

*THE RUSSIANS*

*IN CENTRAL ASIA*



# *THE RUSSIANS IN CENTRAL ASIA*

*A CRITICAL EXAMINATION*

*DOWN TO THE PRESENT TIME OF THE GEOGRAPHY AND  
HISTORY OF CENTRAL ASIA*

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GENEVA, NEW YORK, ETC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

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LATE 6TH INNISKILLING DRAGOONS (FORMERLY OF THE AUSTRIAN SERVICE)  
TRANSLATOR OF SCHILLER'S 'WALLENSTEIN'S CAMP' INTO ENGLISH VERSE

*WITH A MAP*

**HENRY S. KING & Co.**

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THE  
TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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THE valuable information contained in Herr Friedrich von Hellwald's *Die Russen in Central-Asien* induced me to lay before the British public an English version of this book, thinking that light thrown upon a subject hitherto veiled in obscurity, but of such vital importance to England, might be both useful and beneficial to my mother-country.

Whilst proceeding with my difficult task I perceived that a censorious tone—approaching to a hostile spirit—against England pervaded the whole work, and I paused, fearing lest this might arouse indignation and thus stifle the good that might otherwise accrue from this source. But upon mature reflection I determined to continue the translation, firmly believing that the regret Herr von Hellwald expresses at our failures, and the anxious solicitude he displays that England should fulfil her destiny by exerting her humanising influences throughout the East, are but proofs of the sincerity of his regard for the English, whilst his animadversions are but the con-

siderate warnings of a true friend. Even if this supposition be unfounded, it is wise to follow the maxim *fas est et ab hoste doceri*.

Throughout this translation I have endeavoured to interpret the author's ideas as faithfully as the nature of the two languages will permit. Perhaps censure may be passed on me for thus exposing, according to the author's views, England's faults in her Eastern policy; but I here disclaim all advocacy of his opinions, and merely take upon myself the responsibility of having given utterance to them. Another inducement to my task was the opinion on this work expressed by Professor Vámbéry of Pesth—the eminent Orientalist and well-known traveller in Central Asia: namely, ‘His book is distinguished throughout by a thorough knowledge of the subject and an agreeable style of writing; the only drawback to it is that zeal for Russian interest has led him occasionally into unfairness in judging England.’<sup>1</sup> This opinion from such a judge on all matters connected with Central Asia will plead for my small contribution to the slender store of information at present possessed of these almost unknown regions.

Although acquainted with German through a ten-years' service in the Austrian cavalry and staff corps and a constant study of that language, I have found many difficulties in translating this work into English, owing to the peculiarities of the modern style of writing, which differs so materially from that of the classical German

<sup>1</sup> Vide Arminius Vámbéry, *History of Bokhara*. London: H. S. King & Co., 1873, 8vo. p. 403, note 2.

writers. But to ensure accuracy I submitted my manuscript to the criticism of Mr. Moritz Lippner, a native of Germany, possessing a thorough knowledge of English as well as of his mother tongue, to whom I am indebted for many valuable suggestions.

The orthography of the Eastern and Russian words in English is perplexing and troublesome. As regards the latter, I have followed the system adopted in the compilation of the British Museum Catalogue, and beg here to offer my special thanks to Mr. John T. Naaké, one of the under-librarians of the Museum, who has kindly given me every assistance in this matter, in which he, as a Russian linguist, is so thoroughly conversant. As regards the Eastern words, which in the original are written according to the German method of spelling them, and are consequently unintelligible to any one unacquainted with that language, I have adopted the system recently introduced by the India Office, and followed by such distinguished writers as Colonel Yule, Sir Frederick Goldsmid, and other Oriental-scholars. In all quotations I have strictly adhered to the spelling of the Eastern words in the originals, whether they be English, German, or French, and this will account for any incongruities that may occur; but in the text I have endeavoured to follow one uniform system.

I beg here to express my sincere thanks to the librarians and other officials at the Foreign Office, the India Office, and the British Museum for the readiness with which they assisted me in my undertaking.

The map appended to this translation has been carefully executed from the latest surveys made by the Russians and from the official map published in March 1873 at St. Petersburg.

Throughout the translation miles, where not specified as English, are German, and feet are Paris feet, designated by P.F. In order to facilitate calculations of distances and heights, where accuracy is desired, I have annexed a tabular form to show the method of reducing all measures to the English standard.

T. W.

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE CLUB,  
PALL MALL, LONDON:

*March 1874.*

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COMPARISON OF FOREIGN MEASURES WITH ENGLISH.

- 1 Russian foot = 1 English foot.
- 1 Paris foot (P.F.) = 1.065 English foot.
- 1 French mètre = 3.280 English feet.
- 1 Russian verst = 0.662 English statute mile.
- 1 German mile = 4.610 English statute miles.
- 1 Nautical or English Geographical mile = 1.152 English statute mile.
- 1 Russian square verst = 0.439 English square mile.
- 1 Russian verst, linear measure = 3,500 English feet.
- 1 English statute mile = 5,280 English feet.

TO CONVERT RUSSIAN VERSTS INTO ENGLISH STATUTE MILES.

Versts  $\times 3500 \div 5280$  = English statute miles.

## PREFACE.



INTERESTS of the most varied kind are bound up with those vast territories, hitherto so little known, which are comprised under the general denomination of Central Asia. The historian knows this to have been once the trysting-place of the numerous powerful hordes of nomadic races, who penetrated into the very heart of Europe, spreading ruin and devastation like a deluge; the geographer knows this region as the one that is still the most imperfectly represented on the map, where rivers, mountains, and cities can only be traced in vague outlines; the ethnologist recalls to his mind the group of Turanian peoples, together with indistinct ideas connected with them; and, lastly, the politician perhaps looks forward to the collision that may take place between the two greatest powers on earth—the one by sea, and the other by land.

But it is not this alone that involuntarily attracts our attention to Central Asia. In an age when both land and water are ploughed by steam, distances vanish altogether, and that which was once inaccessible now appears easy of



access. The opening of the Suez Canal has already shortened the commercial route to the east of Asia; sooner or later the Euphrates Valley Railway will become an accomplished fact, and then the golden land of India will be bound by bands of iron to the civilised world of Europe.

From year to year the construction of the extensive net of Russian railroads progresses, and when the line from Samara to Orenburg, now in course of construction, is completed, we shall be on the confines of the Kirghiz Steppe, through which in a short time military roads will conduct us to Bokhára and Samarcand—those marvellous cities of Islam lying in the very centre of the Asiatic continent. This is by no means the vision of an excited imagination; for this bringing near of the distant East is partially taking place under our eyes, and that which I have just alluded to will be perhaps actually accomplished in the space of the next twenty years. It is therefore quite natural that science should have of late concentrated its attention on these almost unexplored regions, and is now endeavouring to raise the veil that has rested on them since the days of Marco Polo.

Explorations into Central Asia are being simultaneously carried on by the Russians and the English—the two great rivals in the Asiatic world. For many years the former have unceasingly been pushing forward towards the south and the east, and have at the latest period actually extended their sway over those parts to a considerable degree. Here scientific research follows, as

it were, in the footsteps of military operations, and the geographer is obliged at the same time to trace the course of events.

Just as science in the pursuit of its investigations clings to the Russian standards, and just as we possess to-day a more accurate knowledge of the conquered provinces of Central Asia—hitherto buried in the darkness of centuries—than we do of many parts of European Turkey, so does civilisation assuredly follow the victorious flight of the Black Eagle. Russia fulfils, as the ethnographer must allow, her true mission of civilisation; for, after her own fashion, she adapts European ideas to Oriental minds; in short, Russia gives to Asia culture and civilisation. But every disinterested man must admit that the extension of human knowledge—this opening of new spheres to the development of civilisation—is the greatest gain which mankind has always derived from such warlike expeditions, whether they were undertaken by Sesostris, Alexander of Macedon, or other conquerors.

At the period when the advance of the Russians into Inner Asia was some few years ago almost unnoticed, I devoted a series of articles to that subject in Streffleur's *Oesterreichische militärische Zeitschrift*, which received some attention in non-military circles. The Under-Secretary of State for India, Mr. Grant Duff, addressed in 1869 his constituents at Elgin in a speech which touched upon India and the progress of civilisation there. On this occasion he took the opportunity, when alluding to the opinion of an Austrian military author, who had

stated that Russia advanced into Central Asia for the purpose of spreading European civilisation, to represent this as entirely erroneous. As I have the honour of being that author mentioned by Mr. Grant Duff, I cannot help here remarking that he could not have deigned to make as accurate a perusal of the book—just then published—as was desirable; because he would scarcely have substituted an opinion to which I am not aware of having in any way given utterance.

In my work, which could not but be unpleasant to the official circles in Great Britain, I have stated that European civilisation would advance together with Russian progress into the interior of Asia; but it never occurred to me to represent the spreading of European civilisation as the motive or aim of Russian policy. For these I have pointed out very different things. As these are perfectly distinct matters, I cannot help regretting that Mr. Grant Duff is not better informed about my views.

These articles, in a different shape and in a great measure rewritten and enlarged, form the basis of this present book. In the last three or four years the condition of affairs has vastly changed. At that time the subject did not meet with the consideration it deserved. Even in England—a country the commercial interests of which must be so materially affected by these affairs—people had just begun to take up this very important matter in earnest.

Lord Lawrence, the late Viceroy of India, and Mr. Edward B. Eastwick, so deeply versed in Asiatic affairs,

have made known their opinions on the 'Central Asian Question,' but it cannot be asserted that they have always been diligently bent on treating the subject with great profundity. The English press has from time to time ventilated the Asiatic question, but, unfortunately, hardly with a better comprehension of it than is found in the official world. . . . .

Amongst the Austrian newspapers the *Wanderer*, which is very carefully edited, deserves special mention, on account of the attention and the knowledge displayed in treating this subject. Its editor, the intelligent Herr Carl von Vicenti—an author of uncommon ability—possesses, through long residence in the distant East, a thorough knowledge of those countries, and has also acquired a profound and scientific acquaintance with their languages.

In Germany the question cannot be said to have as yet obtained a great amount of consideration, at least among general readers. The subject is only taken up and carefully studied by the Prussian *État-Major-Général*, which allows hardly any field of knowledge to escape its wonderful activity. The *Allgemeine Zeitung* and the *Kölnische Zeitung* stand foremost amongst the German press. These newspapers occasionally publish articles on the proceedings of the Russians in Central Asia from the pens of well-informed writers. In such instances these articles, with few exceptions, emanate from a man who, perhaps more than any other individual, is zealously engaged in drawing the attention of Europe to events in Asia.

This writer is Professor Arminius Vámbéry, of Pesth—the learned Hungarian traveller in Irán and Turkestán. Since his return from those countries, in which he travelled as a Mussulman Dervish, it has been his constant care to spread, as far as possible, knowledge of everything connected with the Central Asian lowlands. Even if unwilling to share his views on every point, yet no reasonable man—whatever his opinion may otherwise be—would refuse to recognise his ceaseless exertions, to which is chiefly due that there are at this day people who have drawn this apparently remote question within the circle of their investigations. If Vámbéry had done nothing more than this, he has indeed done enough!

In the last few weeks the ‘Central Asian Question’ has suddenly become a burning question, which for a moment called forth even apprehensions of war. It engaged the attention of all the newspapers. No more doubt exists that it must be sooner or later settled. This lies in the nature of the things themselves, as well as in the process of development through which Russia has hitherto passed. We become best convinced of this by casting a glance at the steady growth of that Empire.

An English statesman once declared, and not unjustly, that England was rather an Asiatic than a European Great Power; with how much greater truth, then, may this be said of Russia—that colossal empire which is reproachfully termed ‘the Northern’—the very territories of which will soon stretch nearly over all the zones of the earth, and will cover an expanse equal to half the moon’s

superficial area. This vast empire has been formed within the last few centuries, and, since its first formation, not a decade has elapsed without its having continually, though often unobserved, successfully laboured at its expansion.

Under Ivan IV., who reigned from 1533 to 1584—consequently more than half a century—Russia subdued the Tartar Khanates of the South, with the exception of the Crimea. Kasan was conquered by Ivan, after a bloody battle, in 1552; it had, however, been from time to time subject to the Czars ever since 1487. Astrachan, in the north, fell in 1554, and the Bashkirs were subjugated in 1556, and at the same time a firm footing was gained in the Kabarda on the Kuban. The Cossacks<sup>1</sup> Yermak and Timofeyev opened, in the last years of Ivan's reign, through the discovery of Siberia, a new continent to their fatherland, and laid the foundation of Russia's Asiatic power. In 1587 Tobolsk was founded. In the eighteenth century, in 1727, Russia obtained, through a treaty with Persia, those provinces which were four years previously conquered by Peter the Great, namely, Daghestán, Shirván, Ghilán, and Mazanderán; that is to say, the whole west coast of the Caspian Sea; but in 1734 they had to be restored. The last two of these provinces are the only territories which this Empire once possessed, lost, and has not regained. In 1813 the Persians were obliged to restore Daghestán and Shirván; the important province of Der-

<sup>1</sup> The Author appears here to be in error. For a certain *Ermak Timotheev*, Ataman (leader) of the Cossacks of the Don, was the conqueror of Siberia. Vide T. Toll, *Nastolny Slovar (The Table Encyclopædia)*, vol. ii. p. 146.—TRANSLATOR.

bend having been already in the hands of the Russians since 1806. A new war with Persia at length extended the territory of this gigantic State beyond the Araxes, and as far as the Ararat; and at the peace of Turkmanchai, in 1828, the province of Arran was acquired. And even at the present time Russia has not yet relinquished her endeavours, but is advancing with gigantic strides into the very centre of the Old World. At this moment, too, she is in Central Asia.

Since commerce throughout the world has attained undreamt-of proportions, since steam has ploughed the briny ocean, since rails of iron have brought the remote nearer and caused distances visibly to disappear, thinking politicians can no longer overlook the incalculable bearing which the powerful development of a State must have, when it can at the same time offer one hand to the most ancient of cultivated empires—China counting thousands of years since her first existence—and give the other hand to the modern civilisation of Western Europe.

It is, therefore, not an unprofitable task to examine the events of recent times, and also to consider the nature of the newly-acquired Russian territories, and what advantages they may bring to Russia, and what influence her warlike operations may probably exercise over the States of Europe lying nearer to us.<sup>1</sup>

THE AUTHOR.

CANSTATT, *March* 1873.

<sup>1</sup> Two books, which I should have liked to have used for the compilation of this work, have unfortunately not come to view; they are J. and R. Michel's 'The Russians in Central Asia,' London, 1865, 8vo, and J. MacNeil's 'The Progress and Present Position of Russia in the East.'

# TABLE OF DISTANCES.

1 Paris Foot = 1.065768 English.

PARIS FRET	ENGLISH FEET.									
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	0.00	1.07	2.13	3.20	4.26	5.33	6.39	7.46	8.53	9.59
10	10.66	11.72	12.79	13.85	14.92	15.99	17.05	18.12	19.18	20.25
20	21.32	22.38	23.45	24.51	25.58	26.64	27.71	28.78	29.84	30.91
30	31.97	33.04	34.10	35.17	36.42	37.30	38.37	39.43	40.50	41.56
40	42.63	43.70	44.76	45.83	46.89	47.96	49.03	50.09	51.16	52.22
50	53.29	54.35	55.42	56.49	57.55	58.62	59.68	60.75	61.81	62.88
60	63.95	65.01	66.08	67.14	68.21	69.27	70.34	71.41	72.47	73.54
70	74.60	75.67	76.74	77.80	78.87	79.93	81.00	82.06	83.13	84.20
80	85.26	86.33	87.39	88.46	89.52	90.59	91.66	92.72	93.79	94.85
90	95.92	96.98	98.05	99.12	100.18	101.25	102.31	103.38	104.44	105.51

1 Russian Square Verst = 0.4394 English Square Mile.

RUSSIAN SQ. VERST	ENGLISH SQUARE MILES.									
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	0.00	0.44	0.88	1.32	1.76	2.20	2.64	3.08	3.52	3.95
10	4.39	4.83	5.27	5.71	6.15	6.59	7.03	7.47	7.91	8.35
20	8.79	9.23	9.67	10.11	10.55	10.99	11.42	11.86	12.30	12.74
30	13.18	13.62	14.06	14.50	14.94	15.38	15.82	16.26	16.70	17.14
40	17.58	18.02	18.46	18.89	19.33	19.77	20.21	20.65	21.09	21.53
50	21.97	22.41	22.85	23.29	23.73	24.17	24.61	25.05	25.49	25.93
60	26.36	26.80	27.24	27.68	28.12	28.56	29.00	29.44	29.88	30.32
70	30.76	31.20	31.64	32.08	32.52	32.96	33.40	33.83	34.27	34.71
80	35.15	35.59	36.03	36.47	36.91	37.35	37.79	38.23	38.67	39.11
90	39.55	39.99	40.43	40.86	41.30	41.74	42.18	42.62	43.06	43.50

1 Russian Verst, Linear Measure = 3,500 feet.

1 English Statute Mile „ = 5,280 „

The Russian and English Foot are alike.

