; he is passionate and violent, but of unflinching courage, and has much influence with the tribes I shall have to pass through; his opinion of his own rank and consequence is very great. His son is invaluable; he looks after the horses, loads the mules, ties my turban, helps to cook the dinner, and appears at that meal in a good dress, humour, and appetite. Khoda Woardee pro-

ceeds more leisurely about his work ; he is a quiet gentlemanly man, blessed with a most luxuriant beard, and whether doctoring a mule or eating his food, he is always sedate, and seems to think a good deal, but never speaks if he can help it. Fazil Khan is, simply, the most faithful, single-hearted creature I have ever met with. With the above party I am to dine, breakfast, and associate for an unknown time, and I would not change any of them. In addition to the above, I have seven Demauk Kipchag troopers from the Vuzeer, who look as if they were good men for work. One of them is called "the Wolf," from a curious habit which he is said to possess of rushing into danger. I dare say we shall have occasion to put his vaunted courage to the test.

I am writing this at 9 A. M., on the 15th May, not having had time, in the multiplicity of arrangements previous to my departure, to keep a journal. I took leave at sunset yesterday of my brother officers, at about five miles from the city. All the mules had passed us, and the only absentees were Mahomed Daood and Khoda Woordee. Brutus explained the absence of the former, by saying he had sent him on duty to the city; but Khoda Woordee's absence could only be imagined by supposing he was thinking of something which every body else had forgotten. The march was to Purwannah, about six and a half miles through the range of hills north of Heraut; a capital road, fine moonlight, and only one false alarm on the route. Just as I had taken off my boots and called for a pipe, Khoda Woordee galloped into the court, saying, that when close to the halting-place he had been chased; that a poor wretch, who was on foot in his company, had been seized, he feared, by the seven horsemen from whom he had thought it judicious to flee. He begged that I would allow him to take some of the Kipchag troopers and go to the rescue of his companion. I consented, and had some idea of going myself; but I am glad I did not, for while Brutus was groaning and praying for his son Mahomed Daood, who, he feared, must have fallen into the hands of Khoda Woordee's pursuers, in came young Daood in convulsions of laughter, saying, that seeing some one riding a-head of him, and wishing to have a

chat, he put his horse to a canter, and that the person a-head of him increasing his pace, he (Mahomed Daood) called lustily to him, in the name of the Prophet, to pull in his horse, but the louder he cried the quicker fled the leading horseman, who, I need hardly say, was Khoda Woordee, who for once thought too much, in as much as he mistook a young striping for "seven Turcomans on a chupas." Some time afterwards, when my convulsions of laughter had somewhat subsided, I saw Khoda Woordee sneaking about the door of the ruin, which was my halting-place, and asked why he had remained behind the party? But I could not find it in me to quiz him, particularly as he gave an excellent reason for stopping behind. Old Brutus and I had a good cup of tea, and sweetmeats, before going to bed, and the "lovely moon smiled on our slumbers." We have just eaten a capital breakfast, without feeling the want of knives and forks, or tables and chairs. I have been advised to adopt the Affghan dress on this trip, and find it far from an unpleasant costume, and—shall I confess it?—becoming. The most objectionable part is the nether garment, which, in direct opposition to an Englishman's ideas of fashion, is so preposterously wide as to be inconvenient; those made for me (I begged for small ones) have nearly a circumference of six feet for each leg; in fact, as a facetious friend of mine observes, "the thing is not a pair of breeches, but a divided petticoat." Mine are of a bright red colour, and my shirt is of the same blushing hue; my coat is something like a long surt-out, without a collar. It is made of a light blue chintz, and trimmed with cashmere shawl. The cloak is made very full, with long sleeves, and of a light brown colour. The turban is of white muslin, and arranged with great skill by Mahomed Daood, in large folds. The wristband is a light striped shawl, and the boots much like those of the Horse Guards, but with pointed toes. At Heraut I always found, when conversing with a native of the country who had never before seen the European costume, that he was so absorbed by astonishment at the difference of dress that he could think of nothing else, and that instead of listening to my arguments he was counting my buttons. I have nearly 800 ducats tied

round my waist under my clothes; and Brutus, Fazil Khan, and two private servants, are similarly loaded in different amounts, making a total of 1500 ducats, or about L.900. Our party consists of thirty, and we have thirty-five horses and mules.

*May 16th.*—Khoosh Robat—Made a very pleasant march yesterday of twelve and a half miles. The road generally excellent and the weather delightful. Crossed a pretty little stream, where are the remains of an old bridge. The Khoosh is a small stream; the caravan-serai here is magnificent, large enough to quarter a brigade of infantry; the roof is still in good order; I could not get any tradition concerning it. About halfway we passed a reservoir of water. These buildings prove the wealth and generosity of former kings, who little thought that their works would last longer than their own fames.

*May 17th.*—Killa-i Juppatt, forty-five and a half miles. I am ashamed to say quite knocked up. I rode an Arab horse, who could not walk with the Turcomans, and shook me dreadfully. We stopped at two places on the road, one for a cup of tea and the other for a few hours' sleep. The first seventeen miles of the road are truly beautiful; you cross over the crest of the hills, which must be, I should say, at an elevation of 7000 feet. There are hundreds of hills sloping off in all directions, and covered with the most luxuriant grass; every variety of colour was to be found in the weeds, and every little valley had its own peculiar stream of the purest water. The Herautes may well boast of the beauties of Bad Khyas (as this part of the country is called) in spring. The remainder of the road is in some places destitute of water. Saw several khails with large flocks of cattle. When we passed the khails old Brutus was very anxious to make some little show, so the troopers fell into something like order, the mules got an extra hint to step out, and my running footman was requested to dismount, and place himself a-head of his master. This was all very grand, as the little boy's book has it; but, alas! all the men of the khails were absent, and the women and children hardly deigned to come out of their black tents to look at us. Brutus, however, had the satisfaction of passing in state a considerable kafilah bound for Herat.

A rather amusing conversation took place between Brutus and an old Turcoman who had joined our party. The latter ventured to hint that the nether garment of the Affghans was a *little* too large, and by this remark brought down a torrent of ridicule from the old conspirator, according to whom Turcomans are mere savages, who dip a bit of bread into a melted sheep's tail, and pronounce a long and solemn grace over this *meal*. The old Turcoman was very wroth, and as the dispute appeared to get too warm, I came to the Tartar's rescue, saying, that the best soldiers were those who cared least for their food and comforts; and that, as for the Affghans, they required one mule for their turban, and another for their nether garments. Old Brutus is a surprising old gentleman for work; when every one of the party but he and the Wolf wished to stop, he persisted in pushing on, and I could only get a little rest by throwing myself off my horse and calling for my servants. The cause of all this haste is to get out of the country of the Jumsheedees Demauks, who are said to be notorious and expert thieves. This place is on the banks of the Khoosh River. Plenty of grass.

*May 18th.*—Yesterday evening I made the acquaintance of a patriarch amongst the Jumsheedees, a very pleasing old gentleman, of mild and winning manner. He took us to his khail near the road, and gave us buttermilk, and sent his son to show us the road. His khail was a large one; the khurgahs, of which there were about twenty, were arranged in lines, and the calves and lambs inside the square. The females seemed very busy at their domestic arrangements, and the children fat and happy. My old friend said he had suffered very much from the Persian force, which, during the late siege of Herat, was sent to this valley; he and all his tribe, with every moveable thing, retreated to the hills; but they fled so precipitately, and to so great a distance, that they lost several hundred cattle. We marched eighteen miles during the night; the first half of the road is through the different little valleys close to the banks of the Khoosh, the remaining distance is along the bed of the river, which you cross at a tolerable ford.

At sunrise started again, and moved

twelve miles along the banks of the Khoosh. Our place of rest during the heat of the day was ill chosen; heat great, flies troublesome, grass indifferent, and water distant. Total distance thirty miles.

*May 19th.*—Travelled six and three-quarter hours last night; road generally good, but many quicksands in crossing the Khoosh; in one of them the Wolf got a most effectual ducking, and lost his gun, which, however, we found again after some search. The sleeping-place was in a damp grassy spot; but if it had been in the bed of the river, I don't think I should have objected, being most completely tired. At sunrise loaded and mounted again, and marched five and a quarter hours: total distance forty-four miles, to the Moorghaub, a muddy, rapid stream, the banks of which are thickly fringed with tamerisk jungle. Here we found a kafilah of grain bound for Heraut, and a man with a note from the Cazee of Yellatoon to Major Todd, in which I found it written that Captain Abbott had not only succeeded in stopping the advance of the Russian army, but had reached St Petersburg, and procured an order for the return of the force and the destruction of the forts. I don't believe this, though what on earth could make this Cazee of Yellatoon write such a falsehood, is difficult to imagine. At any rate, I shall go on to Khyva; I have decided on sending the Wolf back with this letter; he promises to reach Heraut in two days, and to return to me at Merve on the sixth day from this date.

*May 20th.*—Before starting yesterday, the Cazee came to my tent and said that three Turcomans were carrying away some natives of Heraut as slaves. On coming out, I found young Daood had seized the bridle of the leading Turcoman, and was bringing the party to our camp. There were ten slaves, two females, and the rest boys—mere children. I am ashamed to say that I was silly enough to let my anger lead me into the absurdity of expressing the disgust and horror which I felt, and was guilty of the folly of lecturing Turcomans on the evil of their ways. The poor children seemed thin and harassed, but not the least frightened, nor very anxious for their release; though it is

possible that fear of the three Turcomans prevented their speaking out on this subject. I asked Brutus to sit by me and write the names of the slaves, of their relatives, and the people who sold them. They had been sold, it appeared, by the Jumsheedees and Hazarehs. I had no power to release these poor creatures, and had I taken upon myself to do so, I should most probably have defeated the object of my mission, which will amongst other things, I hope, lead to the cessation *in toto* of this most detestable traffic. Had I turned the poor children loose, they would soon have been retaken. We let the party therefore go, and passed them again about three miles from the river. Both the females and the smallest of the boys were mounted on the camels. I trust that this humane arrangement was not made merely while I was passing. My party could not be restrained from showering curses on the Turcomans; and Fazil Khan begged me with moist eyes to release the slaves. We moved this night twenty-two miles; plenty of wood and grass along the road, which is generally good, though there are some steep sandy ascents. The valley of the Moorghaub, along which we are now moving, is narrow, and bounded by sand-hills, which are covered with bushes of camel-thorn and other stunted herbs. The valley itself has a fine soil, and has been highly cultivated in former years, but it is now deserted. Stopped to sleep and feed the cattle for a few hours, and started a little after sunrise; passed a place called Sundook Koochan. Connected with this spot is a tradition, viz., "That once upon a time a box fell to the ground here." (The ark?) This is all I could get from the Turcomans, who grinned and said, "Yes, a box fell there, and therefore it is called Sundook Koochan."

*May 21st.*—Started before sunset, and marched twenty-two miles. This particular spot is much dreaded by travellers and kafilahs, as the Turka Turcomans often cross it when on plundering excursions. Very heavy jungle on this part of the road, which is still along the Moorghaub; slept, and fed the cattle at about two miles from the Bund-i-Yellatoon, or bank which throws the water of the Moorghaub into the canal of Yellatoon. The flood this year has been so great as

completely to destroy this bank, and the canal is consequently dry. At sunrise, started again, and moved ten miles; heat oppressive; total distance thirty-two miles.