∴ Versts × 3500 ÷ 5280 = English Statute Miles.

1 French Mètre = 3.280 English Feet.

1 Russian Verst = 0.662 English Statute Mile.

1 German Mile = 4.610 English Statute Miles.

1 Nautical or Geographical Mile = 1.152 English Statute Mile.





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# THE RUSSIANS IN CENTRAL ASIA.



## CHAPTER I.

### RUSSIAN EXPLORATIONS IN CENTRAL ASIA.

ALMOST in every stage of history we perceive knowledge and science gloriously following the triumphant course of conquest. And if any branch of science may be said to cling to the banners of victorious columns, it is that of geography and ethnology, which forms the foundation of the wide-spread intercourse and the commercial development of the present age. In nature, as in the life of nations, all things constantly stand in mutual relation to each other; cause produces effect. From death springs forth life, as life subsides in death. War—that deplorable evil, which banishes commerce and interrupts all intercourse, and which modern opinion cannot but shun and abhor as the source of all disasters—has not unfrequently influenced mankind, both morally and materially, by opening out new territories hitherto impenetrable, and by pointing out to nations a new path to wealth and prosperity.<sup>1</sup> That which is now taking place in remote

<sup>1</sup> Concerning the material advantages of war, vide *Die wissenschaftlichen Errungenschaften des Krieges* (Ausland, 1873, Nos. 4 and 5).

Asia is nothing but an exemplification of this fact, although it arrests so little the attention of unobservant Europe. In the train of the Russian warrior science strides forward with rapid pace, yet ceaselessly spying, observing, and minutely examining all that meets its onward course. That which only twenty years ago was a mystery shrouded in obscurity, doubtfully hinted at by the educated and cautiously mentioned by the learned, at this day stands bared to view and manifest to all. Now is the veil torn asunder, the barriers are thrown down, and whatever is still unexplored must in a few years reveal its hidden secrets to the Russian soldiery. Central Asia, with its steppes, deserts, and mountain ranges, the latter rearing their snow-capped and ice-girt summits to the skies, a land whence sprang forth not long since naught but dark traditions, will henceforth lie open to knowledge, commerce, and the civilisation of cultivated Europe.

Before we attempt a sketch of the countries that form the theatre of the Russian operations of war, and endeavour to elucidate them, it would, perhaps, be not uninteresting to throw some hasty glances over the undertakings pursued during the last few years in time of peace, especially as they have paved the way for Russia to acquire scientific knowledge of the states of Central Asia, and at the same time to prepare victory for her arms.

An immense tract of country beyond the Caspian and Aral Seas stretches to the frontiers of China, which is commonly known as Middle or Central Asia, Tartary, Turkestán, Türkistán, Turán,<sup>1</sup> Turkmenia. There has long

<sup>1</sup> *Turán*, in the Zend language *Tûirja*. The derivation of these names is not yet ascertained, although Burnouf (*Yaçna*, vol. i. pp. 427-430)

existed a great dearth of information regarding the geography of these countries, since none has been derived from other sources than the Chinese, and the scanty accounts that have been handed down to us by the few travellers in these far-distant lands.

The first European who set foot on this part of Asia was Giovanni de Plano Carpini, a Franciscan monk, who went forth in the year 1245 and remained sixteen months on his journey. It was he who first spread in Europe definite information respecting the Mongols, and made reports, though only from hearsay evidence, about China and the Prester John.<sup>1</sup> In 1249 he was followed by Andreas de Lonjumel. Reliable information, however, first reached Europe through William van Ruysbroeck, or de Rubruquis, also a Franciscan monk, who, accompanied by Fra Bartolomeo di Cremona (1252 and 1253), journeyed from Acre across Central Asia until he reached Karákorum, then the residence of the Great Khán. To him we are indebted for the first account of *kumíz*, which is made from the fermented milk of mares, and is the favourite beverage of the Mongols; also for a description of *arak*, a spirit distilled from rice, and for a minute description

has ingeniously mentioned the Bactrian satrapy, *Turiua* or *Turiva*, described by Strabo (lib. xi. p. 517, ed. Casaub.). Du Theil and Groskurd (the latter, part ii. p. 410) prefer the reading Tapyria. Vide Humboldt's *Kosmos*, vol. ii. p. 119. Derivation of *Tûirja* in Zend (*Turuschka*, Sanscrit) signifies 'quick,' 'speedy,' a characteristic of the nomad horsemen of the northern steppes. Consult further, as regards the word *Turanian*, *Globus*, vol. v. pp. 81-83.

<sup>1</sup> Concerning Carpini, vide Peschel, *Geschichte der Erdkunde*, pp. 150, 203, 207; also the interesting article by Dora d'Istria, 'Russes et Mongols, les Ruricovitschs et Jean du Plan de Carpin,' in the *Revue des deux Mondes* of February 15, 1872, pp. 800-832.



of the *yák* (*Bos grunniens*). After Ammianus Marcellinus, Van Ruysbroeck is the first European who makes mention of rhubarb as a medicinal remedy. Moreover, this Dutch monk added much valuable information to, and made many corrections in, the geographical knowledge of that day. All geographical and historical writers, from Aristotle down to Ptolemy, have assigned to the Caspian Sea an outlet into the Northern Ocean. Even the cautious Strabo, having been deceived by Patrocles' survey of the coasts, fell into the same error. When in the service of Seleucus Nicator and Antiochus, Patrocles commanded a fleet in the Caspian Sea, and dared to assert that ships had entered that sea from the Northern Ocean, sailing from India round the eastern coast of Asia; for in those days India was supposed to begin at the mouths of the Ganges.<sup>1</sup> These erroneous views existed even in the middle ages.<sup>2</sup> While Andreas de Lonjumel was still confounding the Caspian with the Sea of Pontus, Van Ruysbroeck had the merit of declaring the Caspian to be an inland sea; for he explored its shores on the west and the north, knowing that Lonjumel had only a short time before examined its eastern and southern shores.<sup>3</sup> Van Ruysbroeck's reports on the Nestorian Christians are full of interest. He states that they dwelt in fifteen cities in

<sup>1</sup> Strabo, lib. ii., xi., vol. i. p. 74, vol. ii. p. 442.

<sup>2</sup> Vide Paul Orosius, *Histor.* lib. i. cap. 2, Colon. 1536, p. 15; also Ravennatis *Anonymi Georg.* lib. ii. cap. 2, ed. Pindar et Parthey, Berlin, 1860, p. 62; also Beda Venerabilis, *De mundi cæli terrestisque constit.*, Colon. 1688, vol. i. fol. 316. The latter appears to have considered the Caspian as a portion of the Indian Ocean. Vide also the Anglo-Saxon map in the British Museum of the tenth century, and 'Orbis e cod. Bruxell. de anno 1119' in Lelewel's Atlas, Plans VII. and VIII. And also concerning the Caspian Sea, Peschel, *Ges. der Erdkunde*, pp. 156, 292; and the discovery of the depression of the same, *ibid.* pp. 412, 549, 557, 558.

<sup>3</sup> Ruysbroeck, ed. d'Avezac, p. 264.

Cathay, and that their Bishop had his see in Singan, a city in the west of China, where, in 1625, a monument was actually found that bore testimony to the antiquity of this Christian settlement.

Unquestionably the most celebrated traveller during the middle ages was Marco Polo,<sup>1</sup> whose very remarkable book of travels has been published by Colonel Yule, in a new and excellent edition, by direction of the Hakluyt Society of London. Upwards of three hundred years elapsed before another European ventured to set foot in the countries of Central Asia that had been visited by the great Venetian traveller. Benedict Goës, a Portuguese by birth, was the first. He was born at Villa Franca, in San Michael, one of the Azores. In the year 1594, accompanied by Hieronymus Xavier, nephew of the celebrated St. Franciscus, and by another Portuguese priest, Emanuel Pinner, he proceeded as coadjutor to the Society of Jesus to the Court of Lahore, where he remained for several years, and collected much information regarding the northern parts of Asia. Thence he journeyed to Agra, and at the end of 1602, or the beginning of 1603, to Kábul and Yárkand, till he reached the Chinese frontier city of Su-tsheu, where he was detained a prisoner for seventeen months. But a few days after the arrival of a Christian missionary, the celebrated S. Ricci, of Pekin, he ended his days. Unfortunately, that portion of Goës' travels which comprises the route from Kábul to Yárkand is enveloped in great obscurity. Of those who in succeeding ages followed in the footsteps of Goës, we

<sup>1</sup> *The Book of Ser Marco Polo, the Venetian*, newly translated and edited with notes by Colonel Henry Yule, C.B., London, 1871, 2 vols. 8vo. Vide critique on this valuable work, *Edinburgh Review*, 1872, No. 275, pp. 1-36.

deem it superfluous to mention others than Floris Beneveni in 1725, Kladishchev 1740, Meyendorff and Negri 1820, Berg 1826, Sir Alexander Burnes 1832, Lieutenant John Wood, Indian Navy, 1838, Abbot 1839, Shakespear and Aitov 1840, Nikiforov 1841, Nicholas de Khanuikov and Alexander Lehmann 1841-42, Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly 1842, and Danilevsky 1842-43, and finally, in the latest period, Arminius Vámbéry.

Until very recently the works of Alexander von Humboldt and Carl Ritter furnished the fullest information concerning these countries, especially of that part lying between Lake Balkash and the Thián-Shán mountains. But the suppositions of these two learned Germans as regards the geography of those countries belonged more or less to the sphere of conjecture;<sup>1</sup> which they were, however, most ready to confess. But chiefly to the Russians is geographical science indebted for a more intimate knowledge of Central Asia. To them, indeed, belongs the honour of having first pioneered for scientific purposes those countries, which consist of mountain tracts difficult of access, elevated table-lands, and monotonous deserts of sand. Centuries ago Russia was deeply impressed with the necessity, and convinced of the utility, of making these regions sooner or later the field for the development of her restless activity. In fact, the possession of Siberia

<sup>1</sup> They depended almost entirely on Chinese sources, which were disclosed by Klaproth, Abel Rémusat, Stanislas Julien, P. Hyacinthe, and others. The most important of these sources are the *Si-yu-thung-wen-tschì*, Peking, 1772, and the *Si-yu-wen-kian-lo* (of which the second edition and the third, in 1777 and 1814, bear the title of *Sin-kiang-wai-fan-ki-lio* and *Si-yu-ki*), the *Ping-tseu-lui-pien*, 1726, and the *Thai-thsing-i-tong-tschì*, 1774. Besides these there is the book of travels of the Buddhist pilgrim Hwen-Thsang, called *Pien-i-tien*. Also the memoirs of Se-mathsien and Ma-tuan-lin's Encyclopædia.

naturally guided her thoughts into this channel. At all times she has directed her attention to the exploration of these almost untrodden tracts of Central Asia. Even the very great discoveries made by Humboldt in these regions were done by command and with the support of the Emperor of Russia. Yet Humboldt, in his travels in 1829 in Upper Asia, did not cross over the Tarbágátái<sup>1</sup> mountains; but in 1834 the astronomer M. Vasily Fedorov succeeded in reaching the mouths of the river Lepsa in the lake Balkash, and was able to determine the position of them. In 1840-1842, the travellers Messieurs Karelin and A. Schrenk<sup>2</sup> completed the examination of the country lying between lake Balkash on the north, the river Ili on the south, and the so-called Dzungarian Alá-Táu mountains.

The passion for geographical expeditions into the neighbouring states of Asia was more and more stirred up by these travellers, and to such a degree that the year 1845 hailed the foundation of an institution that will have incalculable influence on the future progress of scientific knowledge in Russia. The most distinguished men of science and of letters associated together for the purpose of establishing the Imperial Russian Geographical Society at St. Petersburg. This society at this moment possesses a capital of 88,000 thalers, or 13,200*l.*; an annual income of 27,970 thalers, or 4,195*l.* 10*s.*; to

<sup>1</sup> The farthest point reached was the Chinese military station Baty on the Irtish, 49° N. lat.

<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately Von Schrenk's travels have been hitherto only published in fragments under the title, 'Bericht über eine im Jahre 1840 in die östliche dsungarische Kirgisensteppe unternommene Reise' (*Beiträge zur Kenntniss des russischen Reiches*, herausgegeben von Bäer und Helmersen, vii. vol., St. Petersburg, 1847).

which the State yearly contributes 16,150 thalers, or 2,422*l.* 10*s.*<sup>1</sup>

Hand in hand with the intelligent Russian 'État-Major-Général,' the Geographical Society undertook a thorough investigation of all the Russian provinces. In this laborious undertaking the society aided, supplemented, and stood in the closest relations with the officers of that corps. This duty formerly devolved entirely on the Imperial Academy of Sciences; but the activity of the Geographical Society—so different from other similar institutions—limited itself to investigations of those territories under the Russian sceptre and those of the adjacent states of Asia which may hereafter become of importance to Russia. In this colossal empire all is colossal. It therefore soon became apparent how necessary it was to establish at the extremities of the empire, like advanced posts, branch societies in direct communication with the centre, each having its own but more limited circle of investigation. Thus, in 1850, the Caucasian Section of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society was founded at Tiflis; and in 1851, the Siberian Section at Irkutsk; and lately two new branches were added in Europe, namely, in 1867, the Northwest Section at Wilna and the Orenburg Section at Orenburg. Whatever has been done since for geography has been accomplished by the Geographical Society or by the 'État-Major-Général,' and very frequently by their combined efforts.

It would lead us too far from our subject if we were here to sketch, even in the most cursory manner, the progress that has been made in the geography and topography

<sup>1</sup> According to Behm's latest *Geographisches Jahrbuch*, vol. iv. p. 445, of 1872.

of Russia. We must rather confine ourselves to the states of Central Asia, which now almost exclusively engage our attention. In the year 1851 Colonel Kovalevsky penetrated as far as Kúlja, a place on the extreme borders of Chinese Dzungaria, from which journey he brought back very valuable information.<sup>1</sup> After the erection of Fort Vyernoe, on the Almáty, in 1854, the Russian explorers, between 1855 and 1858, succeeded in pushing forward into the so-called Trans-Ili regions. They carried forward their explorations to the southern shores of the lake Issik-Kúl; and one of them, the astronomer, Professor P. Semenov, who accompanied Colonel Khomentovsky on a military expedition, ascended, in June 1857, to the summit of the Thián-Shán, which had never before been trodden by any European. About the same time Captain Myelitsky, of the Mining Engineer Corps (who is known from his interesting investigations around the Baikal Lake in Siberia), and Captain Antipov, of the Staff Corps, in 1854–1855, surveyed geometrically the south-eastern portion of the province of Orenburg, as well as the southern spurs of the Ural mountains, and published the results of their surveys with descriptive maps. About the same time, between 1857 and 1858, M. E. Borshchov, accompanied by M. Syeverstov, examined, by direction of the Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburg, the province of Orenburg, lying between the Ural moun-

<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the object of his journey was thoroughly accomplished, as he went with the intention of cementing still more closely the friendly relations between Russia and China, since both these empires should have a common boundary between them here as well as on the north and north-east. He succeeded in establishing Russian factories in Kúlja and Chígútchak. The treaty relative to this was concluded on July 25 (August 6), 1851, but was first made known on February 28 (March 11), 1861.

tains, the city of Irghiz, the Sea of Aral, and the Caspian Sea. This resulted in a successful representation of the geological condition of the lowlands stretching between the Aral and Caspian Seas, and also of the Mugadshar mountains and the plateau of Ust-Urt. The Geographical Society, in 1858, sent an expedition into Persia for the special purpose of exploring the Persian province of Khorásán, bordering on the south-western frontiers of Central Asia. At the head of this expedition stood the celebrated and well-known traveller, M. Nicholas de Khanuikov, who in 1841–1842 had traversed the Central Asian steppes, and also published an interesting book in the Russian language on Bokhára;<sup>1</sup> the other members of this expedition were Messieurs Göbel, Von Lentz, the astronomer, Dr. A. von Bunge,<sup>2</sup> Councillor of State and Professor of Botany, Binnert, Petrov, and Count Keizerling. This expedition started in March 1858, and travelled through Astrabád, Nishapúr, Mashad (Tús), to Herát,<sup>3</sup> and returned by the Lake of Hamún, Kermán, Yezd, Ispahán, and Tehrán, on the Lake of Urmia.<sup>4</sup> Soon afterwards, at the instigation of M. Semenov, it was resolved to send forth an expedition into the country beyond the lake of Balkash and the river Ili, for the purpose of remedying, for a cadastral survey, the deficiency in geographical points,

<sup>1</sup> It was published in an English translation under the title, *Bokhara, its Amir and its People*, translated from the Russian of Khanuikov by Baron Clement A. de Bode. London, 1845.