*May 22d.*—Marched nineteen miles to the camp of a friendly Turcoman, who did his "little possible" to make me comfortable, and brought me his son and a colt, both of which he said were my property. I of course thanked him, but I told him that I only received one kind of Peshkush, (present,) viz. slaves. At sunrise moved eight miles to Yellatoon, where there is a governor and cazee. Old Brutus was very anxious, when we came near this place, to see whether these worthies would come out to meet us, and at one time he fondly hoped they had done us that honour; for being shortsighted, and seeing some troopers coming towards us, a complacent smile crossed his coarse features, and stroking his beard, he muttered, "After all, they are Mussulmen;" but Daood soon dispelled the charming illusion, saying, "Oh father! these are dogs and sons of dogs, and have sent *servants* to meet us." Great was the old man's ire, and deeply he vowed not to enter their tents; but seeing several people collected a little distance off, I made up to them, and, on dismounting, found they were the authorities of Yellatoon. They gave me a hearty, though rough welcome, and led me to a tent which had been pitched for the occasion. One or two words of prayer, and a stroke of the beard, took place immediately we were seated, and raisins and bread were brought in and devoured. The Turcomans have not the slightest pretensions to politeness; they do exactly whatever suits their fancy, and expect their guest to please himself in every way. They have one custom which I found sufficiently troublesome: they consider it unpollite to leave their guest alone, and unless you keep the door shut, you have a constant flood of visitors, who enter, sit down, stroke their beards, and exit. Last year the governor of Yellatoon stole Mahomed Daood's cloak,—at least so sayeth Brutus. This governor is of the same tribe as the Khan Huzarut, upon whom he is entirely dependent. He is much interested in making it believed that the Russians have retreated, and seems much vexed if any

one doubts this circumstance. This advance of the Russians on one side, and our own in Afghanistan on the other, have greatly alarmed the more intelligent among the Asiatics, who say, "Do you think we are such dolts as not to perceive what will be the end of all this? You and the Russians will meet and shake hands, and we shall be crushed in the operation." Just as I was leaving Yellatoon, the governor brought me two superb hawks, which he begged me to accept. I pleaded the impossibility of carrying them with me; upon this he immediately gave me an old man to take care of them, and the only way of escape was to give the old man a couple of ducats, and tell him to look after the hawks until my return. Brutus says that the birds are celebrated for their speed, and worth at least four slaves each.

*May 23d.*—Marched last night about ten miles, good road, and this morning came to Merve, about twelve more. There is a small shell of a fort here, and a considerable bazar. We are shut up in a small enclosure, and no one allowed to come and see us. The authorities of this place were very anxious that Brutus should halt at some other spot, but he has refused most stoutly to leave me: he is so enraged at the treatment which I have received, that he has done nothing since our arrival but abuse the fathers, grandfathers, and relations of *all* Turcomans, and he now appears to be much relieved. For my part, I am heartily glad of the arrangement, and trust the exclusion of visitors will be continued, though officially I have remonstrated against it. The governor, in reply to my question, "Whether the Khan Huzarut of Khyva wished me to be treated as a prisoner during my stay at Merve?" has sent a very humble answer, saying that he feared some of my property would be stolen, and my rest disturbed by visitors, and that therefore he prevented any Turcomans from entering the square assigned for my residence.

*May 24th.*—Brutus very anxious for the visit of the governor, but I feel confident he will not do us that honour. To-morrow is the grand market-day, and horses, camels, grain, and slaves, may be had in great abundance. I must buy camels; as I have to carry

water and grain for ten days for my party.

*May 25th.*—The governor sent his servant to say he could not call, as he was in mourning for his brother, who, by the way, died eight months back; he wants me to call on him, but this I have not agreed to. I said, if he had made the excuse the first day I would have called; but as he was a servant of the Khan Huzarut, who was our friend, I thought it due to the latter to make the customary present before leaving, so I sent a Cashmere shawl. He is a dog, but it is as well to throw him a bone, as I am compelled to pass through his kennel. The Wolf returned to me before sunset; he reached Heraut from the Moorghaub, a distance of 140 miles, in 36 hours; at Heraut he got a fresh horse, and rejoined me at Merve, a distance of 260 miles, in 105 hours! He has brought me an English newspaper dated 4th March, 82 days from London to Merve! Before his arrival I was talking over with Brutus the chance of his getting safely through the perils of the journey; "Why," said Brutus, "fatigue can't kill him, and no one in this country *will* kill him, for it is more profitable to sell him; and as the Wolf has already been three times sold to the Turcomans, a fourth will make no great difference." The horse he has ridden here from Heraut is ruined; if he survives, he can never be of service during this journey, his back being dreadfully wounded by the saddle. It may be as well to describe here the khurgab, (literally donkey-house,) which is the dwelling of the Turcoman tribes. I am now living in one which is eighteen feet high. The wall is five feet high, and is formed of dried willow boughs, crossing each other diagonally. At each cross a leather thong is passed through both the pieces of willow, so that the whole can be shut up and placed on a camel. This wall is first pitched, and a broad strap of carpeting passed round it, binding it to a doorway. The roof is formed of a ring of willow-boughs, having holes in it for the insertion of other willow-boughs, covered at one end, which radiate from the ring, and slope down to the wall, to the top of which they are firmly fixed; over this framework thick felts are bound; and, with good carpets on the floor, a

dwelling is formed, which keeps out heat, cold, and rain, and is easily removed to any other spot. It is certainly better than any tent, and has the advantage of excluding thieves. The camels are bought, the leather bags for water ready, all supplies laid in, and off we go to-morrow.

*May 26th.*—Called after all on the governor. The fact is, I could not omit this attention without appearing to slight the Khan Huzarut. I found a very old gentleman, with a very white beard, sitting under an awning. He did not move one inch to receive me, (served me right for calling, and yet I think I was right, and the old fellow wrong, in spite of his grey beard.) I fear I must bring this insult to the Khan Huzarut's notice. Called immediately afterwards on the Khuleefa, another greybeard, but a very different character; he received me like a patriarch. This old gentleman has very great influence with all Turcomans, by whom he is much respected and trusted; he is considered almost a saint; and the Turcomans are only too glad to make him the distributor of their charitable donations. I believe he is well worthy of the trust, though they say that some of his *attachés* eat an unconscionable share of the poor-rates. The Khuleefa is a very small man, of very quiet and retiring manners—a *rara avis*—a bashful Turcoman. His face is pleasing, notwithstanding the loss of the bridge of his nose, which was caused by frost. From the Khuleefa's, I returned to my own quarters—loaded, and started; heat very great; total distance twelve miles. The regular road crosses the river Moorghaub close to the town, but the boat is injured, and we have followed the river in hope of finding a ford. I am the guest of a jolly-looking Turcoman, whose khail is very extensive. My host speaks nothing but Turkee, and I know nothing of that language; but I fancy we both feel alike, for he brought me a bowl of buttermilk directly I arrived, and this was exactly what I wanted. We have left the Salore Turcomans, and fallen amongst the Surruks; the former are said to have 10,000, the latter 15,000 families. They appear very similar, except that the women here all wear red head-dresses of a curious shape. Brutus is much scandalized at their

wearing no veils. I have seen one or two tolerable beauties amongst them; their morals are not spoken highly of, but they appear to me to be quiet, careful housewives. There are several Jews at Merve, and, to my surprise, I found one located here, who astonished me by offering me 100 ducats for a bill on Heraut. True to his caste, he asked exorbitant interest. He is now busy getting the fair sex of this khail to make up covers for my horses' ears and bellies, a precaution necessary, owing to the number of venomous flies on the road we are taking. There are two roads from Merve to Khyva, or, as it is more generally called here, Corgunj. One is called the Rah-i-tukht, the other, the Rah-i-chushmah; we take the former, as it has more water. It is said, however, to be the longer by two or three stages. Brutus thinks the governor of Merve means to play us false. The man he has sent with us has suddenly decided that it is impossible to take the Rah-i-tukht, as the river is not fordable. Brutus says that the other road is often dangerous; and, at any rate, the camels we have with us are only sufficient to carry water and grain for our party, with the assistance of wells, and I have ascertained that for four days I should find no water whatever on the Rah-i-chushmah; so sending for the guide, and hearing all the *pros* and *cons* which he could urge, I told him that I had made up my mind either to return to Merve or to go by the Rah-i-tukht. He talked a good deal about impossibilities, &c., and went to make some enquiries. I hope, by the assistance of the Jew, to turn his flank, by getting a guide from this khail. I had secured one at Merve, but the governor sent for him, and told him not to come with me. The Jew has succeeded in getting a guide for me, who agrees to take me halfway to Khyva, on condition that I give him his food while with me, and eight tillahs for his trouble. The demand is most exorbitant, but I see no other way of avoiding returning to Merve.

*May 27th.*—After many intrigues, on the part of the governor's servant, to detain me and to prevent the guide I procured yesterday from coming with me, I at last got away from the khail, and marched sixteen miles; water and grass abundant, camel-

thorn most luxuriant, wood rather scarce; stopt during the heat of the day. It now appears that the guide, who is to receive eight tillahs from me, only knows *one* road, and that *that* road is impassable; he has, however, he says, found a Turcoman who has just come across the desert from his khail on the Khyva road. In the evening, we moved seventeen miles and a quarter to the river Moorghaub; grass scarce, wood plentiful.

*May 28th.*—Marched in the morning fifteen miles along the banks of the Moorghaub, which we crossed at an excellent ford—the stream about thirty yards wide, three and a half feet deep, and bottom hard. The river is, however, full of quicksands, and the greatest care must be taken in searching for a good ford. There is but little grass on its banks, wood abundant, the air cool and pleasant. In the evening started again, intending to make a long march, but at five miles came on another stream; very foolishly tried to find the ford myself, and got into a bad quicksand in which I nearly lost my horse. The mules and camels crossed lower down without any accident. The Wolf this day showed his carnivorous nature by killing and dividing one of my two remaining sheep without leave asked or given. I rather think he will in future see the necessity of controlling his appetite within the rules of propriety. Amongst other things, he had to walk the march through the heavy sand and under a hot sun in his large riding boots.

*May 29th, Friday.*—The Turcoman who is to receive eight tillahs from me, is missing; his mare trotted into our camp last night covered with mud and water, and we fear the poor wretch must have been drowned, as it is known that he could not swim: I have now only the guide whom he had provided for me to trust to. Moved this morning four miles, when we came to a third stream of the Moorghaub, where we had difficulty in finding a good ford. We are halting on the bank while the people go to search for the body of the unfortunate Turcoman. At one P.M., no light being thrown on the Turcoman's fate, we started, and moved fifteen miles, when we came to a fourth stream, nearly as large as the first, which detained us two hours. We then moved



four miles into the desert. I sent for the Governor of Merve's servant and my only remaining guide, and cross-questioned them as to where they intended to take me. The Governor's servant acknowledged that he had no idea whatever of the road. The guide said, he knew of two reservoirs of water in the desert, and that he would stake his life on taking me to them before twelve o'clock the next day; he confessed he was much surprised at coming on the last stream, as he thought we had been clear of the river, but that he had crossed much higher up. He is a very intelligent-looking young fellow, and I will trust him. I take with me water sufficient for one day, and have told this young guide that he shall have the eight tillahs promised to the deceased Turcoman, whose family I will try to provide for. He says that he is confident of finding the water, and that "my sword is on his neck if he fails."

*May 30th.*—Started last night at half-past one, and moved eleven miles and a quarter; when the first dawn of day appeared, it was fine to see the young Turcoman gazing like a startled antelope from side to side, scampering up to every mound and peering over every sand-hill. He saw me using a telescope, and begged to be allowed to look; upon my giving him the glass he seemed a little frightened, suspecting infernal agency; but summoning up his courage, he shouted, "In the name of God!" and applied the glass to his eye, prepared for the worst that might happen. It was long before he could arrange the focus to suit his eye, but at length an exclamation of "God is great!" showed that he began to see the use of the instrument. He had been most anxious, during the last two miles, for a certain mark which he said he must be near. At length he pulled up, and said, that if I would give him a trooper to go with him, he would find the water and return to me. I complied, and lay down in the mean time for a nap. My dream was a confusion of drowning Turcomans, telescopes, streams of water, and the horrors of dying of thirst. In an hour and a half these dreams were disturbed by shouts and yells, and on getting up I saw the Turcoman, with his cap in his hand, screaming, and urging his horse towards us. Long before he reached us, his shouts of

"Water, I have found the water, there is plenty of it!" were to be heard, and after five miles we reached it. The reservoirs were mere pools dug in the bed of a small ravine; the water was muddy, but of good flavour; and the coarse grass on the edges of the banks proved a "bonne bouche" to the horses. Having reached this water, the difficulty is to hit upon the road from Merve to Khyva. The Turcoman says he hopes before night to hit upon a road from Meshed to Bokhara which crosses the road to Khyva. Started again in the evening, and marched fifteen miles, until it was so dark that we feared the camels might lose our track. No signs of the road as yet, but my guide says he can go as well by the stars as by daylight; he says, we must move all night, and warns us that we shall not reach water until late to-morrow.