<sup>2</sup> Concerning Dr. v. Bunge, vide Peschel, *Ges. d. E.* p. 556.

<sup>3</sup> Vide Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1859, p. 206.

<sup>4</sup> Vide the above of 1860, p. 43. M. de Khanuikov has given a detailed account of the whole expedition in his book entitled *Mémoire sur la partie méridionale de l'Asie Centrale*, Paris, 1861, p. 234, with three maps. As regards Khorásán, vide *Production und Handel von Chorassan*, Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1864, pp. 7–9.

which were essentially necessary to make it possible to re-map this part of Central Asia. On February 12, 1859, Captain Golubev,<sup>1</sup> of the Staff Corps, accompanied by M. Matkov, of the Topographical Department, went thither by direction of the Imperial 'État-Major-Général' to assist in these investigations. He determined by measurement sixteen points, and advanced as far as the lake of Issik-Kúl, the contour of which was in 1847, for the first time, pretty accurately delineated by M. Nifantiev, of the Imperial Russian Topographical Department, but was definitely fixed by the surveys undertaken in the years 1859 and 1860. The latter were made, under the superintendence of M. Venyukov, a very distinguished member of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, by a committee of officers belonging to the Siberian Division of the Russian 'État-Major-Général.' In this manner about 53,000 square versts<sup>2</sup> of the country around the lake of Issik-Kúl and along the banks of the river Chúi were surveyed. Also on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, about 38,000 square versts<sup>3</sup> around Ust-Urt, about the Kará-Bugáz Gulf, as far as the Bay of Balkan, were laid down, so that the form of the Kará-Bugáz Gulf was accurately determined.

In the course of the year 1860 the outline of the Caspian Sea was corrected by means of the chronometrical,

<sup>1</sup> Captain Golubev died in January 1866, and unfortunately much too early for the advancement of scientific knowledge.

<sup>2</sup> Vide the same in Petermann's *Geogr. Mit.*, 1861, p. 198.

<sup>3</sup> A Russian square verst = 0.0206677; a German square mile = 1.138021 square kilomètres. In long measure 104.3387 versts = an equatorial degree. 6.955916 (say 7) versts = 1 German mile, and 0.9373998 (say about 1) verst = 1 kilomètre. Annexed to the translator's preface is a tabular comparison of the English, Russian, German, and French square and long measures.—TRANSLATOR.



astronomical, and topographical surveys made in 1858 to 1860 by Captain Ivashintsov, of the Russian Navy, under instructions from the Hydrographical Department. About the same time an officer of the Staff Corps, Colonel D'Andeville, in 1858 published in his map of the Ust-Urt the first correct representation of the peninsula of Mangishlak.<sup>1</sup> The 'État-Major-Général' also accomplished cadastral surveys of more than 5,320 square versts in the province of Orenburg, in the districts occupied by the Cossacks of the Ural, and also in the Kirghiz Steppe, besides taking levels of the country lying between Fort Perovsky and Yáni-Dariá, a distance of 575 versts, and lastly making a reconnaissance over 27·905 square versts eastward of the Sea of Aral. In the following years surveys under the direction of Colonel d'Andeville were continued, extending from the rivers Ilek and Utwa, on the Sír-Dariá, from Fort Chulák to the Kokanian fortress of Yáni-Kurgán, including the south-western spurs of the Kará-Táu and along the Yáni-Dariá River. Moreover, reconnaissances were undertaken by five officers of the Topographical Department in the province of Orenburg, and in the north-eastern part of the steppe beyond the Tobol, to discover the present condition of those countries. The result was that in that year altogether 7,670 square versts were surveyed, and 153,870 square versts were examined for military purposes. In the year 1862, in those parts where Colonel Salesov conducted the cadastral surveys, 5,996 square versts were surveyed, and six new sheets, on a scale of 1.420,000, were added to the special maps of

<sup>1</sup> 'A Notice on the Mountains Ak-Táu and Kará-Táu, in the Peninsula of Mangishlak, on the Eastern Coast of the Caspian Sea,' by G. von Helmersen (*Bulletin de l'Académie Imp. des Sciences de St.-Petersbourg*, vol. xiv. No. 6, March 1870).

the provinces. Colonel Chernyaev made in 1863 a reconnaissance in the mountain range of the Kará-Táu, particularly between the Dáúd-Khodja mountain, the forts Susák, and Chulák-Kurgán, the city of Turkestán, the town of Uch-Kajuk, and the ruins of the fort Yáni-Kurgán. In another reconnaissance the country between the western spurs of the Kará-Táu, the Dáúd-Khodja, and the lakes Telekúl and Telekultáta was examined; the maps made on these two occasions were on a scale of 1:210,000. In the year 1863 Captain Butakov, of the Russian Navy, and Naval A.D.C. to the Emperor, steamed up the Sír-Dariá as far as Baildyr-Túgái. He determined the exact position of several points, took soundings of the river, ascertained the navigable channels, and surveyed its banks with the aid of an officer and two men of the Topographical Department. In the year 1864 the cadastral surveys extended over 3,933 square versts, mapped on a scale of 1:21,000, and an area of 9,500 square versts was trigonometrically determined; besides which, a rectification was made of the former surveys of the steppe-districts of the Inner Horde, lying between the Ural and the Volga. New surveys, stretching over 970 square versts, were taken in the Trans-Ural steppes, on the Emba, the Sír-Dariá, the mountain tracts of the Kará-Táu, and in the new province of Turkestán, also upwards of 102 square versts, with plans of the cities and environs of Turkestán and Chemkend, on a scale of 1:8,400.

In the year 1865, Colonel Salesov ordered reconnaissances of the roads on a scale of 1:84,000 over 20,600 square versts between Fort Orenburg on the Turgái, Turkestán and Fort Perovsky on the Sír-Dariá, and then over 20,000 square versts of the province of Turkestán from Merke westwards to the Sír, and up that river as far as

the embouchure of the Chirtchik. He also prepared the sketch of a map of the Khanate of Kokán.

The Russians were not less active in the military district of Western Siberia. In 1860 as much as 45,000 square versts on a scale of 1.420,000 were surveyed in the districts of the Seven Rivers and the Trans-Ili, on the north-west portion of the tract of the Alá-Táu and on the south-west of the lake Issik-Kúl. Also in 1861, two officers and four adjuncts of the Topographical Department surveyed, under the direction of Colonel Babkov, 14,500 square versts in the valley of the Chúi and the surrounding country. In 1862 Colonel Babkov turned towards the Chinese frontier, namely, from the northern branches of the Alá-Táu to the lake of Zaisang-Nor, and from the river Toktá to the Chinese frontier-stations beyond the mountain pass of Khabar-Asú, in the Tarbágátái. He laid down a plan of the country from the rivers Básará, Korbúgi, Tebezge, and Támirsik, at the northern extremity of the Tarbágátái, to the southern shores of the Zaisang Lake and the valley of the Black Irtish, being a distance of 120 versts. Observations were made along the frontier as far as the advanced military post of Kos-Agách; the position of the mountains Sári-Chakú and Mánkrák was determined, and during the course of the summer about 19,972 square versts were surveyed. A military reconnaissance was undertaken in the year 1863, south of the river Chúi, which moved along the upper course of the Sír-Dariá and amongst the Celestial or Thián-Shán mountains, in the direction of Káshgar, supplying materials to make a map containing 28,140 square versts. In the year 1864, nine officers and thirty-two men of the Topographical Department accomplished, under the direction of Colonel Babkov, the map-

ping of an area of 8,766 square versts along the Chinese frontier, on the northern declivities of the Tarbágátái and in the valley of the river Borokhúdsír; also surveys on the upper course of the Chúi, between Fort Kastek and the mouth of the Great Kebin; and, on the south of the Chúi, from the river Tálás, over the mountains of Kárábúra, to the river Choktál; and besides an itinerary of routes through the valleys of the rivers Arys and Búgún, and from Chulák-Kurgán to Auliett (or Aulie-átá), was made on a scale of 1.210,000, and lastly plans were drawn of the forts Tokmák, Merke, and Aulie-átá on a scale of 1.21,000.

Besides these works, which were carried on in the ordinary course of duty, the Russian Government took care to have these countries explored by special expeditions; although they were not suggested by purely scientific motives, they produced very beneficial effects on geographical knowledge. To this latter class belong the investigation of the Kirghiz Steppes by a committee under the direction of the Councillor of State Girs; the committee under the guidance of Lieutenant-General Dlotovsky to fix the boundaries between the territories of the Ural-Cossacks and the Kirghiz on the left bank of the Ural; and then the travels of Lieutenant-Colonel Tatarinov, of the Mining Engineers, on the southern slopes of the Kará-Táu, where he, at a distance of 90 versts from Turkestán, Chemkend, and the mouth of the Arys, found coals of the best quality.<sup>1</sup> The working of these pits, and also of the gold mines discovered in these parts, was immediately commenced.<sup>2</sup> From the west

<sup>1</sup> Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1867, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> Tatarinov. Concerning the present preparations for working the coal and gold mines in the province of Turkestán vide *Izvyestiya* of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society at St. Petersburg, vol. iii., 1867, No. 2.

of Siberia a military party, under the command of Captain Holmstrom, was sent to determine the shortest caravan route from Semipalatinsk and Petropavlovsk, leading in a westerly direction from Lake Balkash through the Golodnaya (Russian for 'Hungry') steppe to the Russian fort on the south bank of the Chúi and on to Táshkend and Turkestán. At the same time Colonel Babkov, under whose direction Captain Holmstrom's expedition stood, made a topographical survey of the very important lake of Balkash. Connected with the above are the statistical reports of M. A. J. Maksheev, the archæological researches of M. H. Favitsky, the ethnographical and linguistic studies of M. Radlov, and lastly the meteorological observations which General von Kaufmann caused to be made at fifteen different stations in the province of Turkestán.

The mountain regions of the Tarbágátái, which in so many respects excite our interest, were carefully examined in 1864 by M. C. Struve and his fellow-traveller, M. Potanin. Struve's expedition was undertaken for astronomical and topographical purposes, in order to complete former investigations and to collect sufficient topographical materials for laying down a map of the whole province of Turkestán. His investigations embraced the whole territory from Merke to the river Sír, the country along the Sír from the parallel of Turkestán, on the west, to the mouth of the Chirtchik, and on the east to the mountains of Súsámír and the sources of the Chirtchik. Besides these topographical labours, astronomical observations were made, which determined a series of points from the fortress of Vyernoë to Táshkend and Chináz, and on the Sír-Dariá to those points which had been fixed by Rear-Admiral Butakov. The result of these investigations by Struve was a

map of Turkestán; it was commenced in September 1865, and appeared in 1868 with the following heading:—‘Map of the Province of the Governor-Generalship of Turkestán, executed in the Asiatic Section of the “État-Major-Général” under the superintendence of Captain Narbut,’ on a scale of 1.2,000,000.

The other expedition of the naturalist Syevertsov had in view geological and zoological researches. To this expedition were attached an officer, sub-officers, and some men of the Mining Department. As far back as 1864, M. Syevertsov had made travels in the Central Asian regions under the orders of the Russian Minister of War, and also provided with instructions from the Imperial Russian Geographical Society at St. Petersburg. The results of these travels are communicated in a report<sup>1</sup> which contains much that is interesting, and especially diffuses great lucidity over the geognostic conditions of those countries.<sup>2</sup> His more recent researches, as well as those of M. Nikolsky, are laid down in the ‘*Izvestiya*,’ i.e. communications, to the Imperial Russian Geographical Society.<sup>3</sup> Syevertsov carried his explorations then into the western parts of the Thián-Shán mountains, the river Naryn, that is, the upper course of the river Sír-Dariá, and even beyond the Thián-Shán mountains to Aksái, the northern source of the Káshgar-Dariá. He corroborated the absence of the volcanic formation in the Thián-Shán. He also believes that he can prove that in these central

<sup>1</sup> *Izvestiya* of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society of St. Petersburg, 1865, No. 7, pp. 127, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Marthe, *Russian Scientific Expeditions in 1864 and 1865 in Turkestán* (*Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, Berlin, 1867, vol. ii. pp. 79-81).

<sup>3</sup> Syevertsov, in vol. ii. 1866, ch. 7; Nikolsky's *Geological Researches* in vol. iii. ch. 2. Vide also *Izvestiya*.

regions the exodus of the great animal kingdom took place from the inland seas and lakes of the Himalaya mountains and of Eastern Siberia, and that his investigations, in a geographical point of view, into the propagation of fish, strengthen the supposition of the inland seas of Central Asia having been originally united with the Arctic Ocean, and suggest the probability that the Caspian was earlier separated from the Black Sea than the latter was from the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>1</sup>

From these slight sketches it is very perceptible how Russia, with the aid of science, is step by step levelling the way and preparing for her onward course into the interior of Asia. But, even after the achievement of military success, science is not returned into store like arms no longer in use; on the contrary, we behold a bright example when science goes hand in hand with war, the former endeavouring by the increase and spread of human knowledge to atone for the misdeeds that the latter may have possibly committed against the humanising influence of civilisation.

<sup>1</sup> Mannoir, *Rapport sur les Travaux de la Société de Géographie de Paris*, 1868, p. 190.

## CHAPTER II.

THE COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL ASIA.<sup>1</sup>

THE region now under our consideration is bounded on the west by the Caspian Sea and the river Jaik or Ural (the *Daix* of the ancients), which separates Europe from Asia; on the north, the same river forms the boundary as far as Orsk, thence it stretches in a direct line to the Siberian town of Semipalatinsk;<sup>2</sup> on the east it borders on the lofty, chiefly granite, mountains of the stupendous Tarbágátái,<sup>3</sup> branches of the Alá-Táu

<sup>1</sup> We have taken as the basis of the geographical sketch the corresponding sections of Klöden's *Handbuch der Erdkunde*, vol. iii. of ed. 1862, completing them to the present standard of geographical knowledge. We have made use, for the purpose of the textual description, of the following excellent maps:—Lieutenant Charles Zimmermann's Atlas in Ritter's *Asia* (a most useful map in spite of the numerous recent explorations); besides this, his geographical analysis of the maps of Middle Asia, Berlin, 1841; Kiepert's Turán or Turkestán, Berlin, 1864; a valuable general map of the Russian, Turanian, and Chinese frontier territories of Central Asia, in three sheets, from Petermann's *Geographische Mittheilungen* in 1868; and, finally, the map of Central Asia on a scale of 1,4,200,000 which appeared in the *Invalide Russe* as a supplement in August 1868. This map is not yet much known, but it is highly important on account of its delineating the latest explorations of the Russians in those countries. Very useful is also the Russian map of Russian Asia, published in 1865, and the small but valuable map of Southern Turkestán, published in Russia in 1867.

<sup>2</sup> Situated on the river Irtysh, in the Government of Tomsk. Vide an article on it by Abramov in the *Zapiski* of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, 1861, vol. i.

<sup>3</sup> The Tarbágátái, or the Marmot-mountains (*tarbágá* signifies a



and Altái<sup>1</sup> ranges, on the Thián-Shán, or Celestial mountains of the Chinese frontier, and the Belút-Tagh, which on the south unites with the gigantic range of the Hindú-Kúsh; and the southern boundary is formed by the Paropanisus,<sup>2</sup> stretching along the territory of Herát, and thence by the high mountain ranges in the north of the Persian province Kohistán (or the highlands) as far as the Caspian Sea. It extends from 34° to 50° N. lat., and 48° to 78° E. long. of Paris. A glance at the map informs us that this region comprises the south-western portions of Siberia;<sup>3</sup> the formerly independent Turkeistán, together with the Khanates of Khiva, Bokhára, and Kokán, which

‘marmot’), rise on the north of the Alá-Kúl and on the south of Lake Zaisang, and stretch upwards of thirty German miles from west to east. During all the summer they are covered with snow. M. Semenov calculates the mean height of the ridge at 4,500 P. F. This region, in many respects so interesting, was explored more accurately than has since been the case by M. C. Struve and his collaborateur, Potanin. The Kirghiz have very recently endeavoured to make a permanent abode there, and, if there were not a deficiency of wood, considerable settlements would have taken place.

<sup>1</sup> Altái is a contraction, or, more correctly, an abbreviation, of *Al-Taiga*, signifying a lofty rocky mountain. Some deduce the derivation of the name from the Turkish word *altyn*, ‘gold,’ and accordingly *Altái* means ‘gold mountains.’ Altái is an ancient Turkish territory (Humboldt’s *Kosmos*, vol. ii. p. 43). New disclosures, given in a very interesting manner, have been made concerning this region by M. Bernhard von Cotta in his travels during the year 1868 (vide *Ausland*, 1869, Nos. 10, 11, 13, 16, 18, 50, 51, and his valuable book entitled *Der Altaï, sein geologischer Bau und seine Erz-lagerstätten*, Leipzig, 1871, 8vo). Then the results of the Russo-Chinese Frontier Commission under Babkov, completed in August 1869, which have laid the foundation for a special knowledge of the frontier district, which includes the wildest parts of the Altái from the Lake Zaisang to the borders of the government Yenisei (Petermann’s *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1870, p. 77).

<sup>2</sup> Alexander von Humboldt, in deviation from the usual mode of spelling this word, namely, ‘Paropamisus,’ adopts ‘Paropanisus’ (*Ansichten der Natur*, 1859, vol. i. p. 82).

<sup>3</sup> In a geographical point of view, Siberia cannot be distinguished from the Turanian lowlands.

once comprised the empire known as the Great Bucharia; the territory of Eastern Turkestán,<sup>1</sup> not long ago nominally belonging to China as the provinces of Thian-Shan-Nan-Lu and Thian-Shan-Pe-Lu;<sup>2</sup> and, finally, the states of Kábul and Herát reckoned as portions of the kingdom of Afghánistán, and also a small part of the north of Persia.

By far the greater part of this country, that is to say the western and northern, belongs to the Turanian lowlands—the most extensive on the face of the earth, if we include the Sarmatian plains of Eastern Europe, which are only separated from the former by the Ural mountains. In this region the ground sinks towards the south, but eastwards there is a gradual ascent towards the south-east. In the south-western portion, however, exists the greatest depression of the earth's surface, of which the lowest hollow is filled up by the Caspian Sea,<sup>3</sup> its level being 82·8 p.f. below the level of the Sea of Azov. This flat low basin extends along a dried-up plain as far as Saratov on the

<sup>1</sup> The table-land lying between Thián-Shán and the Kuen-Lun is also called High Tartary or Little Bucharia. The last denomination is denoted as meaningless and absurd by Adolphus Erman, who is so thoroughly well versed in Russian geography. And justly so, because Chinese Turkestán is neither small, nor does it stand in any other relation to the Khanate of Bobkára than that caravans from its capital visit these provinces.

<sup>2</sup> *Nan-Lu* means 'south road,' *Pe-Lu* 'north road.' Consequently, the territories on the south and north of the Thián-Shán mountains—the province *Thian-Shan-Pe-Lu* (Dzungaria)—are now more than half Russian.

<sup>3</sup> The Caspian Sea was, between the years 1858 and 1862, for the first time accurately surveyed under the direction of Post-Captain N. Ivashintsov. He determined astronomically forty leading points on the coast, and connected them longitudinally by means of chronometrical observations taken on board different steamers (Petermann's *Geogr. Mitt.*, 1863, pp. 53–62). The Caspian Sea (*Kök-Küz* of the Turkomans; *Kuzghun-Denizi*, i.e. 'raven sea,' of the Turks; *Darjâ-i-Chyzyr*, i.e. Sea of Khárazm, of the Persians) has a superficial area of 407·075 square versts, according

Volga, and thence to Obschey-Suirt (or Syrt),<sup>1</sup> containing altogether about 6,000 square miles.

On the east side of the Caspian, on the contrary, there are some considerable heights; for instance, there stretches across the peninsula of Mangishlak a mountain range with flat summits and declivities that descend to the sea-shore like so many terraces; then the eastward adjoining Ák-Táu, with its low but steep chalk cliffs; and on the south of the gulf Kará-Bugáz (or Black Gulf), the Balkán<sup>2</sup> mountains, which extend upwards of ten miles, having a breadth of 3 to 3½ miles, and a height of more than 5,000 feet. The highest peak is called the Dirhem-Tágh. The long chain of the Kúron, formed of granite and porphyry, joins on the outstretching spurs of the Balkán. On the east of the gulf of Kúli-Dariá lies the chain of the Kette-Sári-Bábá mountains, and in the island of Cheleken rises the rocky ridge of the Chokrák.

The plateau, or high table-land, having a breadth of 33 miles, and lying between the Caspian and Aral

to the acceptance of the Central Statistical Committee (Petermann's *Geogr. Mitt.*, 1862, p. 391). On its southern coast, near the small town of Sari (36° 50' N. lat., and 53° 15' 5" E. long. of Greenwich), grow here and there date-trees (vide C. von Baer, *Dattelpalmen an den Ufern des kaspischen Meeres einst und jetzt*). From the *Mélanges Biologiques*, vol. iii., it appears that they grow in a latitude in which they were not hitherto supposed to be found (compare Ritter's *Erdkunde*, ix. p. 251). Consult also that important work on the highly interesting southern coasts by G. Melguno, entitled *Das südliche Ufer des kaspischen Meeres oder die Nordprovinzen Persiens*, Leipzig, 1868, 8vo, p. 334, with maps.

<sup>1</sup> The Turkish word *syrt* simply means 'highland,' although originally it signified 'back-bone.' The Obschey-Suirt, or Syrt, is a mountain ridge which stretches along the river Ural in an east and westerly direction from the southern extremity of the Ural mountains to the river Volga.

<sup>2</sup> The *Úlu Balkan* (i.e., in Turkish, 'the great mountain') is distinguished from the *Kütshük Balkan* (in Turkish, 'the little mountain').

Seas, bears the name of Ust-Urt, which in Turkish, *Ust-Uert*, denotes a 'highland.' It rises 600 feet above the level of both those seas, and is begirt on all sides with tolerably steep and lofty declivities. On the east it overhangs the Sea of Aral, and then stretches fifteen miles towards the south; thence, taking a westerly direction, it spreads towards the north-east till it reaches the Gulf of Kaiduk on the edge of the Caspian, where it forms their eastern shores; thence running along the south of the Mertvy-Kultuk ('Dead Bay' of the Russians) until it unites on the north-east with the Mugadshar or Mughadjar mountains. In this part the slopes are low, and gradually sink till they entirely disappear in the sandy desert of the Bolshie-Barsúki. Some are of opinion that the Ust-Urt possibly owes its origin to an earthquake, which 500 years ago is supposed by a slight upheaving of the earth's surface also to have diverted the course of the Oxus. But the learned Syeverstov, on the contrary, maintains, in consequence of a scientific examination of the structure and formation of the Mugadshar mountains and the plateau of Ust-Urt, that they are a continuation of the Ural mountains, and thus solves the problem long since mooted by Humboldt.<sup>1</sup>

On the north of the Aral, where the Barsúki desert expands between that sea and the southern spurs of the Mugadshar mountains, there lies a large tract of land which has a depression lower than the level of the Mediterranean. The whole of this region, particularly on the north-east of the Sea of Aral, presents every variety of marine *flora*; for there only grow those kinds of plants,

<sup>1</sup> 'Is the Ust-Urt a continuation of the Ural mountains?' (*Bulletin de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de St.-Petersbourg*, vol. iv. No. 8, pp. 483-487).

and indeed whole families of them, which are indigenous to the bottom of the ocean and never found in inland seas, whether they be salt or fresh water. Consequently at the present time there exists no doubt that the depression of the whole land between the Aral and the Caspian Seas as well as the lowlands of Western Siberia, which, spreading out their marshy plains, here and there dotted with lakes of salt water, and reaching as far as the slopes of the Dzungarian mountains, once formed a great gulf opening into the Arctic Ocean.

The salt lakes, the halophytes, which abound in every direction within this district, and which produce, both far and wide, almost the only vegetation, led in the first instance to this conjecture, which is borne out by many other arguments besides those derived from geological and palæontological researches.<sup>1</sup> The numerous lakes, which on the west extend like a furrow from Áksákál-Barbi to Sári-Kúpá, indicate the country where the Aral-Caspian Gulf united with the more northern Siberian Gulf, as the depth of the sea in the great bay of the Arctic Ocean had already decreased.

Of all the seas that especially interest the geographers in their investigations, none does so in a greater degree than the Sea of Aral; and this may be attributed partly to the contradictory descriptions hitherto given of it, and partly to the highly important problems concerning it involved in physical geography.

The Sea of Aral (i.e. the Island Sea; the Sea of Khárazm of the Arabians, the Oxiana Palus of the

<sup>1</sup> M. E. Borshchov, *Communications regarding the Nature of the Aralo-Caspian Lowlands* (*Würzburger naturwissenschaftliche Zeitschrift*, vol. i. pp. 106-143, 254-295).

ancients) has a superficial area of 61,322<sup>1</sup> square versts (1,267 square miles), and is fifty-seven miles long and forty miles wide. But this statement of its dimensions is extremely uncertain. For instance, we find it stated in Klöden's 'Handbuch der Erdkunde'<sup>2</sup> that its area is 1,240 geographical square miles, its length twenty-three miles, and its breadth only eighteen miles. In other places, 2,100 square miles are computed for its area, sixty-three for its length, and varying between fifty-four and twenty-five miles for its breadth. With regard to the level of the Sea of Aral there exists still greater uncertainty. Generally it is considered to be below the level of the Black Sea, and above that of the Caspian. But the Caspian lies, according to some authorities, 78·8 P.F., and, according to others, 82·8 P.F., below the level of the Sea of Azov. Whilst Klöden, in his book<sup>3</sup> above cited, gives the level of the Sea of Aral at 34 P.F., he in his book entitled 'Verzeichniss von Landseen mit Angabe ihrer Höhenlage, Ausdehnung und Tiefe' (or, in English, 'A Specification of Inland Seas and Lakes as regards their Height above the Level of the Sea, their Area, and Depth'), published in Behm's 'Geographisches Handbuch,'<sup>4</sup> represents its level at 4·15 toises, equivalent to 24·9 P.F., above the level of the sea, in consequence of the levellings made in the year 1858 by the astronomer, M. C. Struve, junior, and the very valuable investigations of Admiral Alexis Butakov. Struve, however, found it 132, not 106 English feet, as it was erroneously computed in his time. According to this statement, therefore, the

<sup>1</sup> According to the views of the Central Statistical Committee (Petermann's *Geogr. Mitt.*, 1862, p. 392).

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i. p. 420, 1st edition.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. i. p. 423.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. i. p. 282.

Sea of Aral would lie 23·9 p.f. above the level of the Caspian, and 41 p.f. above that of the Black Sea. But as the plateau Ust-Urt, with a breadth of thirty-three miles, lies between these two inland seas, and rises to an elevation of 600 feet above the level of the Caspian, the slight depth of the bed of the Aral is not so very striking.

Klöden, although he asserts in page 423 of his 'Handbuch der Erdkunde' that the Aral lies 34 p.f. below the level of the sea, in contradiction to his statement in page 415, where he says 'The Aral is 34 p.f. above the Black Sea, and 110 feet above the Caspian,' expresses his opinion that further measurements may perhaps demonstrate this last difference in the levels to rest on erroneous calculations; for, without doubt, these two inland seas were once united, and they now produce the same varieties of the animal and vegetable kingdom. In the same passage we are also informed that 'the whole district lying under the level of the sea contains 4,500 or even 10,000 square miles.' If the Aral Sea be forty-one feet above the Black Sea, as Struve's levelling proves, without corroborating the expectations of Klöden, then it cannot possibly lie in so great a depression below the level of the sea. This can, therefore, if it really does exist, be adduced less successfully as an argument in favour of the hypothesis that once the Caspian and Aral Seas were united. Professor O. Peschel also, who assumes the level of the Aral to be below that of the Black Sea, alludes to this hypothesis.<sup>1</sup> Without disputing this opinion, he imagined that it required some direct proofs; but at the same time he admits that the Aral Sea might formerly have covered a much greater surface than it does at the present moment. The small lakes in the Kará-Kúm, and perhaps in the

<sup>1</sup> *Neue Probleme der vergleichenden Erdkunde*, Leipzig, 1870, p. 5.

Barsúki deserts, we may consider as the remains of the former expanse of the Sea of Aral, and consequently as certain evidences of its diminution.<sup>1</sup> If the whole plain—namely, that supposed great depression of the land—had once been a sea, then, according to Arago's opinion, the surface of the water would have undergone a constant diminution, because the amount of evaporation far exceeds the means of supply; and consequently no assumption of the depression of the land is necessary to account for the peculiar features of this district, as was once deemed essential. Professor Peschel also believes that, in explanation of the wasting away of the Aral Sea, it may be said that the basin of the Aral lies immediately exposed to the drying influences of the north-east trade winds. When the Arctic Ocean at one time extended as far as the lakes of Oron and of Baikal, the north-east winds, then quite saturated with moisture, must have reached the Sea of Aral, and could not at that time have abstracted as much fluid by evaporation as at present. But Professor Peschel suggests another solution, that appears more obvious and satisfactory. At the delta of the Oxus (Amú-Dariá) many small arms branch off from the main stream, and with it discharge themselves into the Sea of Aral. We know that these have been formed by the Khivans, who, for the purpose of irrigating the adjacent plains, have dug deep canals, and many smaller channels, to distribute the waters of that river. The last Sultán of Khárazm, Sáid Mehemed Khán, Pádisháh i Khárazm, who had his residence at Kohne-Urghendj, through which place the Amú flows, particularly devoted himself to fertilise that part of the desert lying between the Aral and the Amú, for he caused canals to be cut through it, and they

<sup>1</sup> *Neue Probleme der vergleichenden Erdkunde*, Leipzig, 1870, p. 5.



increased in number and extent in proportion to the settlements that were made. But the consequences of such an undertaking are easily foreseen, since, through the distribution of water over an extent of fields, the expanse of evaporation becomes so much increased that the main stream can only reach the sea with a greatly diminished volume of water. Now, as the superficial area of a lake is the mathematical expression for the equilibrium between loss by means of evaporation and supply by means of fluids, it follows that when the water supply diminishes, the superficial area of the lake where the evaporation takes place must decrease in a relative proportion.

In the regions of the Aral and Caspian lowlands, the following opinion has prevailed for centuries—namely, that the level of the Aral and Caspian Seas periodically rises and falls, a period varying from twenty-five to thirty-four years being computed for the Caspian, and from four to five years for the Sea of Aral. According to observations that have been made, the level of the Sea of Aral has, in the course of thirty-two years, sunk about 11·3 English feet; and the width of the line of coast gained by the receding of the water during a period of ten years—namely, from 1847 to 1858—may be estimated at nearly 0·3 to 0·6 geographical mile.<sup>1</sup> Connected with the present undeniable diminution of the quantity of water in the Aral arises one of the most interesting questions in physical geography—namely, will not the Sea of Aral entirely disappear in course of time?