*May 31st.*—Moved last night thirteen miles at the tails of the camels; it is dreadful work, crawling along at two and a half miles an hour, particularly without any road. At last, by the greatest good-luck, in the middle of the night, and without a moon, the road was discovered. It was pointed out to me, and though I dismounted and tried hard to distinguish it, I failed. The Turcomans of the party, however, were very positive, and took the greatest trouble in tracing it. After marching some hours they begged me to halt until the morning, lest the track should be lost. We slept two hours, and then started again. By daylight even, it was difficult to trace the road, the soil being nothing but loose sand, which drifts with every breeze. The only good marks are the bones of dead camels and other animals, of which there are great quantities. Some public-spirited people have been at the trouble of occasionally putting the skeleton of a camel's head on a bush near the road, and this is considered an infallible sign. At one or two places branches of trees are also heaped together as a mark, but these are few and far between. This desert is very uneven. I have seen one very like it in India, which extends along the eastern bank of the Indus near Bhawalpore. There are innumerable bushes of a dwarf description, and in places the ground is almost hard, but some of the sand-hills are of great height and of the finest red sand. We came on twenty-

seven miles this morning; the heat was dreadful, and the loose sand and the fatigues of the previous night added much to our thirst; all the water we had in the leather bottles with the riding-horses was consumed, the camels were far in the rear, and there was no appearance of a well. The Turcoman guide, however, was positive as to the vicinity of a well, and in reply to my question of "Whether my sword was on his neck if he failed?" he laughingly said, "Yes, I will find the well if you'll find the tillahs;" and on we plodded, a fiery hot wind blowing. At length I almost despaired, and Brutus wanted to lie down, but I thought on the Turcoman's former successes, and pushing up the sand-hill over which he had gone, had the happiness to see him dismounted and leaning down peering into the long-sought well. My panting steed got an extra kick from my heels, and I was soon by the guide's side pulling up a bucket of water, which, alas! was so very offensive in smell and taste, that I could not drink it. The servants, however, and the horses, drank it most greedily. The Turcomans say that there is nothing injurious in this water; on the contrary, that it is cooling to the blood. It is strongly impregnated with saltpetre, is perfectly clear, but of so unpleasant a flavour and so offensive to the nostrils, that, notwithstanding the heat and my excessive thirst, I could not swallow it; and with parched lips I waited four long hours until the camels arrived. I derived some little advantage from making the servants pour quantities of this nasty water over me while I held my nose. I was so nervous lest the camels should lose the road that I could not sleep. Late in the evening a man arrived, saying the camels were near. Fazil Khan mounted immediately, and shortly returned with two leather bags of good water, and Brutus and I drank large draughts. They may talk of nectar, &c., but I never enjoyed any thing so much as this water, of which, by the way, we had some capital tea made in a short time. It was fortunate that I kept Khoda Woordee with the camels; for the Kipchag Sowars, headed by the Wolf, suffered so much from the excessive heat that they lost all sense of discipline, and tried to detain the camels until the cool of the evening,

helping themselves in the mean time from the water bags; but Khoda Woordee behaved with great firmness, and succeeded at last in frightening even the Wolf, who, being an opium-eater, felt the heat so much that at one time he threw himself from his horse, vowing *his hour* had arrived. When I look back and think how unlikely it was that even with the Turcoman I should find the reservoirs of yesterday and the well of to-day, and when I reflect that, had any thing happened to the guide, or had he been less intelligent—had we, in short, by any accident missed these watering-places, the destruction of all the party was inevitable;—I say, when I think of all these things, I acknowledge I have great cause for gratitude to Him who has guided me through this and many other dangers. We are now on the high-road to Khyva, the "Rah-i-tukht;" twelve hours' travelling will carry us to another well which contains sweet water; and in three days all the difficulties of the road will be overcome. Total distance, forty miles.

*June 1st.*—We halted until late this evening, to allow the cattle to recover in some measure from the fatigues of yesterday. Moved in the evening six miles—the same broken sandy ground, and the same ugly dwarf bushes.

*June 2d.*—Moved during the night thirty miles. At daylight I was pushing on a-head with the young Turcoman, when he suddenly reined up the old mare, and listened attentively, crying, after a pause, "In-shallah, we'll have a sheep to-day;" and before I could make enquiries as to the why and wherefore, off went my friend at a gallop, leaving me to follow as I best might. In about five minutes I heard the bark of a dog; a shout was then raised for the shepherd, and in due time a creature appeared, much like the drawings of Robinson Crusoe. The young Turcoman and the shepherd were old friends, and their meeting was very animated. The shepherd hoisted himself about, leaning on his staff, and the young Turcoman, throwing his left leg over the pommel of the saddle, appeared to be giving an amusing account of our party, for they both grinned, and now and then laughed loudly. In a few minutes we reached the well, which proved to contain most delicious water, and

near it we found a camp of Turcomans, with large flocks of cattle; they are about to move to the river Oxus, finding it impossible to feed their cattle any longer in the desert. The water for their sheep was drawn up by slaves. Our party have been very busy this day, drinking buttermilk and water, and praising the young Turcoman guide. Total distance thirty miles.

*June 3d.* — Moved during the night twelve miles, and then slept till near daylight, after which, came on six miles to the much-talked-of Tukht. This is rather a large sand-hill, nothing else. The Turcomans believe that Solomon paid it a visit. If he came here on business, he was, of course, not to blame, but if he came here for pleasure, he must have been much disappointed, and showed no great proof of wisdom. The river Oxus is said, in former years, to have flowed near this spot. That wretch of a guide who was sent with me by the Governor of Merve, lost the road last night, and went back with the camels towards Merve. He was found this morning by young Daood, close to the last watering-place. Some travellers from Khyva are here, who confirm the report of the Russian retreat. Total distance eighteen miles.

*June 4th, Thursday.* — Came on last night eighteen and three-quarter miles, then slept for two hours, and this morning came on twenty-two miles to the river Oxus; the heat was very great. We are pitched on the edge of a small stream from the river, and the half-starved cattle are enjoying themselves among luxuriant grass and pure water. I have not yet seen the river. The last twenty miles of this road was generally hard, and the sound of the horses' hoofs was pleasant, after having waded through so much deep sand. The name of this place is Ruppa Kalla; there is the ruin of an old fort here. Total distance forty and three-quarter miles.

*June 5th.* — Delayed until three o'clock this morning, by the non-arrival of the camels. At four miles from Ruppa Kalla we passed a fort called Koosh Gullah; the road is along the banks of the Oxus, which is a magnificent stream, with rather high banks. I should estimate the distance between the high banks at three miles. Through this channel the body of the

water takes a serpentine course, now on one side, and now on the other, leaving large portions of dry ground, which are invariably covered with most luxuriant jungle. Immediately you ascend the high bank you are on the desert, and, I think, the same would be found on the other side. This noble stream flows on its stately course without deigning to hold any connexion with the barren wilderness on its banks; a fine image for one poetically disposed—vanity of vanities. If I have not been guilty of the presumption of comparing my wretched little *dribble* of a course to this noble stream, perhaps I may derive some little hope by thinking, that after its long uninteresting route through barren uncongenial wastes, it at length reaches its long-sought ocean. God grant that my wanderings may bring me to old England! About halfway, I should say the stream was five hundred yards in breadth. At the halting-place I don't think it was quite three hundred yards, and there was a small sand-bank near our side.

*June 6th.* — Last night came on eighteen miles. At three miles passed a ruined fort, the gate of which has some slight pretensions to architectural ornament. Slept until daylight, and came on this morning eleven miles to a high mound. Here we marched off into the bed of the river for water, and passed, before we reached it, through four miles of ground that has been highly cultivated, but is now neglected.

*June 7th.* — Last night came on sixteen miles. At four miles passed a spot which is sacred in the eyes of Turcomans, as having been the tomb of "Huzurut-Maduri-Baba-Adam," literally *Adam's mother!* They made offerings here, by turning loose a mare and horse; their progeny are said to be numerous, though I cannot say that I saw any of them. At nine miles came to the separation of two roads, one leading inland, and the other following the river; we took the latter; it is said to be the longer of the two, but we are sure of water and grass. Total distance thirty miles.

*June 8th.* — Came on seventeen miles, a good road, through heavy jungle, in immediate vicinity of the river, and sandy ground on the high

bank. Brutus was taken ill with dysentery during the night. I should pity the old man more if he did not groan so much; we are now halting on his account.

*June 9th.*—Last night came on twenty-five miles. After the first eleven miles left the river, and turned inland. Slept until daylight, and this morning came on ten miles. At two miles from sleeping-place we came to a small village, with a few trees and some cultivation, in a hollow, the ascent from which was rather precipitous; these are the first fixed habitations we have seen since leaving Merve. About one mile from this, passed another village, still smaller, and soon afterwards came in sight of this village, "Phitunk," which is very extensive, thickly populated, and appears to be highly cultivated; large trees in every direction, and many carts. Total distance thirty-five miles.

*June 10th.*—Wednesday, came on this morning thirteen miles, about a mile of which was through the village of Phitunk, and then eight miles across rather high barren ground, and the remainder through a cultivated country; round this place, "Hazar Asp," (thousand horses,) there is a fort of some size, but no strength. The Inak's garden seems a fine one, and the wealth and prosperity of the inhabitants, and the fertility of the soil, have surprised me greatly. From all accounts which I have ever read of Turkistan, the whole of the country is described as a desert, and the people as a miserable race, living in tents and possessing a few flocks of cattle; but from Merve I marched through thirty miles of cultivation watered by the Moorghaub. This cultivation appeared to extend for many miles inland, the khails being very numerous; and here the whole face of the country is a garden, and each family appears to have its own farm-house. The carts of the country meet you at every corner; they are invariably drawn by a stout pony. Their construction is coarse in the extreme; the wheels are of an enormous height, and the felloes absurdly deep; there is no tire, but the breadth of the wheel is not more than that of a common cart; the naves are exactly double the thickness necessary, and with all this wood the body of the cart is not larger than a good-sized wheelbarrow. The whole

affair looks like the "grandpapa" of the carts of the present century in England. Iron is too precious a metal at Khyva to be used if any substitute can be found, and consequently the carts here have hardly a single nail in them, and roll along screeching ludicrously on wooden axles. Instead of using iron bolts for the different fastenings, they fix them by a very strong glue which they procure from Russia, and which does not separate by immersing the parts so joined in water. This is the seat of the Inak, the brother of the Khan Huzarut of Khyva, and a very powerful and influential person in all affairs of government. He received me very kindly, assigning me quarters in the house of his Vuzeer, who is the brother of the Khan Huzarut's minister.

*June 11th, Thursday.*—Came on this day thirty-eight miles, the road very circuitous, and through the cultivation, which is divided alone by small ranges of sand-hills. I have never in India seen the ground more carefully cultivated, nor more densely populated—the whole country is beautifully wooded.

*June 12th, Friday.*—Entered the city of Khyva. There is a fort of some size here, but of no strength; all the houses are made of mud, the outer walls being solid and the inner partitions supported by wooden framework; they are of a considerable size, and the rooms are lofty, but unornamented, and without windows; if sufficient light cannot be procured from the doorway, a hole is knocked in the roof. Water is so near the surface that it is necessary to lay a foundation of wood or stone for all the walls. The gardens in the neighbourhood of the town are very numerous, and appear to be kept with much care. The bazar was crowded, the streets narrow and dirty: the climate is delicious. In the evening I was summoned to the Khan Huzarut's presence. His highness received me very graciously. There is no pomp or show about his court, no guards whatever, and I did not see a jewel of any sort. The court robes are the same as those of the working people—a cotton stuffed cloak, and a high black lambskin cap. I was informed that it would be "out of order" if I appeared before the Khan without my boots. It was in vain to point to my Wellingtons—these

were pronounced as *nothing*; so, rather than be suspected of disrespect, I pulled on a large pair of Affghan riding-boots over my gold-laced pantaloons: these, with my beard, made rather curious additions to the undress uniform of the gallant Bengal artillery. I fancy by appearing booted it is meant to show that you are ready to obey the Khan's orders at a moment's notice.

*June 13th.*—Summoned again to the Khan Huzarut's presence. I was taken to a garden seat, a favourite spot. I passed through a long gallery, with a flat roof supported by beams, and, after one or two zig-zags, entered a court surrounded by buildings, containing a large pond of water, on the edge of which there were many fine trees. From this court we made one or two zig-zags to another similar court, and from thence to a third, the zig-zags from which led to the Khan's dwelling. After ascending two or three flights of narrow steep steps, I found myself in a large verandah, and in the presence of Khan Huzarut. The interview passed off very pleasantly, and the Khan was pleased to give me access to his presence at any hour.