According to Sir Henry Rawlinson's views, the Sea of Aral in physical geography may be compared with the

<sup>1</sup> Petermann's *Geogr. Mitt.*, 1861, p. 197.

variable stars in astronomy. At times this sea shrinks, for the length of 300 to 400 English miles, into a swamp, or even dries up, till it forms eventually a firm marshy soil. Humboldt, in his celebrated work on Central Asia, has devoted upwards of 200 pages to a geographical discussion on the Aral and Caspian Seas, and thereby defined beyond a doubt the dubious course of the Oxus (Amú-Dariá), which was supposed at one time to flow into the Aral, and at another into the Caspian. But nowhere has he ventured to express the opinion that the Aral Sea had ever entirely disappeared. In fact, this phenomenon has been disputed by many learned authorities. Colonel Yule and Sir Roderick Murchison<sup>1</sup> are of opinion that, notwithstanding the acknowledged temporary fluctuations in the course of the Oxus, and the great uncertainty as regards the names of places and topography in general, which they ascribe to the carelessness and ignorance of ancient geographers, the relative condition of the Aral and Caspian Seas has never in any stage of history undergone a marked change. Numerous learned authorities have gone still further, such as Vivien de Saint-Martin, Malte Brun, Hugh Murray, Baillie Fraser, and Burnes, who assert that such a variation is quite impossible, since the Oxus and the Jaxartes (Sír-Dariá) have never changed their course, and have from time immemorial, as at present, discharged themselves into the Aral Sea.

But, on the contrary, a host of not less important authorities, headed by Sir Henry Rawlinson, that distinguished and thoroughly experienced Orientalist, maintain that these fluctuations in the Aral Sea have actually existed. Before, however, this very interesting question

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xxxvii. (1867), pp. 134-166.

becomes definitely solved in a scientific point of view, let us cast some rapid glances over the assumed variations in the Sea of Aral within the period of history.

In ancient history, from the earliest times—let us say from 600 years B.C. till 500 to 600 A.D.—the Sea of Aral was entirely unknown; no geographical writer, whether Greek, Latin, or Persian, makes the slightest allusion to its existence. Herodotus and Strabo are the only classical authors who could be supposed to have any knowledge of the Sea of Aral. Their descriptions, however, do not give the idea of a large isolated inland sea, but represent rather a continuous series of marshes that are fed by the inundations of the Jaxartes, the main stream of which found its way into the Caspian. All other writers imagined that the Oxus, as well as the Jaxartes, discharged its waters directly into the Caspian. They computed a distance of eighty parasangs between the mouths of these two rivers, and made no mention whatever of any deviation or bifurcation in the course of either of these rivers. Moreover, Alexander the Great led an army into those parts of Asia, and despatched officers especially to reconnoitre those countries, ordering them to follow the shores of the Caspian; whilst he himself crossed the Oxus about 400 English miles above the mouth, and reached the bank of the Jaxartes. The result of this exploration was that both these rivers fall into the Caspian Sea—an opinion held in estimation amongst all the ancients, and one that entirely agrees with the description of the commercial route used for the conveyance to Europe of the produce of Eastern Asia. This commercial route started from the (Indian) Caucasus, utilised the Oxus as far as the Caspian, which was traversed by vessels; it then went up the river Cyrus (the *Kur*), and descended the

river Phasis (the *Rion*) to the Black Sea. In those days, when such a mercantile route was possible, the Oxus must have actually discharged itself into the Caspian, and not into the Sea of Aral. When we sum up the amount of geographical information which the Greek and Latin authors had at command—when we consider that the country lying between Persia and the Indian Caucasus, now under our observation, was governed for centuries by Greek princes—that Greek admirals navigated the Caspian Sea, whilst the India merchants travelling to the Mediterranean brought home to Rome their diaries and itineraries—then must all doubt be banished if we do not possess in such renowned works as those of Strabo, Pliny, and Ptolemy, an accurate representation of the geography of Central Asia during the period from 500 B.C. to 500 A.D. It is true that, in the opinion of Murchison, the geographical knowledge of the ancients was not of much value; but what is of still greater weight is the opinion of Humboldt, that Alexander's expedition has only tended to bring the geography of Asia into confusion; for to this expedition must be ascribed the confounding of the Jaxartes with the Tanais, and the Caucasus with the Hindú-Kúsh.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, it must not be forgotten that the ancients may have brought the Aral into connection with the Caspian, and may have possibly considered the former a part of the latter, in which case it would of course account for finding the mouths of both rivers in the Caspian Sea.<sup>2</sup> But when Colonel Yule draws the

<sup>1</sup> Humboldt, *Asie Centrale*, vol. ii. pp. 14, 153, 156.

<sup>2</sup> Rennel also holds that opinion in his book, *Geographical System of Herodotus*. Annexed to this work is a map of the twenty satrapies of Darius Hystaspes, in which Rennel shows the Oxus discharging itself into the Caspian, and the Jaxartes into the Aral, both which seas he represents as two distinct and separate sheets of water. So does also Williams in his

conclusion from the Byzantine historian Menander's<sup>1</sup> description of the embassy of Zemarchus to the Great Khán of the Turks in A.D. 570, that the Sea of Aral was known to the Greeks, we are led to believe, from a competent criticism in the 'Edinburgh Review'<sup>2</sup> of Yule's 'Marco Polo,' that the Colonel has entirely misconceived the geography of Zemarchus' expedition.<sup>3</sup> Zemarchus, on his return from the mission, encamped at Ák-Tágh,<sup>4</sup> and then crossed the Oetsh, Oich (or Vakh, probably the right arm of the Oxus), near the city of Urghendj. He found the Aral not yet formed into a complete inland sea, but in the condition of an extensive marsh; and then he followed its shores for some distance. It is probable that some thirty or forty years later, during the reign of Khosrú-Parviz, the great change took place which diverted the waters of the Oxus from the Caspian into the Sea of Aral. About that time, too, the lake Kardar, now forming the south-western portion of the lake Aibughir, was entirely dried up; but the latter had till then been most

*Life of Alexander the Great.* In H. Kiepert's *Atlas Antiquus* (twelve maps for Ancient History, the fifth newly executed and enlarged edition) the Aral is represented in sheet 2 as separated from the Caspian; whilst the Jaxartes falls into the Aral, the Oxus is here shown to flow into the Aral, and to discharge itself into the Caspian. The same delineation is found in sheet 12, representing the Roman Empire. But in his *Historisch-geographischer Atlas der alten Welt* (11th edition, sheet 2), only dry beds of the arms of the Oxus lead to the Aral, whilst the stream of water flows in a great bend to the Caspian. A similar representation is met with in Menke's *Orbis Antiqui Descriptio* (2nd edition) in sheets 2, 3, 7, 8.

<sup>1</sup> The number for January 1872, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> In *Cathay and the Way thither*, vol. i. p. 63.

<sup>3</sup> *Menandri Excerpta de Legat., Corpus Script. Hist. Byzant.* ed. Niebuhr, Bonnæ, 1839, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Niebuhr looks upon *Ák-Tágh* as *Asferah-Tágh* near Samarcand, and Humboldt as the Altái. No certain opinion can be expressed on the subject.

probably fed by an arm of the Oxus running through Urghendj. The drying up of the Kardar exposed to view the remains of a city (perhaps the Berrasin-Gelmaz?) which had been destroyed in ancient times by an inundation. According to a Persian tradition, it required twelve years of constant labour to raise the great amount of treasure that lay concealed amongst its ruins.<sup>1</sup>

Just as all the classical authorities concur in stating that the Oxus and the Jaxartes fall into the Caspian Sea, so do all Arabic authors of the Middle Ages not less agree in fixing the mouths of both those rivers in the Sea of Aral. El-Istakhri, and, later, Ibn-Haukal, are the first writers who give certain and reliable information regarding the Aral. This sea received, to the time of the rise of the Great Mogul Empire, all the waters of both these rivers; and, according to the testimony of the Arabic writers, from A.D. 600 to A.D. 1300, the whole of this country must have exhibited pretty nearly the same features as in the present time. But assuredly great changes must have been taking place in the delta of the Oxus. The capitals Fil-Mansúreh and Kát, which formerly stood in the south at the apex of the delta, were, between the ninth and twelfth centuries, entirely destroyed by inundations of the Oxus; whilst, on the other hand, a volume of water was diverted into irrigation canals that extended towards the west quite a hundred English miles into the desert. Nevertheless, during this period not a drop either of the Oxus or of the Jaxartes appears to have

<sup>1</sup> This tradition is noticed by Yayut in his large dictionary, under the head of 'Kardar.' The ruins of the enchanted castle of Berrasin-Gelmaz are described in Abbott's *Travels*, vol. i. p. 211, who places them in an island of the Sea of Aral; but in Butakov's map of that sea (*Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xxiii. p. 94) it lies, under the name of *Barsa-Kilmesh*, in a salt marsh to the west of the Aibughir swamp.

found its way into the Caspian Sea. In the year 1221, it happened that Oktái-Khán, son of Chenghiz-Khán, at the siege of Urghendj, burst asunder for the first time the dam of the Oxus, which served to regulate the flowing of the streams of irrigation into the old channel, and by these means he was able to direct the full power of the flood against the walls of the city, which washed away their foundations and entirely destroyed them. We do not exactly know what occurred after the destruction of this dam, and whether this caused simultaneously a kind of bar to the arm of the river flowing into the Aral below the place where the water was turned from its course. A few years later, however, in 1224, we for the first time learn, from Yayut's description of the peninsula of Mangishlak, that the Oxus was again directing its course to the Caspian. We may therefore ascribe, in this instance, the great change in the physical geography of this region, which ended in the drying up of the Aral, chiefly, and also with a degree of certainty, to the destruction of the dam at Urghendj by the direction of Oktái, since Hamdullah Mustowfi, in the following century, about the year 1330, describes the deviation of the course of the Oxus from the Aral to the Caspian Sea. He there distinctly asserts that this occurred about the same time as the rise of the Great Mogul Empire. When the city of Urghendj was destroyed, a second great change must have happened to the Oxus, which caused the upper or southern arm to open out its waters, because the canal described by Hamdullah is not the northern arm at Urghendj, but the one which flowed from Hazárasp through the pass of Múslim and Karláwa towards Akritsheh on the Caspian. Its mouth was probably at Aktúbbe, a place still existing, and situated a little to the north of the mouth of the Atrak.

The traditions of those dwelling in these and the adjacent parts all agree in this, namely, that the Oxus formerly discharged itself into the Caspian Sea. In fact, the dried-up bed of a river, called the Oghüz, may be traced from the lower course of the Oxus, running along towards the south-west close under the steep declivities of the Ust-Urt till it reaches the Bay of Balkán on the east of the Caspian Sea. To account for the origin of such dry river-beds near the course of the Oxus, we have sufficient authenticated documents from the most recent researches. One of the principal arms of the lower Oxus, the Laudán, having its course the farthest towards the west, and forming a bar of only one foot and a half in depth at its mouth in the marshy lake of Aibughir, was only dammed up some fifty years ago, when its waters were conducted into another channel. This arm displays, however, a constant inclination to fall back into its former course, and the flow of water in that direction increases every year. We know likewise that the Amú-Dariá turned gradually towards that side where the Khivans had constructed numerous irrigation canals, and forsook the arm that flows towards the west. Now, on the contrary, all the principal canals are cut on the left bank, and consequently the greatest rush of water is directed towards the west.

Although Sir Alexander Burnes<sup>1</sup> doubts that the Oxus

<sup>1</sup> Burnes's *Travels into Bokhara, being the Account of a Journey from India to Cabool, Tartary, &c.*, London, 1834, 8vo, vol. ii. pp. 187, 188: 'I have only to state, after an investigation of the subject and the traditions related to me, as well as much inquiry among the people themselves, that I doubt the Oxus having ever had any other than its present course. There are physical obstacles to its entering the Caspian south of Balkhan and north of that point; its more natural receptacle is the lake of Aral. I conclude that the dry river-beds between Astrabad and Chiwa are the remains of some of the canals of the kingdom of Kharasm, and I am supported in this



had any other than its present course, most of the later travellers have discovered the former bed of the Oxus exactly in those very places which were pointed out in the earlier descriptions of that river. The first account of it was given by M. N. Muravev,<sup>1</sup> who travelled in 1819 from the Bay of Balkán on the Caspian to Khiva. The traces of the before-mentioned southern arm of the Oxus from Hazárasp were observed by Abbott<sup>2</sup> close to the point of its diversion. Afterwards Captain Arthur Conolly examined most carefully the lower portion of the same arm near the Kúrán hills, which were intersected by the Múslim Pass,<sup>3</sup> and found the Oghüz whilst journeying from Astrachan to Khiva. The most recent description of it is by Vámbéry, who entertains no doubt that the Oxus formerly fell into the Caspian Sea, and is inclined to ascribe the diversion of the stream in a great measure to the irrigation canals already alluded to. Vámbéry, when coming from the south, describes the opposite bank of the river-bed, commonly known amongst the Turkomans by the name of Döden, as rather steep,<sup>4</sup> and mentions in another passage that the plateau of Káflánkír seems to rise up like an island out of a sea of sand; if one could credit the assertions of the Turkomans, it was formerly surrounded by two arms of the Oxus.<sup>5</sup> In proof of the existence of the southern arm from Hazárasp there is found in the local traditions suffi-

belief by the ruins near them, which have been deserted as the prosperity of that empire declined.' Vámbéry also alludes to these ruins, but considers them of Greek origin (*Travels in Central Asia*, p. 99).

<sup>1</sup> *Reise des Capitäns N. Murawiew in Turkmenien und Chiwa*, 1819 bis 1820, Paris, 1823.

<sup>2</sup> Abbott's *Travels*, vol. i. p. 60.

<sup>3</sup> Conolly's *Travels*, vol. i. p. 51 and following pages.

<sup>4</sup> Vámbéry's *Travels in Central Asia*, p. 106.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 115.

cient evidence of a satisfactory nature. It may indeed be assumed as a matter of fact that that arm in all probability represents the original course of the Oxus as described in the geography of the Greeks; for it flowed along close to Bárcáni (Verkán or Gúrgán), and eventually discharged itself into the Caspian in the north of Socanda (Atrak): a trace of this name is still discoverable in the Arabic word Ab-oskún. But the northern arm, namely, the Oghüz, was probably the original bed of the Jaxartes after having discharged a portion of its waters into the marshes of the Aral. In Hamdullah Mustowfi's description of the Caspian, there appears a very remarkable passage, in which he states that, in consequence of the flowing of the waters of the Oxus into that sea during the preceding century, the level of the Caspian rose to such a height in his time—about A.D. 1330—that the celebrated harbour of Ab-oskún and the adjacent country were flooded. And, further on, he argues very rightly that the body of water would continue to augment until the increase and diminution had assumed equal proportions—namely, until the absorption of water by evaporation exactly corresponded with the volume of water received by this sea from its various sources of supply.

From what has been hitherto brought forward, we arrive at the conclusion that at the end of the thirteenth century the Oxus discharged itself no longer into the Aral, but did so into the Caspian Sea. Many more interesting facts, however, can be adduced in support of this view. Between the period of 1300 and 1500, Europeans were in possession of many means of becoming acquainted with the physical geography of Central Asia, which were, however, greatly surpassed by the vast explorations undertaken in the present century. In those

days missions were frequently despatched from the European courts to the Mongols of Central Asia, and the envoys generally wrote accounts of their journeys. Colonel Yule has collected the reports of many of these travellers during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries into a valuable book.<sup>1</sup> But it is very singular to observe that none of these accounts make mention of the Sea of Aral, although in almost every case the route of these travellers must have led to it or across it. The monk, William van Ruysbroeck, who in 1253 passed down the lower Jaxartes, relates that this river did not flow into any sea, but lost itself in a desert, where it formed an extensive marsh. The Polos, who, in their first journey to the East in 1260, were supposed to have travelled direct from the Volga to Bokhára, must, according to the present configuration of the earth's surface, have proceeded along the northern or southern shores of the Aral; yet not the slightest allusion to that sea can be found in Marco Polo's brief account of this journey, or in any other part of his work.<sup>2</sup> Therefore it can scarcely be assumed that at that time the Sea of Aral presented an imposing body of water. Moreover, another writer, the Florentine Balducci Pergoletto, gave exact details of the route then in use for commerce from the Black Sea to China, on which the merchants carried thither articles of European luxury, and returned home laden with silks. Pergoletto, who wrote about the same time as Hamdullah Mustowfi, about the year 1340, gives the following advice to merchants travelling to Tartary—they may take a circuitous way by Urghendj,

<sup>1</sup> *Cathay and the Way thither.*

<sup>2</sup> In the excellent new English version of Marco Polo's *Travels* by Colonel Yule, we regret exceedingly not to find a thorough investigation of the Sea of Aral question.

but they would save from five to ten days if they went direct from Saraichik, on the Yaik (the present Ural river, or the Daix of the ancients) to Otrar on the Jaxartes; consequently they were to take a direct line across the bed of the Sea of Aral. This route recommended by Pergoletto was taken by Fra Pascal, of Vittoria,<sup>1</sup> in the year 1337, and also earlier by Ibn Batuta, as far as Urghendj. We have carefully perused the chapter relating to the journey of this traveller; but though he mentions the Oxus, Khárazm, as well as many places on the Jaxartes, amongst them Otrar, he never refers to the Sea of Khárazm.<sup>2</sup> In the same manner, the maps of those days take as little notice of its existence as the books of travel. One of these maps—the so-called Catalanian map—was expressly executed to illustrate the caravan route from the Sarai on the Volga to China; another is preserved in the Palatinal Library at Rome; a third is the Borgia map; and the most celebrated of all is the Venetian by Fra Mauro; but on none of these is the Sea of Aral represented. On the Catalanian map the Jaxartes is not delineated, and on that of Fra Mauro it falls into the lake of Issik-Kúl, which Colonel Yule is inclined to regard as the dawning knowledge of another ‘embouchure’ than that of the Caspian Sea. We might urge in opposition to this, that it is scarcely probable that Fra Mauro’s map should show a lake so much smaller, so inaccessible, and so remote from the route as Issik-Kúl, and not at the same time delineate the more important and larger Sea of Aral. It is difficult to admit that so large

<sup>1</sup> *Cathay and the Way thither*, p. 233.

<sup>2</sup> *Voyages d'Ibn Batoutah: Texte arabe accompagné d'une traduction par C. Defrémery et le Dr. B. R. Sanguinetti*. Paris, 1858, 8vo, four vols. The corresponding chapters are at the beginning of the third volume.

an expanse of water, if then in existence, should have escaped the observation of those who drew the maps, or that it should have been considered too unimportant for insertion. Colonel Yule holds in no great estimation Marino Sanudo's map,<sup>1</sup> where indications of the Sea of Aral may be perceived.

If we pass over the space of another century, when the Oxus still continued to flow into the Caspian, and the Jaxartes either lost itself in the desert, or painfully struggled to unite with the Oxus, then from the hitherto alleged negative proof we arrive at a positive proof of the entire disappearance of the Aral Sea during the fifteenth century. Sir Henry Rawlinson became possessed of a Persian manuscript,<sup>2</sup> dating from the year 1417, by an anonymous author, who seems to have been a minister of the celebrated ruler of Herát, Sháh Rukh Sultán. This manuscript contains a description of the province of Khorásán, in which he displayed a thorough acquaintance with every village in that country. Since Sir Roderick Murchison in his day endeavoured to depreciate the value of this Persian manuscript,<sup>3</sup> it behoves us here to bear in mind that a great part of the celebrated work of Abdurrhazak (translated and commentated upon by Quatremère) was, word for word, transcribed from the above-mentioned manuscript. Quatremère, who is thoroughly versed in these subjects, observes that this is one of the most curious and veracious books that ever have been written in an Oriental language. In the description of the seas

<sup>1</sup> In Bongarsius, *Gesta Dei per Francos*, vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Vide, on this subject, *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xi. (1867), No. 3, p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> In his 'Address,' *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xxxvii. (1867), p. cxxxv.

and lakes of Asia, this anonymous writer says of the Aral, which he calls the Sea of Khárazm, that ‘in all ancient books the Sea of Khárazm is represented as the great basin that received the waters of the Oxus, but now (in the year 820 of the Hegira—i.e. A.D. 1417) the sea no longer exists, for the Dscheihûn or Jaihún (the Arabic name for the Oxus) had hollowed out a fresh course to the Caspian Sea, which it entered near Karláwa, as will be hereafter described.’ When delineating the Asiatic rivers, the manuscript further states that ‘it is mentioned in all ancient books that the Dscheihûn diverges from this point towards the Sea of Khárazm, and discharges itself into that sea; but at the present time the sea no longer exists, as the river had formed a new bed that leads to the Caspian. Its mouth is at a place called Karláwa or Akritsheh. From Khárazm to the point of entry into the Caspian, the greater portion of the land is a desert.’

Thus much as regards the Oxus.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore it concerns us now to examine the course of the Jaxartes. For, although the Sea of Aral possesses no springs, and is consequently dependent for its supply on the waters of the Oxus and Jaxartes, yet it could still exist as an inland sea, even after the withdrawal of its supply from the Oxus, if the Jaxartes still continued to feed it. Now, we have indeed heard that at about that time the latter ran to waste in the sands of the desert; but the above-mentioned Persian manuscript states further that ‘the river from Khojend, in its lower course passing through the desert of Khárazm, unites with the Oxus, and finally

<sup>1</sup> Compare R. Lenz, *Unsere Kenntnisse über den früheren Lauf des Amu-Darjâ*, with two maps, St. Petersburg, 1870. A very thorough and critical treatment of this question.

reaches in this manner the Caspian Sea.' Sir Henry Rawlinson draws the conclusion from this passage that about the year 1417 the Jaxartes below Otrar turned from its present bed to the left, and reached the Oxus between Kungrad and Khiva. Although the testimony of this Persian author is so important, especially as it proceeds from one so thoroughly acquainted with that country, yet that passage already quoted from Sir Roderick Murchison has given rise to very strong doubts; for on geological grounds he holds such a union of the Jaxartes with the Oxus to be impossible. In truth, the mention of this unusual circumstance occurs in no other authenticated source, not even in the classical writers. But when the English geologist so prominently brings forward this circumstance, and lays so much stress on it, that if ever such a union of these two rivers had in olden times occurred, it must have been perfectly well known to the ancients, he seems to us to be asserting something very contradictory to his former opinions, when he disparages the testimony of the ancient geographers on account of their ignorance. Lastly, Kiepert's map of Turán (published at Berlin in 1864) deserves consideration, in which there is drawn the course of the river Yáni-Dariá (the Persian for 'new river'), making a bend below Otrar, near the Fort Perovsky. This river, receiving into its bed a portion of the Kizil-Dariá (Persian for 'red river'), effects a junction with the Oxus, which it reaches at Khodja-Ili. The Russian map of the Kirghiz Steppe, on the other hand, makes the Yáni-Dariá halfway to the Oxus merge into a small lake in the desert of Kizil-Kúm. Without wishing to pass an opinion on the vexed question of the union of the two streams, we cannot help pointing out that, taking the diversion of the Oxus for granted, the

drying up of the Sea of Aral becomes probable from the simple reason that the Jaxartes, having become exhausted in the sands, never reached that sea. This is, in addition to the evidence already adduced, manifestly corroborated by the great Sultán Baber, who was thoroughly acquainted with the topography of his own country, and states most explicitly that ‘the Saihún (Jaxartes) flows in a northerly direction from Khojend, and in a southerly from Finákat, which is now better known as Shahrokhia; thence bending towards the north, it runs down towards Turkestán, and, without meeting another river, is sucked up by the sandy deserts, and disappears<sup>1</sup> farther down in Turkestán.’ This would evidently determine the question as regards the course of the Jaxartes until the beginning of the sixteenth century; we will therefore only point out that the testimony of Sultán Baber is the only one which has been left undisputed either by Murchison or Yule.

About the year 1500, there began a new phase in the course of both rivers, which from that time commenced flowing back to the Aral. In 1550, these regions were visited by an English commercial agent, one Anthony Jenkinson, who landed at Mangishlak, a peninsula on the Caspian, and went down to a former mouth of the Oxus, where he learned that that river had changed its course, and was flowing into the Sea of Araī. The ruler of that country, Abúl-Gházi Khán, who has left to posterity a very detailed description of his territories, gives minute accounts of this event, and also mentions the year in which the Oxus flowed back again into the Aral. He relates how the old stream became gradually dried up, and formed the now existing inland sea. Since then, to the

<sup>1</sup> Leyden's *Baber*, p. 1.



present day, we possess from year to year information relative to the condition of this river.

Although we have prominently brought forward the arguments on the assumed periodical disappearance of the Sea of Aral—for which we have also much nearer home, but on a smaller scale, an analogous example in the drying up and refilling of the Neusiedler Lake<sup>1</sup> in Hungary—we are indeed far from having the intention of espousing either one side or the other in this much-disputed question, which still awaits its definitive solution. It only rested with us, therefore, to lay before the reader the materials at hand, and to test the views formed upon them in the most searching manner, so as to enable him to form his own opinion on the subject.

<sup>1</sup> Concerning the periodical drying up of the Neusiedler Lake, vide *Ausland*, 1872, No. 24, pp. 575, 576.

## CHAPTER III.

## DESERTS AND STEPPES.

ON the north-east and east of the Sea of Aral there expands between the rivers Irghiz and Sír-Dariá<sup>1</sup> an extensive desert of black shifting sand. It alternately consists of a parched clayey soil and of salt marshes, and is dotted here and there with numerous small sand-hills. The soil, however, produces peculiar species of vegetation, amongst which two kinds of leguminous plants (*Leguminosæ*) are remarkable. Along the whole extent of this boundless steppe, which the Kirghiz have very appropriately named Kará-Kúm (signifying in Turkish, *kará*, 'black,' and *kúm*, 'sand'), and also on the clayey soil impregnated with salt, are found the characteristic plants termed *Chenopodiaceæ*, and especially the *saksaúl*<sup>2</sup> (*Haloxylon ammodendron*), shooting up everywhere in scattered woody thickets, and the umbelliferous shrubs that grow about a foot high. Consequently it cannot, properly speaking, be termed a barren waste. The chief distinction here between a desert and a steppe seems to exist in the presence or absence of drinkable spring water. The banks of the Sír-Dariá and the shores of the Aral are covered with thickets and reeds (*Arundo phragmites*, Linn.), alter-

<sup>1</sup> *Dariá* or *Darjâ* means in Persian a 'sea' or 'great river.'

<sup>2</sup> A full description of the qualities of the *saksaúl* is found in Basiner's *Travels through the Kirghiz Steppe to Khiva*, St. Petersburg, 1848, p. 93.

nating with high-stemmed rushes (*Lasiagrotis splendens*), with which the Kirghiz plait their elegant and fine straw mats. At the delta of the Sír-Dariá the *saksaúl* reaches the height of fourteen feet; on its banks grow profusely *halophytes*, and the shifting sand-hills give shelter to charming groves of tamarisks (*Tamarix*). At certain distances along this arid plain, wells have been sunk for the use of the caravans, that are obliged to take this route to Europe; but they yield only a moderate quantity of water. Throughout Turán there is generally a dearth of woodland; consequently the sylvan solitude, so grateful to the hermit, is here unknown, that was wont to work so powerfully on the imagination of Indian poets.<sup>1</sup>

Between the rivers Sír-Dariá and Amú-Dariá we meet with the desert Kizil-Kúm (Turkish for 'red sand'). It is a reddish-brown plain of sand, upwards of forty miles broad, the shifting sands of which are likewise towered up into hills by storms. Scanty bushes, sometimes reaching ten or twelve feet high, are spread over all the plain. Here grows only one kind of grass, which is, however, very frequently found, and, when forming an extensive turf-land, affords good pasturage to the horse. The border-land of the desert of the Kizil-Kúm is called Ak-Kámish, and has good grazing land, on which the Kirghiz feed their herds.

To the south, this steppe borders on the still more barren clayey steppe of Bokhára, into which penetrate some mountain ridges composed of slate and plutonic rocks, the spurs of which, with their bare and precipitous granite walls, scarcely attain the height of 1,000 p.f. Vámbéry describes this steppe as a vast sea of sand, which, like the ocean, when lashed by stormy winds, rears up

<sup>1</sup> Humboldt, *Kosmos*, vol. ii. p. 42.

high billows of sand, but, when lulled by soft zephyrs, undulates its surface into gentle waves. Not a bird in the air, not a worm or a beetle on the earth, is to be seen. Traces of extinct life alone are found—such as bones of dead men and animals, which each passer-by collects into a heap, to serve as a mark to guide the next comer. The desert is wide, but so deficient in water that the traveller, even in sleep, firmly grasps his water-bottle. Frequently men and camels, tortured by exposure to the heat and burning sand, fall sick and die.<sup>1</sup> By far the most terrible of all is the devastation caused by the *Tebbád*, which signifies in Persian the Fever-wind. On its approach, the camels begin to bellow loudly, then throw themselves down, stretching out their long necks on the ground, and trying to bury their heads in the sand. Travellers droop, cowering down behind their camels. With a dull panting noise the wind rolls over them, and pours on them a flood of sand, of which the grains, as they descend, burn like sparks of glowing fire. Vámbéry, however, suffered but little from the fever and the vomiting caused by the effect of this wind. Southward of this clayey steppe, we meet, at about 40° N. lat., the beautiful and highly cultivated plain of the Zarafshán, which has, by means of artificial irrigation, been snatched from the barren waste. The other deserts in the neighbourhood of the Amú-Dariá are for the most part entirely sterile deserts of sand. A leafless plant—the so-called gold-rod—is very frequently found in these wastes. There are here still traces of the former existence of considerable woods; for trunks of trees, about a foot thick, are burned for charcoal. The water even of the wells is bitter and brackish, and fit only for the use of cattle. Sandstorms occur not unfrequently in

<sup>1</sup> Vámbéry, *Travels in Central Asia*, London, 1864, 8vo, p. 158.

these steppes. In the deserts of Turkestán and Khárazm, a spark of fire, thrown from carelessness on the ground, and fanned by the wind, will set whole steppes on fire, when the scorching sun in the hot season has, as it were, burned all the grass and shrubs to cinders. The flame, barred by no hindrance, and being constantly fed, spreads with such rapidity that even on horseback escape is most difficult. The fire once kindled rolls over the parched grass like a gushing torrent,<sup>1</sup> and mounts up with towering flames, whilst furiously devouring the bushes that are thick enough for a while to oppose its progress. Thus rushing onward, it traverses in the shortest space immense tracts of land, till it perchance meets with a river or a large expanse of water, which alone are able to arrest its impetuous course.

The Kirghiz Steppe belongs to that low-lying land forming the basins of the Aral and Caspian Seas. This steppe, rising in its centre to about 300 feet, consists of vast level plains, or rather undulating ground, the slopes of which are generally very extensive, and descend gradually and gently on every side. Nevertheless, we unexpectedly come across broad and deep hollows, that in long strips run through this arid waste. Not a tree nor a shrub<sup>2</sup> is to be seen on which the wearied eye can rest. The whole steppe may be compared to the boundless ocean when its wide-spreading waves have become all at

<sup>1</sup> Vámbéry, *In der turkomanischen Wüste* (Globus, 1861, vol. xi. p. 46).

<sup>2</sup> A. Becker, *Reise in die Kirghisen-Steppe nach Astrachan und an das kaspische Meer* (*Bulletin de la Société Imp. des Naturalistes de Moscou*, 1866, No. 3, pp. 163–207). ‘A Map of the Kirghiz-Steppe and the neighbouring Central Asian Territories,’ on a scale of 1-4,200,000, St. Petersburg, 1865, compiled in the Russian language by Lieut.-Col. Iljie, may serve as a map to the above; but, to judge from the title and the scale, it is identical with that of the *Invalide Russe*,

once motionless. This monotonous surface is only broken by the Mugadshar mountains (a continuation of the Ural range), which intersect the steppe from north to south. The Airúk, however, the highest peak, scarcely reaches an elevation of 1,000 P. F. The mountainous tract of the steppe is composed of feldspar and porphyry, which are often mixed with lead, copper, silver, and sometimes with gold. Along the banks of the Irtish, and in the level parts of the steppe, are found carbonate of lime and an almost horizontal stratum of coal.<sup>1</sup>

A graphic picture of the Asiatic steppes has been sketched by Mr. Thomas Witleam Atkinson<sup>2</sup> in the following words:—‘Men speak of the solitude of dense forests. I have ridden through their dark shades for days together, but there was the sighing of the breeze, the rustling of the leaves, the creaking of the branches—sometimes the crash of one of these giants of the forest, which, in falling, woke up many an echo, causing the wild animals to growl, and the frightened birds to utter shrieks of alarm. This was not solitude—the leaves and trees found tongues, and sent forth voices; but in these dreary deserts no sound was heard to break the death-like silence which hangs perpetually over the blighted region.’ By the side of a lake in the desert, Atkinson once watched the forming of a hurricane overhead. The boisterous wind rushed vehemently along with tremendous velocity, reared up

<sup>1</sup> Anatole Jaunez Sponville, *Chez les Kirghis (Bulletin de la Société de Géographie, Paris, 1865, vol. i. p. 448).*

<sup>2</sup> *Oriental and Western Siberia, London, 1858.* As regards the geographical statements, Atkinson is altogether unreliable, for his travels in the north of Mongolia are supposed to be an invention. The book entitled *Recollections of the Tartar Steppes and their Inhabitants, London, 1863, 8vo,* is written by Mrs. Atkinson. The quotation is taken from Atkinson’s *Upper and Lower Amoor, London, 1860, 8vo, p. 53.*

the mighty surging billows, and ploughed a deep furrow along the face of the water. Terrifically roared the hurricane as it rapidly passed from the lake to the steppe. There it began to whirl up clouds of sand, which was forcibly heaved up into numerous hills that formed a successive row of terraces, or was in other places heaped up into immense masses. In a quarter of an hour it passed away, and all was still. But woe be to him who should be unfortunately overtaken by the whirlwind in the open level plain! <sup>1</sup>

All the steppes do not, however, bear so gloomy a character. The vast steppe lying between the Don, the Volga, the Caspian Sea, and the Chinese lake of Zaisang<sup>2</sup> (or Nor-Zaisan), which spreads over a space of nearly 700 geographical miles, and is dotted here and there with hills and interspersed with pine-woods, possesses in large clusters a vegetation more varied than is found in the Llanos of Caraccas and the Pampas of Buenos Ayres. The more fertile parts of the plains, inhabited by pastoral tribes, are studded with low shrubs, luxuriantly blooming white rosaceæ, imperial lilies, tulips, and cypripediæ.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Streifzüge in den Gebirgen und Steppen der Chalchas Mongolen und Kirghisen* (Globus, 1863, vol. iv. p. 259).