*June 14th.*—This evening I waited on Khan Huzarut on business at the garden seat. I have omitted to mention that the eldest son of Cazez Moolah, Mahomed Hassan, who had been sent several months previously with money and letters for Captain Abbott, returned to Khyva on the day of my arrival. It appeared that he reached Khyva after Captain Abbott's departure, and followed him to Mungisbauk on the Caspian sea. There he heard that Abbott had moved along the Caspian to Nova Alexandroff, a Russian fort; and following his traces, he at length found Abbott a prisoner and wounded among the Cuzzacks. It appears that fifty Cuzzacks at night attacked Abbott's small party, and soon overpowered them. Abbott was four times beaten to the ground, and in protecting himself from sabre cuts, lost the fore and middle fingers of his right hand, and received several other wounds. He was found by the Cazez's son in a wretched state, seventeen days after the attack; three of his servants had been distributed as slaves, and he himself had been allowed but little food, and deprived of all his property.

The presence of the Cazez's son, and some of the Khan Huzarut's Sowars who accompanied him, frightened the Cuzzacks, and Abbott was allowed to move to the camp of a neighbouring Turcoman, who received him very hospitably. After a short time the Cazez's son accompanied him to the vicinity of Nova Alexandroff, where they parted, Captain Abbott telling him to wait three days, and, if in that time no letter arrived, to return to Khyva.

On the fourth day, no news having arrived, the Cazez's son came back to this city; but before he left, he heard that Captain Abbott had been received by the Russian authorities at Nova Alexandroff, by whom he had been placed on board a ship which was to carry him across the Caspian. Brutus's head is in the skies in consequence of his son's valour and perseverance; and he may well be proud of him, for there are few men who would have entered upon the journey which he undertook, and but very few who would have succeeded in reaching Abbott. I have done my best to bring the young man's conduct to the notice of government, and have given him a handsome red Cashmere shawl, to let the Turcomans see that we can appreciate such good service. I was much surprised a few days after my arrival at Khyva, by seeing a person in an European costume enter my khurgah; I saluted him in Persian, but I soon found that he spoke French. His story was sufficiently amusing. It appears that he was a native of Italy, and had there earned his bread by making plaster-of-paris statues; but owing to the immense number of competitors in his branch of industry, he found it difficult to procure even a bare subsistence; and being of an adventurous spirit, he resolved to try to penetrate to some spot where he might manufacture statues without a rival. Urged on by this laudable ambition, he worked his way on board a ship to Petersburg; but here, to his horror, he found hundreds of his countrymen, each with such a stock of statues, as at once convinced him of the hopelessness of success in that city; but still undaunted, he made his way through Russia, and ultimately arrived at Tiflis, where, to his extreme delight, he found himself the sole and unrivalled artist in his profession.

Here then he fondly hoped his wanderings would cease, and he commenced his operations with great vigour, and at first with much success; but just as he had set a-going a thriving trade, the priests discovered that the making of images was forbidden in the Book, and they therefore strictly forbade the Faithful purchasing his manufactures. Still undaunted, he determined to try some other line of business, and put himself as apprentice to a German watchmaker at Tiflis, and in the prosecution of his studies in this branch, he ultimately found his way to Teheran. Here an ambassador arrived on his road to Kokaun, (near the Chinese frontier,) and delighted my poor friend beyond measure by offering to take him to Kokaun; "for," said he, "though, perhaps, the bigoted fools may refuse my images, still they will eagerly purchase my clocks; and, thank God, at any rate I can hardly fear to find a rival at Kokaun in either branch."

The man cannot read, but he is shrewd, and has promised me to keep a list of his bearings and distances on this journey, which has never before been travelled by an European. He says that though he cannot write any known language, still he has invented a system of hieroglyphics of his own, so that, "if I ever get back to you, I shall be able to explain my notes."

It may be as well, now that this journey from Herat is over, to make a few remarks respecting it. The fatigue was certainly very great, but I know not whether the climate of Herat has improved my constitution, or whether habit has made me indifferent to many little comforts—but I did not suffer. I had only a small tent of two cloths, through which I might have taken altitudes of the sun, and at night I never dreamt of pitching this apology for a tent. I am convinced that when marching for months together, and independent of supplies at the places where you halt, the native plan of dividing the distance to be crossed in the twenty-four hours into two stages, is a good one; and should another army of the Indus leave India, I think they would find this plan answer. Your camels and your cattle have the cool of the morning and evening for work, and the middle of the day to feed, and they have a good night's rest, instead of being loaded

or harnessed in the middle of the night. The last five or six miles of a sixteen-mile march ruined our gun-cattle on the Afghan campaign; when the same sixteen-mile march, if divided into two portions, morning and evening, would have given no fatigue to the beasts. As for the trouble to the men of pitching their tents, I think the natives seldom pitched theirs, and the Europeans only when the heat was very great. The men have the trouble of twice loading, but they ought not to grudge this, seeing that the baggage-cattle will last them longer. They certainly take as little care of their horses as any people in the world: one groom is considered sufficient for three, and the only grass the animal gets is what he can pick up within the range of his tether: three cosseers (six lbs.) of barley is considered ample in the twenty-four hours. Immediately you dismount, the girths of the saddle are a little loosened, and a blanket thrown over. In about an hour, when he has somewhat cooled, the saddle is taken off his back, and a blanket and all the thick felts you have, are clapt on, and there the poor beast stands (however hot the sun may be) until about an hour before you load again, when the one groom takes the clothing off his three horses, and with the bare palm of his hand goes through a process which he is pleased to call cleaning the three horses. He never dreams of washing or cleaning the hoofs, and his chief aim seems to be to clean the tail carefully; this he drenches with abundance of cold water, and if the flies are not very troublesome, he ties a knot about halfway; the saddle is then clapt on his back, with heaven only knows how many pads under it to prevent its galling. When all is ready, you are requested to mount, which is an affair of much ceremony, at which all hands attend; one man takes hold of the off stirrup, a precaution necessary to prevent the saddle coming round with your weight; a second gives you the near stirrup; a third puts his right hand under your left arm, and all the lookers-on, as you rise, exclaim in chorus, "Oh God! may it be propitious!" and when the whole party is mounted, a hearty ejaculation of "In the name of God!" is given, and off you start. The result of this neglect of the cattle is, that of

the whole number which came with me, every one, horse, yaboo, or mule, except the horse I rode, of whom more anon, arrived dreadfully pulled down, and there was only one baggage pony out of the whole of the cattle that had not a sore back; some of the saddle horses in particular were dreadfully galled; but if the Affghans have the knack of causing sores, they certainly know how to cure them. One poor beast in particular, a saddle horse, (the one ridden by the Wolf from *Heraut to Merve*,) had on the march an enormous wound on his back, from which a most offensive smell exhaled. I had little hope of this beast surviving, but they brought him to me to-day in almost tolerable condition, his wounds had healed up, and he looked healthy. They never poultice to extract matter, but stuff loose cotton into the sores, and change this cotton frequently; when the sore has filled up, they rub henna over the part, which they believe makes the hair grow and hardens the skin. We have heard much of Turcoman horses and Turcoman horsemanship—I confess my opinion of both is, that they are alike contemptible. I had for my own riding a horse called *Choorlie*, which had been bought of the Turka Turcomans by the chief of the tribe of *Hazarah Demauks*, by whom it was presented to government. This horse's speed and powers of endurance were so famous amongst the Turcomans, that every man I met had heard of him, and the importance of my mission was considerably enhanced by the possession of this animal; and yet I would not give, in India, 400 rupees for him. He has a great deal of Arab blood, yet his head and neck run out exactly on a prolongation of his back-bone, and with his nose stuck out he shuffles along more like a cow than a horse; his mouth is dreadful; I would not undertake to turn him round in much less than an acre of ground, and he is of so sluggish a disposition that I was obliged to keep the whip constantly playing against his side. As for leaping he has not the most remote idea of it, and I don't think it possible he could get over a four-foot ditch without having a tumble—so much for his faults. Now for his virtues—he keeps his flesh well under long marches, eats any thing that comes in his way, is as quiet as a

lamb, walks fast, and ambles nearly eight miles an hour. I timed this horse at a race, over very bad ground indeed, and when he was not in the least pressed by other horses; the distance was one mile, five furlongs, and 170 yards, measured by a perambulator, and this distance was done in three minutes and forty-five seconds. I am no judge of such matters, but whether this was a good or bad time, it must be borne in mind that the ground was covered by small ravines and loose stones. He is a perfect horse in the eyes of the Turcomans, and whenever he is taken to water the people collect to look at him; he is a dark bay, strongly formed about the hind quarters, with a long high-ridged back-bone, rather heavy shoulders, and stands about fourteen-three. His name, "*Choorlie*," was given by the Turcomans in consequence of a large scar which he has over the knee of his near fore-leg; but in general their celebrated horses take the name of their owners. The price of one of these known and tried horses is about 1200 Company's rupees (L. 120), though of course there are some that are not to be bought at any price. The Turcoman mode of training is very different from that followed by our racing characters. At one year and a half old the tuition of the infant Childers commences;—a child is placed on his back, who walks him about slowly, at first a very short distance; and when he can masticate grain they give him a little barley or *jewarree*; the clothing is always very warm; a great deal of food is given in the twenty-four hours, but very little at any one time, and but little water, but the pace is never increased beyond a walk; and when not taking exercise he is either in the tent or close to it, so that he becomes from his earliest days perfectly domesticated and docile. At about three years and a half old they commence training him for a trial, which is but little different from his former training; the distances are gradually increased, but the pace does not alter for many days. At length the poor beast, not being able to walk over sufficient ground in the day, is led about at night until his flesh is brought to a consistency. If melons are procurable, he gets large quantities of these in addition to his other food; and at this stage of the training he is allowed to eat as

much grain as he pleases, but never much at any one time, and he is never allowed much water; a system of sweating is then gone through, and gradually the pace is increased into his best gallop, at which he is at last kept for ten or twelve miles, and then he challenges all the world! without having received one ball or seen a drenching horn. Think of that, ye knowing ones! The only advantage, unless you are a racing character, in purchasing one of these tried horses, is, that you get a beast whose constitution and sinews are hardened by constant exercise, which has been so gradually increased that the animal is not strained or injured, and is able to go through the severest exercise for days together, without loss of condition. But if you are fond of scampering across country, or twisting and twirling your horse about, you must not come to this market, for all people will decide that both horse and man are mad; and a compact little Arab for hunting, or a pleasant canter, is worth all the Turcoman's horses I have yet seen. All the best Turcoman horses have a cross of the Arab blood. I brought with me a handsome compact Arab as a present to the Khan Huzarut. This horse was seldom ridden on the march, and taken more care of than the other horses; but he had been accustomed to two grooms scrubbing his back for hours morning and evening, and to more grass and grain than I could give him, and he fell off sadly on the road, arriving here in such wretched condition that I wished to keep him for a fortnight; but on the second day I was requested to send him to the palace. I urged the miserable state of the nag, but they told me that a Turcoman liked to judge of a horse when he had little flesh; and on my sending the horse, all the spectators were loud in praise of his form and strength. The head of the Turcoman horse is long, his neck is light and long, and he has seldom any crest; his shoulder is heavy, his pasterns are short and straight, hoofs good, hind-quarters and loins very broad and strong, but his hocks not sufficiently curved, and his fore-legs covered with splints, which are occasioned by the peculiar mode of shoeing; in short, he is exactly adapted to the work required of him—to march twenty or thirty days, at the rate of fifty or sixty

miles per diem, with his nose straight before him, never once turning round, and never breaking out of a walk or amble. So much for their horses, now for their horsemanship. Any man who has crossed a Turcoman saddle, *must* feel that though it is difficult for him to tumble off, still it is morally and physically impossible for him to govern his horse. In one of our saddles a man is part and parcel of his horse, and the animal *must* obey the rational being; but seated on one of these affairs called saddles here, a man feels that he is at the horse's mercy; he has the consolation of knowing that the beast is perfectly quiet, and will walk straight along the road; but being yourself raised at least five inches from the back-bone of the horse, and your knees being forced out from his sides by the pad on which the saddle-tree is placed, you feel at once the utter impossibility of governing your horse; and to one accustomed to a light-mouthed Arab, well on his haunches, the first touch of the mouth of a Turcoman horse is sickening; you feel at once that the case is hopeless, and that you *must* progress in a straight line. Now, as this peculiarity of mouth and saddle is universal, the result may be imagined when a body of men, on such saddles, and horses with such mouths, charge. It is impossible, as a friend of mine observes, to change "the direction of the headlong impetus;" and if the flank is turned, the whole are thrown into deplorable confusion. I should say that one of Skinner's horse, with sword and spear, would master three Turcomans similarly armed; and I will answer for it, that H. M. 4th Dragoons cut up 5000 Turcoman horse, *if* the latter presumes to charge, or will venture to wait for a charge. A good deal is said in neighbouring states of Turcoman valour; but I cannot hear that they ever attack parties of equal numerical strength, and in a fair open plain. Their assaults are something like those of the *valorous* cat on the feeble mouse. If a road has not been *chapowed* (plundered) for a year, and caravans are constantly passing on it, twenty or thirty of the Turka Turcomans, or some other tribe perhaps 300 miles distant, will train their horses for a couple of months, and make a descent on the road, along