<sup>2</sup> Abramov, *The Lake Nor-Zaisan and its Neighbourhood*. Translated from the Russian by John Michell. (*Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1865, vol. xxxv. pp. 58, 59.)

<sup>3</sup> The large artificially constructed mounds of earth (*Kurgáns* or *Mogils*) in the steppes of Southern Russia are remarkable and still veiled in mystery, for hitherto no light has been thrown on their purpose, origin, and founders. They are found throughout the south of Siberia, beginning in European Russia and extending as far as the country around the river Amúr, and distinguished as *tumuli*, mounds, and tombs, and also simple *kurgáns*, which aid in impressing a peculiar character on the steppes. Alexander Petzholdt, who very recently devoted especial attention to the *kurgáns* in his book entitled *Reise im westlichen und südlichen Russland*

Just as in the tropics all varieties of vegetation generally show a tendency to assume the nature of trees, so in Asia's temperate zone some steppes are characterised by the extraordinary height to which the flowering herbs grow, such as the saussureæ and other kinds of the synanthèreæ, leguminous plants (*capsulares*), and particularly a great variety of the astragalus. When driving in the low Tartar springless wagons through the trackless parts of these herbage plains, it is necessary to stand erect to discover the right course, for otherwise the view is intercepted by the high stems of the herbs, which here grow so densely as almost to resemble a wood, and, as the wagon rolls on, these lofty stems bow down beneath the wheels. Some of these Asiatic steppes are plains of grass-land; some are covered with salt-wort—a succulent, evergreen, and articulate plant—and others are overspread with far-glistening salt, which, sprouting forth like lichens, besprinkles unevenly, as fresh-fallen snow, the clayey soil.<sup>1</sup>

Near the 49° N. latitude this vast low level seems

(Leipzig, 1864), found the greatest irregularity as regards their form, dimensions, and distribution over the steppes. Some are small, some large, some single, and some double. On an average they are from 15 to 20 p.f. high, with a corresponding space for their base. (*Globus*, 1866, vol. x. p. 64.) Vide also Atkinson's *Travels in the Regions of the Upper and Lower Amoor*, London, 1860, 8vo, p. 184. According to Bernhard von Cotta, the *Kurgáns* correspond, at least exteriorly, quite with the so-called *Hünen* or *Wendengrüber* of Germany; the *Kumanian* hillocks in Hungary; the *Dolmes* in the south of France and the north of Africa; the *Antas* in Spain and Portugal. 'I recollect having seen some similar to them in Siberia, and thence to the Altái mountains, where they were ascribed to the Tschudees.' (B. v. Cotta, *Reise in Südrußland*, in *Ausland*, 1869, No. 5, p. 1206.) Compare also the *kurgáns* in the Russian Steppes. Haxthausen, *Studien über Rußland*, Hanover, 1847, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 337, and *Globus*, v. p. 217, and vi. p. 320.

<sup>1</sup> Humboldt, *Ansichten der Natur*, 1859, vol. i. 'Ueber Steppen und Wüsten,' pp. 6, 7.



to swell upwards till it forms an elevated barrier, from which flows the river Ishim towards the north, whilst numerous streamlets glide towards the south-west in a meandering course till they finally lose themselves in the sand. In this district also rise some low ridges of hills, such as the Arkát, the Aldshán, and the Chenghiz-Táu.<sup>1</sup> This latter proudly raises its crest, clothed with wood and abounding in springs, to a height of 4,000 P. F., and serves to separate the thoroughly barren steppe of Irtish from the lowlands of the Balkash lake. To this chain adjoin the Karkarály, Kent-Kaslyk hills, chiefly composed of granite and porphyry, and ranging between 300 and 1,000 P. F. above the plain. Further on rise the Ak-Táu ('white mountain' in Turkish), the Kúrgentásh, and the long range of the Ildighis, which probably stand in connection with the Úlú-Tágh<sup>2</sup> that is so rich in lead; in this case there would be a range extending for a distance of twenty-five miles, which was formerly represented as the connecting link between the Ural and the Altái mountains.

On the south of this hilly and mountainous range extend a continuous series of isolated lakes from the Sea of Balkash to the Aral; and on the west to the north-east of the Aral there is a remarkable assemblage of lakes, of which many, particularly the smaller, are so united and interwoven as to resemble a wreath of roses. The same phenomenon as was mentioned concerning the Sea of Aral is observable in all these lakes—the disposition to become dried up and then wholly to disappear.

Besides the Caspian and Aral Seas there exists the

<sup>1</sup> *Táu*, Turkish for 'mountain chain.'

<sup>2</sup> *Úlú*, Turkish for 'great;' *tágh*, 'mountain.'

Lake of Balkash,<sup>1</sup> which spreads over a superficial area of about 400 square miles, and is the largest sheet of water in the Kirghiz Steppe. It is often termed in the Chinese Annals<sup>2</sup> *Si-pai*, signifying the Sea of the West, and thus became frequently confounded with the Caspian Sea. The deep depression of the land, continuing from the Balkash to the lake Alá-Kúl, and uniting them together, marks the separation of the mountain system of the Asiatic highlands from the Kirghiz Steppe—a wide-spreading plain, the monotonous aspect of which is only here and there broken by solitary hills. The Balkash, lying, perhaps, 500 p. f. (according to Semenov's computation, 600 to 700 English feet) above the level of the sea, extends from north-west to south-east eighty-six geographical miles, and from one to eleven miles from north to south; its greatest depth is seventy English feet, being greater towards the north and less towards the south. On the north and north-west its shores rise gradually above the level of the water, like the Ust-Urt on the west coast of the Aral. On the contrary, the southern shores, teeming with sedges, where scarcely a line of demarcation between land and water is perceptible, are precipitous. Thence stretches to the outlying spurs of the Alá-Táu mountains (signifying 'spotted') a steppe consisting of sand-hills, and called the Ajábáinym-Ak-Kúm, which is a continuation of the Bed-Pak-Da-La (the *Hungry Steppe*) or

<sup>1</sup> I. Spörer, *Die Seezone des Balchasch-Ala-Kul und das Siebenstromland mit dem Iibecken nach russischen Quellen* (Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1868, pp. 73-85, 193-200, and 393-406).

<sup>2</sup> According to the opinion of Humboldt. It is a fact that the earliest information concerning the Balkash is found in the writings of the Chinese. The name of Balkash Nor (signifying 'broad lake') is Dzungari, and first introduced by Klaproth into geographical nomenclature. The Kirghiz call it Lake *Tenghiz*, i.e. sea.

the ‘*Golodnaya Step*’ of the Russians, dividing Siberia from the Turanian district of Kokán. The water of this lake, dotted with numerous islands, is clear, generally fresh and drinkable; only along its margin and in its creeks it is of a bitter and brackish taste, and unfit to drink. To the east of the Balkash lie the lakes of Sásyk-Kúl<sup>1</sup> (the stinking lake) and Alá-Kúl,<sup>2</sup> both indicating traces of their former continuity with the Balkash. They lie in a sandy steppe, which betokens, from its extreme aridity, the former bed of a sea that has been long dried up. In the Alá-Kúl there is a small island of non-volcanic formation called the Aral-Túbe.<sup>3</sup> The Balkash has within the range of history formed one continuous basin with the Alá-Kúl.

Beyond the Lepsa, which river falls into the Balkash, begins the ‘Land of the Seven Rivers,’ or the ‘Semiryechensky-Krai,’ which formerly belonged to Dzungaria, and in 1849 first came definitively into the possession of the Russians. This district is formed by the Dzungarian high range of the Alá-Táu mountains with their outlying, gradually descending chains on the one side, and on the other by an elevated steppe varying in height from 1,500 to 500 P. F., which by degrees gently

<sup>1</sup> It is 40 versts long, 15 versts wide; its shores are low and covered with sedges and reeds, but otherwise it presents a clear and beautiful sheet of water.

<sup>2</sup> Turkish for ‘spotted lake.’ The Kalmucks call it also ‘Alák-túgúl-noor,’ ‘Lake of the Spotted Bull’—*túgúl*, a bull or calf. In former times it was known by the characteristic name of *Gurghe Noor*, i.e. the lake of bridges. According to Golubev, the Alá-Kúl lies 4,200 English feet above the level of the sea, and contains an area of 1,514 square versts; it is 55 versts long and 40 wide, and 14 feet deep.

<sup>3</sup> It consists of hornstone-porphry, hornstone and clay-slate (argillite). The name *Aral-Túbe* signifies ‘hilly island.’ In Turkish a hill is *tepe tuba*; in Persian, *túbe*, *tape*; *Aral* in Kirghizi means ‘island.’

slopes down to the Balkash. Its boundaries are defined on the south-east by the crest-line of the Alá-Táu mountains, on the north-east by the waters of the Balkash, on the south by the course of the river Ili, and on the north by the river Lepsa. It is separated from the highlands of Lower Asia by the snowy range of the Dzungarian Alá-Táu, but it is physically as well as historically connected with the same by the deep bed of the Ili.

The seven rivers which give the name to this country are the LEPSA<sup>1</sup> with its tributary the BÁKSÁN, the ÁK-SÚ<sup>2</sup> ('white water') with its tributary the SARKÁN, the BIEN,<sup>3</sup> and the KARÁTÁL<sup>4</sup> with its tributary the KOK-SÚ<sup>5</sup> ('blue water'). Only the Lepsa—the southern frontier river—the Ili, and perhaps the Karátál, permanently reach the Balkash; whilst the other rivers, though flowing towards

<sup>1</sup> This river also runs to waste about two versts from the lake without having a proper *embouchure*; its bed contains numerous sand-banks, which render navigation almost impossible. It rises amongst the offshoots of the Alá-Táu from the two rivulets of the Terekty. Its course is at first extremely rapid, but afterwards becomes gradually slower. Its water is drinkable and wholesome, but only clear in summer-time. It is frozen over in October, but breaks up in the beginning of April. On the left bank it receives its tributary, the Bácsán.

<sup>2</sup> It takes its rise where, in the region of perpetual snow, the Kopál breaks asunder from the Alá-Táu. The whole length of its course is about 240 versts. There exists the same peculiarity with regard to its mouth as with the Lepsa.

<sup>3</sup> It has its source in the northern declivities of the Kopál chain. Its course is about 100 versts long.

<sup>4</sup> It is formed from the three rivulets Korá, Chádchá, and Tekli-Airyk, which gush down from the snowy regions of the Alá-Táu. Having received its tributary, the streamlet Kúsák, and then the Koksú, it runs for a distance of 300 versts, and finally discharges itself in three (according to Abramov, in five) arms into the Balkash. The upper course is excessively rapid.

<sup>5</sup> Derived from the Turkish *gök*, 'the heavens,' or 'blue,' and *sú*, 'water.' Its course is 200 versts long. It takes its rise in the same region as the Aksú, and is formed from the two rivulets Korún and Kútál.

its northern shores, either run to waste in the sands before reaching it, or else only reach it at high water. All of them take their rise in the snowy regions of the Alá-Táu, and, after first watering fertile valleys, flow through the extensive plains around the lake of Balkash. In their upper course they are but mountain torrents, which, rushing headlong down their rocky beds, dash through the picturesque glens and valleys of the mountain slopes; but, when in their lower course they reach the arid wastes, they become transformed into sluggish and muddy steppe-rivers. This desert region of the Balkash—a steppe having an elevation of 500 to 1,500 P. F.—contains the winter stations of the nomad tribes. It is covered with barren, sandy and shallow salt-lagoons, is quite denuded of trees, and bears only a species of vegetation indigenous to the beds of such waters, and thus shows the characteristic features of the Aralo-Caspian basin by producing the typical *saksaúl*. Amongst the sedges and reeds that so densely cover the banks of the rivers and the shores of the Balkash are found *kúlán* (wild ass, *equus onager*), porcupine, and turtle. The cultivated tracts of land, from 1,500 to 4,000 P. F. high, which possess good arable land and abundant irrigation, have, as regards their herbaceous plants, a great similarity to the vegetation of the lowlands of Western Siberia and of the east of Europe. Russian colonisation spreads over these regions and concentrates on those spots which, having an elevation from 4,000 to 7,000 P. F., are usually, but not always, richly wooded, and able to furnish the settlers with a sufficient supply for building purposes. In this manner very many settlements gradually arose, which are now flourishing and important places, such as the town of Kopalsk, or Kopál, which was founded in 1849 by Prince Gorchakov, then Governor of Western

Siberia, in order to protect the great hordes of the Kirghiz against the inroads of the Dikokámenni-Kirghiz. The town is situated on the river Kopál<sup>1</sup> (or Kizil-Agátch-Sú?). Afterwards the forts and military stations were erected, namely, Aksúisk on the Áksú, Arásán<sup>2</sup> (in Kalmuk, 'warm springs'), Karátál and Koksúisk (3,350 p.f. above the level of the sea), both on rivers of the same name, Altyn-Emel (Dzungarí for 'golden saddle') and Kaltshyk.

Thus steppes and mountain tracts here also form that fundamental contrast which pervades all conditions of nature and civilisation. The lofty mountains with their plenteous supply of water tend to produce food, to impart animation, and advance civilisation; whereas the low level steppe causes everything to waste away and become depressed, and thus acts as a hindrance to civilisation. Where the desert plains spread out without water and without trees, there essentially is the land of the nomad tribes—the trysting-place of these wandering pastoral races—whose natural propensities cannot as yet be overcome by the influence of the strongest mind, or by the all-subduing power of civilisation. In these highlands, and in the spurs shooting out from them into the plains, has civilisation found a fixed abode, where it may thrive and advantageously expand.

One of the most important of the seven rivers, and at the same time the largest in Central Asia, is the Ili. It takes its rise at Bogdo-Oola, one of the highest peaks of the Thián-Shán, under the name of Ták-Sú, which is fed by

<sup>1</sup> There is still great uncertainty about this river. Is it the Kizil-Ágátch-Sú of Schrenk, or the Kopál of Semenov? On this subject consult Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1868, p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> There are actually here hot sulphur-springs (35° Réaumur), which have their rise at about 750 p.f. above the water-level of the Álá-Kúl.

numerous streamlets of melted snow as well as by mountain torrents that rush down the north-west declivities of that mountain range. The Ili flows for a distance of 130 miles through a long valley, which, with an elevation of upwards of 1,300 p.f. above the level of the sea, stretches from west to east, and is enclosed by the Nán-Shán and Iren-Khábirgán (Dzungarí for 'spotted mountain,' a signification equivalent to the Alá-Táu of the Kirghiz). The Ták-Sú takes the name of Ili after its junction with the red-coloured tributary, the Shúngis or Kásh.<sup>1</sup> The Ili separates the region of Semiryechensk from the more southern part, which the Russian settlers have since 1854 called the Trans-Ili district. From the year 1755 the whole basin of this land has belonged to the Chinese Empire. The banks of the Ili are low, and dotted here and there with large trees and dense thickets; the width of the river is about a quarter of a mile, and its current is strong and rapid. At one point there is a ford, below which the river bursts through some porphyry rocks that had narrowed its bed. There the depth of water is very great, and the course of the river very sinuous. After the foaming passage through this gorge the banks widen again, and the waters, here abounding in fish, become smooth, and the current visibly decreases along the lower course. Here the banks become more and more flat and level, and are covered with a great variety of trees, shrubs, and underwood. Finally, at a distance of thirty-six miles beyond the passage of the porphyry rocks, and after a run of 166 miles, the Ili, traversing the sandy steppe of the 'Seven-River-Land,' discharges itself into the Balkash by means of a delta seven miles

<sup>1</sup> It takes its rise in the south-eastern offshoots of the Tarbágátái mountain range, and flows chiefly in a south-westerly direction. Its most important affluents are the Nilká and the Olotái.

broad, which lies very low, and has a luxuriant growth of high-stemmed reeds.