which they sweep off the caravans, killing or carrying into slavery all the human beings. Now, let us see the opposition they have met with. They have first of all what to other people and horses would be a most harassing march, but they, man and beast, are trained and hardened to it. The first string of camels they come upon will be most probably of twenty-one in number, carrying grain; if this is the case, it is most likely that there will not be more than three human beings with them, each mounted on a donkey, and carrying a thick stick to thrash the camels with; one rides a-head, holding the nose-string of the leading camel; another rides by the side of the string of camels, thrashing any particularly lazy beast; and the third brings up the rear. They have plodded through the sand all night; it is just daylight, and all three are half asleep as they ride along. Suddenly a cry is raised from the rear, and, brandishing their swords and spears, down come the Turcomans, shouting as if they were going to do an act of valour which should immortalize them and their nation. On the first cry, the three unfortunate wretches with the camels have thrown themselves on the ground, and with foreheads in the dust, are muttering prayers to God for protection, and to man for mercy. They are seized and bound, and one or two Turcomans are told off to conduct them and their cattle to the *khail* of the tribe. The camels and donkeys, immediately after their drivers throw themselves on the ground, commence munching the thorns and grass by the roadside, and when all is ready are led off from the direct road. The three poor wretches, fatigued by the night's march, without water or shoes, and with their hands tied behind their backs, are driven by blows and menaces, screaming, after the camels which they so lately governed. Well may they shed tears of anguish, for well they know their fate. Never in their surliest mood did they inflict such cruel treatment on their cattle, as they themselves are now doomed to undergo from their fellow-creatures; and all hopes of home, of wife, children, and kindred, have vanished like the dreams of the previous night! The rest of their life is doomed to be passed in slavery, amongst a people indifferent to human sufferings, and

unacquainted with mercy! This deed of infamy performed, the Turcomans move on to the well, or lie in wait for another *kafilah*; perhaps the next may consist of travellers; an old man, his wife, and only son, have been persecuted in one city, and, to save their little remaining property, are flying to another town, where they have friends, to the daughter of one of whom the son has been long betrothed. The old man's wife and the slave girl of the family (most probably called *Fatima*) are seated in panniers on the leading camel's back; two more camels carry the wealth of the family, and perhaps they have two servants riding on the top of the loads of wretched ponies, one of these will have the old man's pipe, and both carry leather bags of water; the rest of the party consist of poor *moollahs* (priests) and tradespeople, wretchedly armed. It is but a few hours since the party left the well, after what they consider a comfortable meal. The old man and his spouse are chatting sociably about past misfortunes, and drawing bright pictures for the future; the beardless boy has a good gun swung over his back, he is riding a handsome horse, is well clothed, fancies himself a hero, and is perhaps thinking of those bright eyes which for so many years he has heard so highly praised. *Fatima* is dosing in her pannier, holding the master's gun, which, owing to its weight and the old man's infirmities, has been committed to her care; the two servants are somewhat in the rear, screaming in chorus some national song; the rest of the travellers are some distance a-head, when suddenly a shout is raised, and in a moment the Turcomans are on them. Willingly would the old man or his son risk their lives to save the females—the old man shouts to *Fatima* for the gun, but she, at the first shout of the Turcomans, has gone off into hysterics, and is clinging fast by the gun, screaming to her mistress, who has fainted. The old man then bethinks him of his pistols—these are loaded but not primed—they are tied in a bag and in his holsters; before he can extricate them from the bag, and prime, a spear is passed through his body. The son is perhaps willing enough to fight, but he has not been much in the habit of using his fire-arms; his gun is loaded but not primed, and before

he can bring it round, and remember in which of his numerous pouches he will find the priming powder, he is thrown from his horse and disarmed. The two servants have been seized without opposition, and the other travellers have fled in all directions. The camel carrying the women is now made to sit down, the unfortunate wretches are dragged brutally to the ground, and their veils torn off; their cries for mercy and attempts to screen their faces are alike food for mirth to these accursed savages, who, curling their scanty mustaches and shaking their spears, loudly boast of their invincible valour, and ask, "Who was Roostum, whom they talk so much of?" The old man's lot is by far the most preferable; for while muttering prayers his eyes are closed for ever, and he will no more feel oppression or grief for the sufferings of his wife and son. The poor women, if possessing any beauty, are allowed to ride on the camels and have food given to them, lest hardship and suffering should reduce their value when produced for sale. The men of the party have the same fate as the three camel drivers, and another tale of blood and barbarity is registered against the race of Toorkestan. The last booty and captives are sent on the track of the first, and, if satisfied with the plunder gained, the Turcomans proceed to their khail, where they are received as heroes returning from victory; or if they have hopes of more plunder, they make one or two forced marches in search of travellers equally helpless. But they never attack a formidable party, nor have they ever been known to make a second assault when foiled in their first; and it stands to reason that so puny a race—so sunk in vice—can have no chance against any thing like an equality of numbers, where brave and determined men are the parties attacked. What they depend upon is the first surprise, and if they fail in this, they scatter like the sand of their desert from the slightest breeze. It is generally believed that the Turcomans are a race of miserable creatures, without wealth. I am of opinion, on the contrary, that there are few nations amongst whom abundance is so generally diffused. They have all very large flocks of cattle, and numerous slaves; the latter cultivate as much land as will produce grain sufficient for the family, or as

much as there is any hope of selling. Thirty tillahs, or L.21 sterling, is a common price in the market here for a stout man of middle age. Five tillahs, or L.4, is the price of a tolerable pony; a good camel fetches seven tillahs, or L.5, 12s., and sheep are sold for one tillah, or 14s. each. A great deal of Jawarree (which here is the only food of the horses) is sold at about 40 lbs. for one shilling, and the only tax levied by the government is one-fortieth of the grain produced. Each family is bound, if called on, to find one horseman. The Khan crossed the desert from Khyva to the Moorghaub with 50,000 horse thus collected; but on an emergency he could easily assemble double that number, and these troops could traverse a country where Europeans would perish. To the honour of the Khan Huzarat be it said, that he has put an end to all plundering excursions, excepting on the countries or kafilas of nations with whom he is at war. The hospitality of the Turcomans is more in proverb than reality. I have been the guest of several, and always gave my host in coin more than double the value of every thing I received; and I never knew any scruple made as to accepting the money, though I have had complaints as to the smallness of the amount given; and they have often refused to sell me sheep at less than three times the proper price. This nation is very bigoted in its religious faith, much more so than the Affghans. Brutus and my party are much abused for eating with me, as I am considered a kafir or infidel. Brutus gets very wroth on these occasions; he refers them to the Koran, which bears witness to the truth of the New Testament, and he asks, indignantly, whether in the Koran it is written that man shall smoke intoxicating drugs, eat opium, drink wine, and commit other vices too horrible to mention, and (continues he to the gaping Turks) "if these things are not permitted, how dare you presume to call yourselves Mussulmen?" Any other man speaking out so plainly would most assuredly be put to death; but, as a Cazee and Moollah of known family, Brutus is here considered almost a saint; and as he has a great command of language, he frightens these people by volleys of Arabic, which he lets fall in merciless showers on their devoted heads.

These scenes never take place in my presence; but I often see Brutus in a fury, and it relieves him much to abuse these sons of burnt fathers—this race of dogs, as he always calls the Turcomans.

But this essay on Turcoman horses, horsemanship, and valour, is merely “*en passant*,” and now, “*revenons a nos moutons*,”—the review of the march from Heraut to this. I would divide the distance thus: from Heraut to Merve, 265 miles; from Merve to Khyva, 432½; total distance, 697½ miles, which we crossed (not including the halt at Merve) in twenty-five days, (I count to Khoosh Robat, only one stage from Heraut,) or an average of twenty-eight miles a-day. We should have done it in shorter time, but the fording of the Moorghaub and the sickness of Brutus detained us. The only part of the road which was trying to man and beast, was the 170 miles across the desert from the Moorghaub to the Oxus, and this portion was very fatiguing, uninteresting, and disagreeable. The heat during the six days we were in the desert was very great, and the doubt as to finding water was harassing. During every other part of the road, particularly in the cool of the evening, it was pleasant enough pushing along with the mules. On these occasions, all the Kipchag horsemen, except the Wolf, took the lead; the Wolf's duty seemed, by his own choice and general approval, to be confined to looking after the loads of the mules while on the road—and he was most active in the execution of this duty, jumping off, jerking a box to one side, tightening a rope, and mounting again in a moment. After the mules came our baggage ponies, and the man who rode the last always held the rope of the led horse—the Arab which I have already mentioned. Immediately after the led horse, Brutus and I followed, and then my two private servants, one carrying leather bottles of water, tea apparatus, and bread and sweetmeats, and the other my pipe; for this he had large holsters, and a pan of burning charcoal swinging from his saddle. Under his pony he had also a leather bottle of water; so that, without stopping, I could have a *kullian* at a moment's warning. After three or four pulls, the pipe was handed round to any one disposed for a whiff, and old Brutus was then a constant smoker;

but since his arrival here he has requested my man not to bring the pipe to him, as he says his character as a Cazee will suffer in the estimation of these hounds (the Turcomans) if he is seen smoking—but, to proceed regarding our procession. After the servants came Brutus' servant and Mahomed Daood; Khoda Woordee and Fazil Khan brought up the rear. We generally shuffled along at four miles an hour, and Brutus would tell me some anecdotes of his very eventful life, interrupted every now and then by an admonition to the muleteers of “push on, ye rascals—step out, ye lazy knaves,” while I in turn gave him stories of “Yankee Doneah,” as people of this part of the world invariably call America. Khoda Woordee, for the express benefit of Mahomed Daood, would tell some tale of years gone by, in a sort of chant, with a strong nasal twang, and Fazil Khan would think on his bhae (brother) and the last order he received from me; these two, I firmly believe, being the only ideas that ever entered his head. Thus we would while away the time until eleven or twelve at night, when a good place for grass was selected, the loads unpacked, the tea cooked, and then for “tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep.” Before daylight some one would awake and shout to Mahomed Daood to commence loading; he, thoroughly tired with his exertions and the last day's march, would turn round, muttering “Barley, muleteers, give barley;” but here “his exposition of sleep,” as sweet Bully Button hath it, would be too much for him; but another shout being raised to load, up he jumps, shouting “Up, ye muleteers! sons of burnt fathers, arise, will ye? Oh may your houses be ruined! will you sleep all day?” and a hearty kick or two makes the grumbling tired mule-drivers rub their eyes, and growl out a sulky “*bechushun*” of obedience. Another cup of tea before starting, and on we go until about ten A. M., when we pull up at a convenient spot for the cattle. About two in the day, something or other was brought for dinner; if we had killed a sheep the day before, I always liked to have Brutus, his son, Khoda Woordee, Fazil Khan, and the commander of the Kipchag Sowars at dinner; but these were feast-days, and rice and a few raisins was often our only food. I was

most fortunate in the selection of my party, with one exception, of whom more by and by. Never did men behave better, and it was impossible for men to be more attentive to their duty. I should like few things better than to take a three-months' trip in any direction, in the cold weather, with just the same party. The exception to the good men and true, to whom I have alluded, was a Moollah, whom my people brought to me at Heraut, saying that his son was a slave at Khyva, and he wished to go with me to endeavour to effect his release. Now, as there are in the city of Khyva nearly 12,000 slaves of the inhabitants of the valley of Heraut, I could not promise to effect the release of this stranger's son, more than that of any other of the 12,000. This I explained to the man, but told him if he could effect his son's release, he might accompany us, and I would find food for himself and his horse on the road. The man was profuse in thanks for my liberality as he called it, and prayed loudly for my health, wealth, and prosperity. At Merve this man's horse died, and I purchased another for him; and he came on here eating his own dinner, and feeding his own horse at my expense. Here he found a high tone of Mahomedanism prevailed, and, like a cur as he was, he determined to try and effect the release of his son by joining in the cry against us, and he actually went and fabricated a lie, which he took some trouble to spread, saying that Brutus had desired him not to say his prayers on the road, at least to avoid doing so in my presence. Now this lie, if it had been believed, might have caused the death of myself and party. I can't say that I was not angry when I heard of the creature's baseness, but I am happy to say I did not show my anger; but sending for all the party, I asked them one by one whether they had been in the habit of praying when I was present, and whether Brutus had prohibited their doing so? The fact is, that at the usual hours the men dismounted, and prayed as a matter of course, whether I was present or absent. I then quietly asked the creature whether I had fed him on the road—whether I had given him a horse when he must otherwise have remained behind, and then asked why he told such lies—concluding by

telling him that I washed my hands of him for the future. He has since been busy spreading this report, but he is not believed. The country from Heraut to the crest of the hills is mountainous and picturesque, but it has the defect (common to all Afghanistan) of being destitute of foliage. From the crest of the hills you gradually descend to a plain which extends, with little variation, from the river Moorghaub to the mountains. When, with the army of the Indus, we ascended the Bolan pass, I little thought that I should penetrate through the whole of the hilly range of Kohistan, and at length descend on a plain, equal in flatness and in extent to the plains of Hindostan. I crossed the river Moorghaub a few miles above the spot where it is lost in the desert, and before the floods caused by the melting of the snow in the mountains had subsided. The road along the Oxus is travelled by the carts of the country, and grass and wood are very abundant. The river is navigated by boats of considerable size, and appears to be admirably adapted for steam navigation. In the wood and grass on its banks I saw several pheasants, and one wild ass. Being anxious to endeavour to fix the latitude of Khyva, I commenced taking an observation of the altitude of the moon, but soon found that I excited much suspicion. Having occasion to see the Khan that evening, I put my box sextant into my pocket, and the conversation, as usual, turning on the skill of Europeans in manufactures, I produced my instrument as a sample, and made the Khan himself, much to his surprise, bring down the sun, and move the image of one of his courtiers about from right to left. The whole court was in raptures, and I was asked in plain terms to make an offering of the toy to the Khan. This I promised to do before leaving, but in the mean time I can amuse myself without any suspicion of sorcery.

June 30th.—I was this day summoned to one of the Khan's summer houses, to be present at one of the feasts which he is in the habit of giving at this season of the year. We were shown into a large court, in one corner of which there was a kurgah pitched: in this was his highness invisible to vulgar eyes. Sixty moollahs (priests) extended in one line

down one side of the court, and sixty of his highness's relations and the nobles of his court, down the other side. We (Brutus and I) were taken to the right side, and seated next the princes. When we arrived, the moollahs were loud in the discussion of some theological question, which they tore to pieces at a sad rate, without (in my eyes) a proper respect for the presence of royalty. The Koran was then brought, and a passage read, one of the moollahs attempting to expound; but he never could get through a sentence without meeting with interruption from some opponent: three or four would join in on either side, and both parties were equally positive. I saw something very like jostling, and his majesty was more than once compelled to send his Vuzeer to call the parties to order. Three long hours did these theological discussions last: they were carried on in Turkee, and explanatory of a book in Arabic. The sitting with the knees doubled on the bare ground was painful, and I was much rejoiced to see preparations making for the feast. At length long slips of chintz were brought in, and laid in front of the lines of visitors—these were our table-cloths. On these were placed cakes of bread, which were brought in by thirty slaves, marching round in procession; taking the time from the senior officer of the household, we tore up these cakes and eat them. The thirty slaves again entered in procession, each carrying two small china plates, which contained preserved fruits. After this another procession: the thirty slaves entered, carrying each a large bowl which contained a sort of national soup, which had such a very objectionable appearance that I did not touch it. The next procession of slaves brought in dishes of pillaw, which was not well cooked; and on their being removed, a great number of slaves entered bearing raisins and dried plums, which they deposited in front of the spot where his majesty was supposed to be still sitting; meaning by this to show, that those who received them should understand that they came direct from the hands of majesty. On some of these being handed to us, Brutus whispered me to take a large handful and pocket them, which of course I did. A great number of loaves of sugar were now

brought in, and placed in the centre of the square. About a dozen of these were split into two equal portions, but all the rest were broken into small pieces: the half is only given to men of rank, and Brutus appeared gratified at our receiving this distinction, and begged me to pocket mine. Luckily I wore an Afghan dress with large pockets, or I know not what I should have done with the spoils. After the sugar had been pocketed, all hands rose and moved towards the door, and so ended this festival. I was so cramped that I could hardly walk; and the idea of 120 human beings marching out, each with one pocket full of sugar, and the other full of raisins, was trying to one's risible faculties; but I followed the customs of the court, and carried off my spoils as grave as a judge. The town of Khyva consists of a few streets of mud houses: there is one covered bazar, which, though small, is a handsome and substantial building. The colleges are showy buildings, ornamented with coloured tiles, which have a gay effect; but the water is so near the surface, that it is hardly possible to give a sufficient foundation in it. Owing to this cause the minarets all slope from the perpendicular, and the walls are in general separated at the corners of the buildings. The chief beauty of Khyva consists in the luxuriant growth of the trees, and in the number and extent of the gardens. These are invariably surrounded by a thick wall of twenty or even thirty feet high. The buttresses are formed something like bastions, so that at first these gardens may easily be mistaken for forts. Long rows of poplar-trees, branching off from a pool of water in the centre, is the usual plan of the gardens; and the house is generally built in one of the sides, and commands a full view of the garden. I arrived at Khyva on the 12th of June, and remained there fifty-two days; this season is sometimes unhealthy, owing to the rice crops, which, as usual, cause much malaria, and consequently fever and ague; but we were exceedingly fortunate, and I heard of very few cases. The climate is very healthy, and the seasons much similar to those in England, except the winter, which is intensely severe. The fruits are very delicious, particularly the melon, than

which nothing can be of more exquisite flavour—they boast a hundred different sorts; there is one of a long oval shape, which is of a light green colour, and delicate as new-fallen snow. A child may eat any quantity of this fruit without suffering.

The grapes are most abundant, but I have not tasted any equal in flavour to those grown on the banks of the Furra Rood, a river in Afghanistan. Here the vine is supported on sticks, and in winter, after pruning, they bury the main branches under the earth to protect them from the frost. Apples, pears, plums, &c., are all found in great abundance.

The Khan is a good-natured, unaffected person of about forty-five years of age; he has invariably treated me with much kindness, and appears very anxious to gain information regarding England, and Europe generally. He is much respected by his subjects, with whom he bears a high character for justice. He has a very large hawk establishment, and is very partial to this sport, for which he is in the habit of making frequent excursions on the opposite banks of the river, where game is said to be very abundant. He also moves out annually in the spring, to superintend the opening of the canals for irrigation. The whole of the cultivation is dependent on the supply of water drawn from the river by these canals, as the showers of rain are very slight. The fish in the Oxus are very abundant, of excellent quality; and lower down the river, at Kurakulpauk, the natives subsist entirely on them. The trade is chiefly with Russia, from whence the sugar and broad cloth are sent in caravans. The teeth of the sea-horse, from the polar regions, is also an article of commerce. From Mungisbank to Khyva, a camel can carry his load in twenty-two days; and from Petersburg to Mungisbank there is one uninterrupted communication by water. Peter the Great formed the canal communication between Petersburg and the Volga, and thus won from Cowper the memorable line, "The astonished Caspian hears the distant Baltic roar."

With such advantages, it is unnecessary to say that we can hardly hope to compete with Russian merchants in the Khyvan market. Owing to the late war with Russia, no merchandise reached

Khyva, except through Bokhara, from Ourenbourg; but a glance at the map will show that the proper outlet for merchandize from Eastern Russia into Northern Asia is not from Ourenbourg, but from Astrakhan, from whence sailing vessels cross in two days to Mungisbank. So that, in twenty-four days, the Russian goods can be sent from one of their large towns directly to the capital of Toorkistaun. If the Khan of Khyva and his successors consult their own interest by giving protection to merchants, I think there is very little doubt of their having the whole of the Russian trade with Northern Asia carried through their city.

August 3d.—I have been too busy with office matters to resume this rambling journal up to this date; in the mean time the following occurrences have taken place:—Brutus has returned to Heraut; the Khan Huzarut has made over to me all the Russian prisoners, and I am to take them to a Russian fort on the eastern shore of the Caspian. The announcement of this determination put the mettle of my establishment to a severe test. The sufferings of Captain Abbott and his party, among the Cuzzacks, have not been forgotten; and as I gave out that I should take ship at Nova Alexandroff, it is hardly surprising that some of the muleteers and understrappers should have begged to be excused sharing my fortunes any further. Old Brutus seemed to consider it a matter of course that I should take him; and on my first breaking to him my determination to send him back to Heraut, he was loud in his exclamations of the impossibility of returning without me—"He might live a thousand years, but he never would return to Heraut unless in my company. How could he? would not his face be blackened to all eternity? Heaven be praised! neither his father nor grandfather had eaten the salt of ingratitude; and as for himself! what petition should he make? was it not evident to all people that he lived but in the favour of the gentleman," &c. &c. The old man, I really believe, had I wished it, would have accompanied me with the best grace in his power; but his age and infirmities prevented my ever dreaming of such a thing. He has a young son and an old wife to look after; young Daod

had been purchasing some presents for his young wife, to whom he had been married about a month previous to our leaving Heraut, but his only remark was, with a sigh, "Well, father, you must take these Russian boxes to my house;" and he has been invaluable in superintending all the thousand preparations for this long and harassing march. Khoda Woordee considered it a matter of course that he should accompany me; and Fazil, "the faithful," said, he "of course should not return to Hindoostan except in my company;" and he has been about a fortnight endeavouring to explain the purport of a letter which he wishes to have sent to his Bhae, (brother,) to the effect that a certain young damsel in Rajpootana may be released from her betrothal to him, as he is going to accompany the gentleman to *Petersporh*. Brutus is much horrified at my expressing a determination to shave off my beard when I arrive in Russia. At first he thought I was joking; but finding that I was serious, he begged me to reflect that the beard was given to man as an ornament; that, according to *the Book*, damages might be recovered from any one who deprived you of this appendage; that to lose it, was the most serious disgrace and misfortune that could befall a man; but that knowingly, and from forethought, to *deprive one's-self* of such an ornament, was, he begged to submit to my superior judgment, *not* the act of a wise man; and here followed some flattering remarks on the promising appearance of *the beard* that was in danger. I humbly urged that the custom of Feringistan was such, and that surely the dust was an argument in favour of the razor; but my remarks made no impression on the old conspirator, who remained stroking his own thin beard with a very serious thoughtful countenance. After some time, I asked him what would Khoda Woordee do in Russia? This was too much for the old gentleman's gravity: we had a hearty laugh at the idea of any barber being rash enough to think he could remove the forest of a beard which flows from Khoda Woordee's chin. The Kipchags did not relish the trip, and I was not anxious to take them. They have accompanied Brutus on his return to Heraut.

Old Brutus was very anxious to

grace his return by taking away several Heraut slaves with him, amongst the rest, the daughter of the Kutub: long and often did he dwell upon the latter woman's sufferings. She, the daughter of the "Sayer of Prayers," behind whom the king and nobles of Heraut prayed! Shame on him if he left her here! I could only assist him in my good wishes, but these were of little value. At length he determined on making a representation to the Khan Huzarut on the subject, and the result was, that the woman was promised to him. The next day he rushed into my room in a perfect fury; it was some time before he could collect his breath enough to tell me the cause. At length, amongst curses on those sons of burnt fathers, this race of dogs! he told me, that instead of the Kutub's daughters, they had released and sent to him a female relation of the notorious plunderer, Bi Bood! one of the greatest villains that an age of misrule ever produced. And now, said Brutus, "if I do not return this woman, there is no hope of the Kutub's daughter, as in the eyes of this race all women are alike; they have given me one woman, and *that* was their promise, and, if I send back this woman, Bi Bood will never rest until he has ruined me and my house? Upon what calamity have I fallen, that it should be my lot to release one of Bi Bood's house?"

I was very sorry, indeed, to part with Brutus; he has decidedly more heart than any of the Herautees of my acquaintance, and some of his peculiarities were most amusing, to say nothing of his being valuable to me in negotiations with these bigoted Mahomedans. I think the tears on his cheek were genuine, and I wish him all luck and happiness. I have exalted his head by having a tukti rowan, or travelling litter, made for him; the affair is painted green, with two golden balls, and carried by two ponies in shafts; it has much the appearance of a meat safe, but in the eyes of all people here, it is considered a very elegant travelling carriage, and Brutus is delighted at the prospect of this passage through the *chartoo*, or centre market-place of Heraut!

I moved out to Zaca, a village about nine miles N.W. of Khyva, the first five miles being through very rich cultivation, and the remainder across

a spur of the sand-hills. I am pitched in a garden belonging to H. M., and am to receive charge of the prisoners to-morrow.

*August 4th.*—Busy all day paying the unfortunate prisoners. There are as yet 325 males, eighteen females, and eleven children; the latter were all born here. The average number of years of slavery of Toorkistaun is thus:—males, ten years and a half; females, nearly seventeen. One of the males has been sixty years in slavery, and some of them only six months. With one exception they were all in fine health, and appear to be strong, stout men. They are all Christians of the Greek church. The poor women are small and plain; their husbands and children are with the party. The women were all seized near Ourenbourg; the men were seized thus:—256 males fishing on the eastern shores of the Caspian, thirty-eight near Ourenbourg, and thirty-one bought or seized from the Persians; the last-mentioned chiefly belonged to the regiment of Russian deserters which was in the Persian army under Samson. I gave each man a ducat, and have hired a camel for every two. They all seemed, poor people, very grateful, and altogether it was one of the pleasantest duties I have ever executed. This evening one of the Russian women came to me in great distress, saying, that her two children were still detained in Khyva. I have promised to secure their release. The other Russian prisoners have told me of several of their countrymen who are still in captivity, and the collecting them will cause much delay. The minister came out here to see me this morning, which is considered a very high honour. I took the opportunity of speaking to him regarding the two children and the other slaves still detained, and he has promised to have them sent to me.

*August 5th.*—Started at sunrise and marched fifteen miles, nearly the whole of the road through rich cultivation. Gardens are to be seen on every hand; small villages and detached farm-houses are very numerous. At nine miles passed a large village called Caizabad, where there is a considerable bazar, one mile from which crossed a very fine canal about thirty-five yards in breadth. The halting-place was at one of the numerous

formal gardens. Before sunset started again, and marched twenty miles during the night, chiefly along the edge of sand-hills. This was merely a slip of sand, the cultivation being on either side of it. The river is said to be only a short day's march from this—about, I suppose, twenty miles; it is said to have encroached very much of late, and on this account the estates here have been much neglected. This place is called Dusht Houz; total distance this day, thirty-five miles. Caruley Yuz Bashe, the commandant of cavalry, accompanying me, is a handsome active man, and I am well pleased with him. He is much in favour with the Khan, and has received orders never to appear again at court unless he can give a good account of me. I was repeatedly asked by the Khan, before leaving, to fix the number of troopers I would like to have with me; but this I always refused, saying, I was his guest, and would go with one or two horsemen, or with a thousand; but until I reached the Russian frontier I trusted to his majesty for protection, with whom the disgrace must rest if any misfortune happened to me, as he could alone take the necessary precautions. Caruley was one of the party sent by the Khan to oppose the Russian advance under the Khoosh Beggie. This party succeeded in surprising and carrying off 200 camels belonging to the Russian army; but as no blood had been spilt, they decided on attacking a small Russian detachment which had taken up a position behind a slight intrenchment. Their mode of attack, after mature deliberation, was to drive on the camels which they had just seized, and to advance in their rear; the result was, as might have been anticipated, that the camels being wounded and frightened by the fire opened on them from the Russian intrenchment, turned on the Turcomans, throwing the latter into hopeless confusion; taking advantage of which, the Russians succeeded in securing such of the camels as had not been shot; this Russian force did not exceed 10,000 fighting men and forty pieces of artillery. The reports so industriously spread in India of an intended invasion on our provinces were altogether without foundation, as no idea of an immediate advance beyond Khyva could have been entertained. The expedition failed from the exces-



sive severity of the winter, which destroyed all the camels: but, apart from this, when it is remembered that from Ourenbourg to the mouth of the Oxus is a distance of 800 miles, and that in the whole extent there is not one fixed dwelling; that no supplies whatever could be procured, and that even fuel was not to be found;—I say, when these obstacles are taken into consideration, we can hardly be surprised at the failure of the expedition. There are two men appointed to collect and superintend the hired camels, of which I find we require 220. One of these is a Cuzzack, by name Niaz, an enormously fat creature without any beard, but of a pleasing, good-humoured expression of face; the other is a haggard, dissipated-looking Chowdoor Turcoman, from whose face I have no hopes. To add to my annoyances, they have given the power of collecting the Russian prisoners to this man, whose name is Khojah Mahomed. Now the Chowdoors are the chief dealers in Russian slaves; they are settled about Mungisbank, and have seized at different times several fishing boats; in these they embark, and capture the unfortunate Russian fishermen on the Caspian. It is not likely that any of this tribe should assist me in collecting the Russian prisoners, especially as it is known that one of the objects of my journey to the Caspian is to put a stop to their piracy! Accordingly, Khojah Mahomed made great protestations of his zeal and promises of activity, but did nothing whatever. The Russian prisoners released themselves occasionally and came to me, but none were brought by him. At last two Russian prisoners, with chains on their feet, escaped from Khojah Mahomed's own house, and came to me. This was too much for my patience, and I declared my determination of bringing his rascality to the Khan Huzarat's notice; but Caruley and Niaz begged me to overlook the man's offence, saying, that the Khan Huzarat would certainly have put him to death if I complained of him. The creature, too, humbled himself before me, and said he had eaten dirt, and begged me to forgive him, binding himself by all possible oaths to behave better in future. He had the collecting of half the camels, and it would be difficult to get away without him, so I consented at last to spare him; but there is no

hope of the man, villain is written too legibly on his face, and he will be a "calamity" during the whole march. I have a Yamoot with me, by name Beerdee, an ugly little fellow, but invaluable; he has been once or twice to Heraut, and been treated very kindly by Major Todd. The minister wrote to me, saying that the two children, concerning whom I spoke a few days back, were in the hands of a very influential person, a lady in the palace; that after much negotiation he had succeeded in procuring the release of the youngest, a boy, whom he sent to me, but that it was impossible to effect the liberation of the other child, a girl nine years of age. The mother on hearing this became frantic, vowing that nothing should tear her from her child, and that she would prefer remaining in slavery with her darling "Shureefa" to freedom without her. She then taunted me with the promise I had made to effect the child's release; and, to make a long story short, I at last ordered my horse, and rode that night into Khyva, arriving about ten in the morning. My arrival occasioned some alarm to the minister, who was exceedingly anxious to know the cause of my sudden visit; but I considered it advisable to lead him astray on this point, saying I wished to see the Khan on various subjects, and hoped to be admitted that evening: this request was complied with, and after discussing many points, I was at length told I might retire. There is a Turcoman superstition regarding a petition made by a person on the eve of departure, and to refuse this request is supposed to bring ill-luck on the journey. Taking advantage of this, I urged that his majesty had given me all the prisoners, but that there was in his own palace a child detained. The khan urged that she did not wish to go; I pleaded her not being of age. He was silent for some time; at length, turning to the minister, he muttered, "Give him the child." Shortly afterwards, a beautiful little girl was brought to me. It was very dark, so, taking a lamp, I advanced to have a closer view of my hardly-earned prize, when the little puss screamed out lustily, vowing nothing should make her go to "that Russian slave-dealer!" The Turcomans were greatly amused. Luckily, I had brought Beerdee Yamoot with

me, and the little "Shureefa" made no objection to going with him, jumping up behind his pony, and looking much alarmed when I approached. She was about nine years old, and I think I have seldom seen a more beautiful child. We rode the whole of the night on our return to our camp, and Shureefa gave Beerdee an account of her separation from her mother, which he translated to me. "She was torn from me, and, striking me on the forehead, exclaimed, Oh, luckless one, would that thou hadst never been born!" On reaching our camp, the Russians gave a shout at the sight of Shureefa; and the next morning she and her little brother were brought by their mother to make their bow to me. But still the little rogue feared my Persian robes, and appeared much alarmed.

*August 12th.*—That rascal, Khojah Mohamed, still fails in bringing in any of the Russian prisoners, and I fear I shall be detained here for some days. Fortunately, the khan is coming here on his road to a shooting excursion, and I shall be able to see him if necessary.

*August 14th.*—The khan arrived this morning, and I obtained an audience. After pointing out the exertions I had made to recover the prisoners, I showed the khan a list of those whom I knew to be still detained, and said in plain terms, that unless assisted by him, I must beg to decline the share in the transaction which had been assigned me; that it was quite useless to go to the Russian frontier unless I could take *all* the prisoners, and that my "head was confused" with the trouble I had already taken in this matter. His majesty was astounded at my plain speaking, and gave his minister an order in a tone which made him *shake*. I have been advised to move one stage further, and have been promised all and every one of the prisoners, and have received an order threatening death to any one who shall detain them.

*August 15th.*—Left Dusht Houz this day, and was delighted to find one of the officers of the household waiting with seventeen of the Russian prisoners. I have cross-questioned all the prisoners, and find there is the son of one of them still a prisoner on this side. The head of the village where he is detained has been sent for. The

only others of whom I can hear are three on the other side of the river, and Caruley has sent troopers to fetch them. On the 18th, the head of the village came to camp, and swore on *the Book* that the lad concerning whom I had sent was dead; but the next day the father saying that he had positive intelligence of his son being concealed, and still alive, Caruley sent three troopers to the spot, and after much difficulty they succeeded in digging him out from a vault in the granary. From Dusht Houz to Arbogue, we marched a distance of 125½ miles, along the alluvial soil near the river Oxus. There were frequently several khalls of Turcomans in sight in all directions, but the only fixed village is Old Ooregunge, which is 109 miles from Khyva. It is on the site of the ancient city, which is said to have existed in the time of the Fire-worshippers. For many years it has been altogether deserted, the river having changed its course. A prophecy has descended from generation to generation, that in the latter days Ooregunge shall be again inhabited; and within the last five years the river has returned to this side, and filled the bed of a considerable stream, from which canals have been cut for irrigation; and people are fast collecting, there being now about 1000 families resident here, and a considerable market twice a-week. I tell the Turcomans that the sooner they repent of their slave-dealing and other sins, the better, for the fulfilment of the prophecy evidently approaches. There is a tower, or rather pillar, here, about 120 feet high, which has been formerly handsomely ornamented; there are also the ruins of four tombs, the roofs of which have been gaily decorated with coloured tiles. Treasure has been found here, and some mummies. Altogether, it is a fine field for the antiquary. At Arbogue we arrived on the 26th, and here we halted for two days, to lay in water and to make all arrangements for crossing the barren steppe which separates us from the Caspian. The horizon is much similar to that at sea, and of all uninteresting marches this is the most tiresome. The wells are from seventy to thirty miles apart, and in many instances the water is five paces from the surface, and nearly always of bad flavour. This enormous plain is inhabited by Cuzzacks,

who feed large flocks of cattle on a small herb which is most abundant, and wander from well to well. These Kurgis never cultivate land, and the greater number never taste flour during the whole of their lives. The men and women of this tribe, whom I have seen, are very ugly, small, and emaciated; but I am assured that many tribes of Kurgis Cuzzacks are celebrated for their great size and strength. Their food is invariably soup and meat, neither rice nor bread forming part of their meals. The different descriptions of meat are thus estimated by them—1st, mutton; 2d, horse-flesh; 3d, beef; and 4th, camel flesh. The flesh of the horse is said to be very nutritious, and I hear that several of the grandees of Khyva eat it on principle. Niaz (my fat guide) is a poet, and, at my request, sung me a song of his own composing. It commences with a loud and long hollo, and ends in a volley of words shot off with the greatest volubility: a good pair of lungs seem to be the chief thing necessary. This is all I can make of Beerdee's Persian translation of the words of the song, which is addressed to some fair damsel:—"Oh, h—h—oh! I am mounted on an ambling pony, clothed in velvet and khuncobs, and have eight yards of gold!" To which proud boast the fair one answers, "Oh—h—h—h—h—oh! I care not for your ambling pony, your velvet khuncobs, and your eight yards of gold. I care alone for you." These Cuzzacks have no *horses*, but hundreds of ponies, which generally amble well. This ambling is natural to them, and is not acquired by instruction. When a colt has obtained a certain age he is tried, and if he is found to possess the hoped-for amble, his ears are split, to mark his superiority over the less gifted, who are, I fancy, generally devoured. This amble seems to be the Cuzzack's idea of perfection, and "yokshee yoorgab," a good ambler, is the greatest commendation. The women ride over the country as constantly as the men, and are said to have considerable privileges. My fat guide has been once or twice to Ourenbourg with letters. I asked him to give me some account of the governor of Ourenbourg, General Perofsky. "He is a man of a *snakish* appearance, complexion black, eyes

yellow, and coat covered with ducats." All the audience shook their heads, and said such a man *must* be dangerous.

The Russian prisoners amounted to 416 souls, and as my own party was considerable, it was decided by the united wisdom of "They the Tutor," Caruley, Niaz, and Beerdee, that half the Russian prisoners should march the first day under Niaz; that Caruley and his Sowars should accompany me on the second day; and that Khojah Mahomed should bring up the rear with the remaining half of the prisoners—I took the precaution of leaving ten of Caruley's Sowars as spies on Khojah Mahomed. This arrangement was found to answer very well; and, thanks be to God! not a man, woman, nor child, was lost during the whole of this most fatiguing march. We were most truly fortunate in every respect, the weather was most favourable, neither too hot nor too cold, and I am not aware of a single instance of any of the prisoners suffering from thirst or hunger. Not a horse or camel even was lost. When crossing one of the stages over this steppe, the whole of the prisoners were together—it was a glorious sight to pass them. They speak no European language but their own, and our only mode of salutation was the "Az salam Alliekoum." This they shouted out to me as I rode by them; and thus the salutation which a true Mussulman will not exchange with an infidel, became the only greeting between Christians.

The plain was so open that the camels crowded together, and marched over *en masse*, the children and women riding on panniers, singing and laughing, and the men trudging along sturdily; all counting the few days which remained ere they should rejoin their countrymen, and escape from what they must have long considered a life of hopeless slavery.

The release of these poor wretches has surprised the Turcomans amazingly, and, to crown all, the Khan has granted orders, prohibiting, under the penalty of death, the seizure of Russian subjects, or the purchase of natives of Heraut. This prohibition of the slave trade is quite novel in Toorkestaun, and I humbly hope that it is the dawn of a new era in the history of this nation; and that ultimately the British name will be blessed with

the proud distinction of having put an end to this inhuman traffic, and of having civilized the Turkoman race, which has been for centuries the scourge of central Asia. About eight marches from Nova Alexandroff, I sent one of the Russian prisoners with a Cuzzack to give information of our approach, sending by them an English letter to the governor of the fort. On their arrival at Nova Alexandroff, they were looked upon as spies; my letter could not be read, and the intelligence of the release and approach of so many fellow-subjects was too astounding to be credited! a whole night was necessary to convince the Russians in the fort of the truth of the good tidings. It was pleasing to see the rush of the prisoners to greet their countrymen. That evening we pushed on one stage, and the next morning approached the fort. The war between the Turcomans and Russians has hitherto been carried on with such barbarity, that it was not surprising that Caruley should remind me, about six miles from the fort, that he had already exceeded his instructions in accompanying me so far; the camelmen also began to grumble loudly at the danger of going too near the fort. Now this was a little perplexing, for though the Russian prisoners had not much property, they had still much more than they could possibly carry; and to leave it on the ground and march on the prisoners, almost naked, would have a bad effect; to say nothing of the chance of the Russian prisoners (finding themselves in a large majority) helping themselves to the camels. However, I gave the order to unload, and made Caruley himself count the camels. This being done, I asked the people from whom the camels were hired, whether they had received their beasts; and on their replying in the affirmative, I asked Caruley whether the Khan Huzarut's orders had been obeyed, and he answered "Yes." I told him to stand on one side, that I had nothing to do with him; but I would give ten ducats to any man who would lend me twenty camels to carry some property to Nova Alexandroff, and would be security for the safe return of the camels. The twenty camels were soon procured, and with the aid of my own and "They the Tutor's," we got on well enough, and made a grand appearance. The men marched in a

line with the camels, carrying the women and children close in the rear; and thus we approached the Russian fortress. The worthy commandant was overpowered by gratitude; his receiving charge of the prisoners would make a fine picture, and was a scene which I can never forget. The fortification here is small, but constructed on scientific principles; it is on the edge of the high shore of the Caspian sea. The garrison does not exceed 500 men, who suffer much from acrofula, though relieved twice in the year from Russia. At Arbogue we ascended a cliff of about 300 feet: this bears all the signs of having been, in former ages, the sea-shore; and I am disposed to think that originally the Caspian and Aral seas were united, and that there was a promontory jutting into this ocean, including Mungisbauk and Arbogue. Now a reef crossed this cliff in two places, and it is traced in modern maps, and designated the Chink: it was across this promontory that our route lay from Arbogue to Nova Alexandroff. I am unable to throw any light upon the assertion which has been made, that in former ages the river Oxus flowed into the Caspian sea. This tradition is commonly mentioned and generally believed by the Turcomans and Cuzzacks; and Beerdee assured me that he had crossed the original bed of the river, which was easily to be traced; and he mentioned as an indisputable proof, that the trunks of very large trees were still to be found near the former bed of the river. If this is the case, I should consider it conclusive, for no trees could possibly have thriven in this climate unless on the borders of a river. Supposing this assertion to be correct, the promontory which I have mentioned would have turned the Oxus into the Caspian, and the mouth being choked by an earthquake or some other cause, the river would be turned by the other shoulder of the promontory into its present course near Arbogue into the Aral. The Wolf rode over to Nova Alexandroff from Heraut, where I had sent him shortly after my arrival at Khyva, and brought me English and Indian letters; he declares he was shot at six times on the journey. He will be very useful in accompanying Mahomed Daood and the tail to Khyva. Three ves-

sels have been sent for our conveyance to Oochuck, on the northern shore of the Caspian, and from thence we travel by post-stages to Ourenbourg. I have eighteen camels and twenty-six horses, all government property, and it is absolutely necessary to have some confidential person in charge of them. They must be sent back to Khyva, as it is impossible to feed them here, and this road will be impassable in about two months more, owing to the excessive cold. Under these circumstances I shall only take Fazil Khan and Khoda Woordee with me, sending all the rest back under Mahomed Daood. I have been four months residing altogether amongst Mahomedans, and I confess I cannot help feeling something like shame at the appearance of the bottle; it is a point wherein I must allow the Mahomedans can taunt us. The presence of the dogs, too, is objectionable, though at one time I was very fond of the canine genus. Little Beerdee came into my tent, very much distressed, the evening of the first day after our arrival, and after many times muttering "Tobah, Tobah!" oh, "repentance, repentance!" he informed me that they were fattening some of the *unclean* animals with the intention of devouring them! Pah! "There was a woman there too," said he, "she had her head, face, and neck uncovered, and she wears no breeches." Upon my enquiring how he had ascertained the *last* fact, he said, "she was moving about, and I saw up to her knee!"

This shameless person went up to the unclean animal, and gave it bread! She patted its head! faugh!! and stroked its sides!! Lahole o la Kowate Istukfaroollah—"Disgrace and pollution! may Heaven defend us!" "Well Beerdee, what did *you* do?"—"I only fled; before this I should not have minded going with you, but now, for God's sake, give me my despatches, and let me depart." It was useless to argue that the unclean animal was the work of God, that it was only from its disreputable life to be objected to, but that here he himself had seen it *fed well and cleanly*. "For

God's sake let me depart," was his only answer, and in a whisper, "they worship images! I saw it, all of us saw it!"—"Why, Beerdee, can you tell me the reason why you turn to the Kibla when you pray?"—"Don't ask me such questions, I saw them worship images," and off he goes to Khyva, to tell many a funny tale, no doubt.

*September 17th.*—This morning parted with Mahomed Daood and the establishment. Well, good-luck to them, they have followed me over many a weary mile, and, *Inshallah*, if I rise, they shall rise too; never had man better servants. The only difficulty was to persuade them to go back, though the terrors of the sea were before them if they accompanied me, and these terrors were, in their imagination, any thing but contemptible, to say nothing of the images and the unclean animals! The Russians gave me a feast, and drank the healths of the Queen of England and Emperor of Russia, and did me the honour of toasting me also. "They the Tutor" much alarmed at the guns and hurrahs, and much scandalized at the bottles.

*September 18th.*—The prisoners came on board, and the worthy commandant bade God spare us. Gave him three cheers on leaving. Sailed at sunset, light but favourable breeze.

*September 19th.*—Progressing but slowly. "They the Tutor" was rather unwell yesterday, and has not been seen this day. We are sailing over a smooth sheet of water, as clear as crystal, and not eight feet deep; you may count every seaweed. Land has been in sight all day to the south. They say the waters of the Caspian decrease yearly.\*

*September 20th.*—Land in sight occasionally this day, and the water not above eight or ten feet deep. A dead calm about noon, which lasted all night.

*September 21st.*—A strong breeze sprang up right in our teeth. Took advantage of a slight favourable change in the wind, and moved about twelve miles into deeper water. Here

\* It is a curious fact connected with this sea, that by the last Russian surveys, it appears that the sea of Aral is 104 feet, and the Black Sea 116 feet above the Caspian, thus making the Aral and the Black seas nearly on a level with each other, with the Caspian in a hollow a little more than 100 feet below and between them.

the wind settled against us, and we were twenty-four hours anchored, a heavy swell running and shaking this little boat as if it were but a cockleshell.

Late on the evening of the 22d, we got a puff in our favour, and gradually the wind came round and brought us in, in gallant style, early in the morning of the 23d, to the anchorage of Oochuck, as it is called by Turco-mans and Cuzzacks, or Goorieff by Russians, as pretty a spot for fever and ague as I have seen. The vessels are surrounded by high grass, which covers their decks, and the mud is black and glutinous. This place is at one of the mouths of the Ooral river. We are now waiting while people go to fetch carriages for us from the neighbourhood. "They the Tutor," and indeed all but the old sailors, suffered dreadfully from sickness. He said that the riding on a camel's back in kajores (panniers) was painful, but that the shaking in this vessel was something he could never have dreamt of; two days more, he protests, would have killed him. Long and loud are his exclamations of Shookr Alhum-dullillah! Thanks to Almighty God!

On the evening of the 24th, five or six carts and carriages were brought for our conveyance to Goorieff. "They the Tutor," a German naturalist, a Russian doctor, and I, started in a sort of phaeton, drawn by three ponies; off we went like mad. "They" in a dreadful perturbation; I really sometimes think that these shakings and novelties will be too much for him.

This place, Goorieff, is chiefly a village of fishermen; the houses are all of planks, comfortable and clean. It is only within the last few years that the Caspian has retired from this ground. Enormous quantities of fish are caught here, and a considerable trade is carried on in consequence with Astrakhan.

*October 1st.*—Arrived at Ourenbourg after a most harassing and tiresome trip by the post carts. There was a village of *boxes*, (for the dwellings cannot be called houses,) and a small field fortification at every station; but the only place of any consequence is Ooreilsky, which is a considerable town, with some fine houses. It is

the headquarters of the bettman of the Ooral Cossacks, a very agreeable, accomplished gentleman. The arrangements regarding post-horses are excellent, and the pace good, but, oh! the carts, they are dreadful. I have travelled far, and in barbarous countries, but never did I suffer so much *pain* as on this journey. The tract of country from Goorieff to Ourenbourg is occupied by the Cossacks of the Ooral, who are amongst the hardiest soldiers in the Russian ranks; they have many privileges connected with the fisheries on the river. The fish is caught in very great quantities, and is a considerable article of traffic.

On my arrival at Ourenbourg I parted with my long-cherished beard, and inserted myself into the tight garbs of Europe. Here I found a very pleasant society. There is a considerable fortification, and a large force. The bazar is a very busy scene, and natives from all parts of Asia may be seen wandering about, staring at the wonders of European skill and science. Since my arrival, the natives of Khyva, who had been so long in confinement, have been set at liberty, and are to be allowed to return to their homes with their property. The total number of natives of Khyva at Ourenbourg, Ourvelskee, and Astrakhan, who thus owe their release to English mediation, is 640, which added to the 416 Russians brought with me, makes a very satisfactory little total in our favour, to say nothing of the numbers which the prohibitory orders may be hoped to save from a life of slavery.

From Ourenbourg I posted to Moscow, *via* Lunbeersk. At Moscow I took a place in the diligence, and arrived at Petersburg on the 3d of November, where I had the honour to receive the thanks of the Emperor for the kindness which I had found it in my power to show to his subjects. This city, and the road to it from Ourenbourg, have been often described by many more able persons than myself; and having carried my unfortunate reader safely into civilized life, I will now make my bow, and wish him, when next he moves, a pleasanter journey with a more amusing companion.