Some spots on the banks of the Ili are peculiarly adapted to settlements, and even well suited for permanent colonisation. This is borne out by the numerous military stations and penal settlements that have been established by the Chinese throughout the upper part of the basin of the Ili, which lies between Iren-Khábirgán and the Thián-Shán. It is here that stream forth the waters of its many tributaries, such as the Kásh, the Pilitshi,<sup>1</sup> the Yklyk,<sup>2</sup> the Korgás,<sup>3</sup> the Uesük,<sup>4</sup> on the right, and the Tarksyl, the Kogúshi, the Yagústái, the Kainák and Búgra<sup>5</sup> on the left bank; these streams are ingeniously made use of for the purpose of irrigating the rich but dry and clayey soil of the fields, which are thus rendered capable of yielding fine crops and plentiful harvests; the woods also are in the same manner artificially renewed. And the aspect of a village with enclosures of quickset hedges, and shaded by large trees, delights the traveller's eyes after the descent of a stern and frowning mountain-pass, or the crossing of an inhospitable steppe.

In the extensive valley forming the basin of the river Ili, which is only towards the west, during the summer, exposed to the hot westerly winds, the climate is peculiarly

<sup>1</sup> It discharges itself into the Ili, not far from Kúlja.

<sup>2</sup> Also into the Ili, close to Kúlja.

<sup>3</sup> Falls into the Ili 20 to 30 versts westwards, and divides its waters into several arms; its bed is about half a verst wide, and contains large deposits.

<sup>4</sup> It may be considered until lately as the frontier between China and Russia. It is the most important of all the tributaries of the Ili; its bed is from two to three versts wide, traversing a thickly wooded valley. The river itself is about fifty fathoms wide; it is very deep, and has a very considerable fall.

<sup>5</sup> Concerning these affluents further particulars are still wanting.



dry, and, like that of the more southern Dzungarian portion of the Kirghiz Steppe, determines the point where the climate gradually changes from the raw bleakness of Siberia to the tropical heat of the regions beyond the Thián-Shán. But here, notwithstanding the dryness of the air, thrive vines, rice, maize, *sorghum* (a kind of seed used as flour), wheat, water-melons, and melons; of European fruit trees are found the peach, apricot, pear, and plum tree; consequently such fruits as grow in Istria, the corresponding latitude in Southern Europe. Winter lasts here only three months, and rarely maintains a severe degree of cold for more than three weeks. But, on the other hand, summer is terribly hot, so that, even in the shade, the thermometer of Réaumur occasionally reaches in August 36° to 38°. The climate agrees particularly well with the inhabitants, who are rarely visited by epidemics.<sup>1</sup>

The advantages of this favourable situation are enjoyed by the important Russian colony settled at Fort Vyernoe, although it is built on the south of the valley of the Ili and of the ford, already described, at the foot of the Alá-Táu, which is 2,533·4 P.F.<sup>2</sup> above the level of the sea. It is here that the mountain-torrents of the Almáty gush forth and rush impetuously down the ravines into the plains below. The fort has now become a small town,<sup>3</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Radlov, *Das Ili-Thal in Hochasien und seine Bewohner* (Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1868, pp. 88–97, and 250–264). A work that enters fully into ethnography, and is well worth reading.

<sup>2</sup> 2,430 feet according to Captain Obukh, of the Russian *État-Major-Général*, who during a whole year made meteorological observations at Vyernoe. M. C. de Sabir, *Aperçu des récentes explorations des Russes dans l'Asie centrale. Le pays des sept rivières et la contrée transilienne*. In the *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, Paris, 1861, vol. ii. pp. 335–364.

<sup>3</sup> Concerning the importance of this place, vide Michel Wolkov, *Notice sur le pays transilien* (*Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, Paris, 1861, vol. ii. pp. 113–119).

contains from 4,000 to 5,000 inhabitants; it was originally founded by some Cossacks and Russian emigrants in 1854. The slopes of the adjacent Trans-Ilian Alá-Táu, richly clothed with Siberian fir-trees, served to furnish them with materials to build their dwellings, and the rivers Aksái and Almáty, of which the valleys are covered with fruit trees, supplied the water to irrigate the fields and plantations. And now agriculture flourishes in this almost unknown spot of Asia.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE COUNTRIES BORDERING ON THE SÍR- AND AMÚ-DARIÁ.

WHILST no other considerable streams than the Ural and the Emba (the *Jastus* of the ancients) flow from the regions engaging our attention into the Caspian Sea; the Aral receives the two most important rivers of Central Asia—the Jaxartes and the Oxus of classical antiquity.

The Jaxartes<sup>1</sup>—the present Sír-Dariá (*Dariá* signifying in Persian ‘a sea,’ ‘a river;’ the Arabs call this river the *Saihún*)—is still, as regards its course, partially unknown to us, consequently incorrectly delineated on all maps. The length of its course is computed at about 400 German miles, of which 200 are navigable. The first light thrown upon the topography of the Sír was as lately as 1863, when the Russian Rear-Admiral Butakov<sup>2</sup> undertook an exploration of the river from Fort Perovsky as far as Baildyr-Túgái. Its sources, however, were in 1869

<sup>1</sup> The *Jaxartes* or *Orxanthes* is written *Araxes* by some of the old classical writers. The historians of Alexander the Great called it erroneously the *Tanais*, the Massagetæ *Silis*.

<sup>2</sup> A notice on the upper course of the Sír-Dariá (Jaxartes), between Fort Perovsky and Baildyr-Túgái (*Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde*, in Berlin, 1866, No. 2, pp. 114–128), together with an excellent general map of the Sír, with the position of places changed according to the recent survey, and also with a specification of the points in those countries that have been astronomically determined.

first discovered by Baron Kaulbars, whose surveys embraced the different chains of the Thián-Shán mountain system, extending from the frontier of the khanate of Kokán and the valley of the Aksái on the south-west to the Tengri-Khán and the Músárt-Khán on the north-east. By means of these surveys the source of the Naryn was also determined, which is the most easterly and important affluent of the Sír; it was found to spring from a glacier in the Ak-Shirák mountains, lying nearly in the same meridian as the east end of the lake of Issik-Kúl. Thus the river Sír takes its rise in the Thián-Shán mountains. Little is yet known of its upper course beyond Kokán as far as Baildyr-Túgái, distant 807 versts from Ak-Mesjed or Fort Perovsky. The confluence of the Gúlishán with the Naryn<sup>1</sup> near Kokán unites their waters into one stream. Thence, increased to an imposing volume of water, it flows on in one bed, wide and deep, between its banks, which are generally low, consisting sometimes of a clayey soil impregnated with salt, and at other times of sand. At high-water, or at seasons of flood, it oversteps its banks, and, commingling with some considerable tributaries, expands its waters far and wide over a land that is only equalled in luxuriant vegetation by the most fertile valleys of India. From Khojend to Hazret-i-Turkestán it takes a northerly course, and passes through the sandy desert of Kizil-Kúm. Here all begins to assume a different aspect. The banks become bare and sterile;

<sup>1</sup> Even Andrian Balbi, relying on Klaproth's information, considered the Naryn to be the upper course of the Sír (*Abrégé de Géographie*, Paris, 1833, p. 685), and the latest Russian explorations entirely corroborate this view. The Naryn, or Tá-akhái, runs through a narrow valley between the almost parallel chains of the Thián-Shán, in a west-south-westerly direction. In 1867, Syeverstov, the leader of the scientific expedition into Turkestán, very nearly reached its sources.

here, burrowing deeply into the sand, the river is separated from the steppe only by a small strip of jungle; there, on the contrary, rising from its shallow bed, it rolls over the adjacent lowlands, flooding them into sedgy lagoons or leaving them impassable marshes, which stretch far and wide, reaching a distance of many hundred miles, over the low-lying plains. Only on those places where the steep banks prevent the river from overflowing except at occasional high tides, do the Kirghiz attempt cultivation of the land; but then, it is said, the rich alluvial soil amply repays their labour by yielding abundant crops.

It is certain that where the land has been flooded there is found a luxuriant pasturage, and on that account the Kirghiz seek such grass-land for the winter months. In the midst of these meadows are found here and there sand-hills 30 to 40 P. F. high; they are generally overgrown with tamarisk, *turanga*, and *djida*, and the banks, from 7 to 8 P. F. in height, with tamarisks, thistles, and *saksáúls*. The numerous islands, some three versts long, are generally covered with almost impenetrable thickets which are infested with tigers. The width of the river varies from 150' to 400'; its depth, 3' to 6'; the velocity of the current attains seven versts in the hour, but its mean velocity is four and a half to six versts. The water is turbid and of a yellowish colour, but its taste is sweet and agreeable when once settled, and it is considered wholesome.

Nowhere along the banks of the Jaxartes did Admiral Butakov find human habitations, and rarely any cultivated fields. At present this majestic stream wends its course through a desolate wilderness as far as Fort Chulák, which towards the east is the most advanced post of the Russian fortifications on the Jaxartes. In ancient days, however, it was navigable, and teemed with numerous

transports for the conveyance of merchandise. The Admiral found on its banks the ruins of cities such as Otrar, where Tamerlane died, and Túngát, which that powerful ruler destroyed. The banks of the Sír above and below the Fort Chulák present a very striking contrast. As far as the fort the barren desert reigns supreme; but below it all is full of animation and activity, for there life and property are secure under the protection of the Russians. Far and wide the fields appear to be well cultivated, and the crops which they yield are abundant. The *aúls* (villages) of the Kirghiz are well populated, and possess large herds of cattle and numerous flocks of sheep; the *kibitkas* (tents) are also good. At No. 1 Fort, Kázály, where there is a Cossack colony, a wine of excellent quality is produced, and the attempts at the cultivation of cotton have not been unsuccessful.

Of the affluents of the Sír-Dariá Butakov saw only two, which both entered that river on its right bank; they are called the Arys and the Saurán-Sú. From the mouth of the Arys near the ruins of Otrar to Fort Uch-Kajuk (i.e. 'the three boats'), which stands upon a marshy ground, the distance is 127 versts. The Arys has the same peculiarities as the Sír—similar windings and islands, low banks subject to inundations, and producing the same kind of vegetation. The Saurán-Sú falls into the main stream at Au-Chár, thirty-eight versts below Uch-Kajuk. The other tributaries flowing down from the Kará-Táu are the Initchke, on which the city of Turkeistán lies, the Kará-itshik, nine versts lower down, and the Sári-Sú; properly speaking, these rivers do not reach the main stream of the Sír, as they lose themselves in the marshes.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Admiral Butakov's *Fahrten auf dem Jaxartes* (*Globus*, 1865, vol. viii. pp. 113 and 114).

At Ak-Mesjed (the 'white martyr's grave' or 'white mosque') the Sír branches off into three arms; the northern retains the name of Sír, the middle is called Kuván-Dariá, and the southern arm Yáni-Dariá. From the point of diversion the desert of Kizil-Kúm stretches to the south-west. The Kuván turns to the west, divides itself into five arms, which afterwards reunite and then disappear in the sand. The lower course of the Sír to the Sea of Aral, which has of late been carefully examined, diverges into several channels, and forms with its divided waters several large islands. It is, however, constantly undergoing great changes, which is attributable to the extremely loose and light nature of the soil composing its banks and the absence of every kind of stone in its bed. In spite of the circuitous course and the shallowness of its water—in many places being only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  p. f. deep—the Russians have since 1845 been able to navigate this river even with steamboats. In December the river freezes over, and is not open again till March. The whole land around has the appearance of having been once the bed of a sea. The clayey soil of the valleys, strongly impregnated with salt, is in the lower ground rendered capable of tillage and cultivation by means of a scientific and very ingenious method of artificial irrigation. No rain falls in summer, and where no water bedews the land it becomes a barren desert covered with salt and capable of bearing nought but prickly plants. But with a plentiful supply of water everything thrives, vegetables of all kinds, excellent fruit, and even the vine. In the sedgy marshes around the mouths of the rivers abound wild boar, and there, too, swarm clouds of gnats and locusts.

The Sír is the principal river in the country of Kokán, and divides the khanate into two parts: the greater, lying

on the east, is mountainous; the other, lying on the west, is a sandy desert. The banks of the Sír are for the most part sandy; consequently the chief towns and cities are situated at a considerable distance from the river. All the other streams that water this country flow into the Sír, and are fordable except in spring. The mountains which enclose Kokán on the south and south-east are covered with perpetual snow, but their valleys have during summer a very mild climate, which is extremely favourable to the breeding of cattle. In the plains it snows seldom, although occasionally at night the thermometer of Réaumur falls down to 10°. Often in winter terrible storms arise in the mountains around Táshkend (Turkish for 'the city of stone'). The steppes, however, suffer from excessive heat in the summer months. In the month of March the land becomes clothed with luxuriant verdure and fragrant flowers, and before May all is in full bloom and exhaling the sweetest odours. At length the summer heat reaches 40° Réaumur, when all traces of vegetation vanish; then nothing meets the eye but sand and parched clay, which bursts open into innumerable fissures and chinks through the combined influence of excessive heat and aridity. Only a few herbs are then found around the springs, the rivulets, and in the mountain dales. But although a rainfall in summer time is most unusual, almost every kind of grain is artificially produced by means of irrigation, and so abundantly that grass grown in this manner will frequently yield four crops. In September and October the heat gradually decreases, but in November the mean temperature by day is 15° Réaumur. The Chúi forms the northern frontier of this country; it is a true steppe-stream with brackish water, and has a course of seventy miles long. It rises in



the heights of Mús-Tágh, and enters the valley of the mountain lake Issik-Kúl, five versts distant from the western shores of that lake. A plain, gently sloping towards the east, lies between the river Chúi and the lake, which is composed of salt water of a bright blue colour, and is subject to frequent tempests. The lake of Issik-Kúl,<sup>1</sup> which is 161 versts long, and as much as fifty versts wide, contains an area of 335·1 square miles, and an elevation of 4,691·5 P. F. above the level of the sea. It lies in a deep basin in a plateau from ten to fifteen miles in width, which expands between the Músart mountains on the south and the Kúngi or Alá-Táu mountains on the north. It was long considered as the original source of the Chúi; but only a small affluent of the Chúi, the Kútemáldy, flows into this mountain lake, which is bordered all around with flat grassy shores of luxuriant verdure. The Chúi at first rolls on through moderately high banks, then through quite flat and sandy banks, taking a north-west and a westerly direction, till it discharges itself into the lake of Tele-Kúl in the steppe. Here it meets with the Syri-Sú or Sári-Sú (Turkish for 'yellow water'), which runs down from the Ildighis mountains, and, winding through the Kirghiz steppe in a north-east and south-westerly direction, eventually falls into the lake of Tele-Kúl.

<sup>1</sup> Issik-Kúl, in Turkish *Issi-Kúl*, in Chinese *In-Hai*, signifies 'warm lake;' the Kalmuks call it *Temúrtú-Noor*. *Noor* (Nor) is a contraction of *naghor*, and means in Mongolian 'a lake,' which is in Turkish *kúl*. The Russians have fixed for the name of the lake the spelling of *Issyk-Kul*. Seventy-two rivers and streamlets fall into this lake, which is never frozen over, but two of its feeders are covered with ice during three months of the year, although during summer there is no difference between the temperature of the water of the lake and its affluents. The lake-water, though brackish, is drinkable. In the years 1858 and 1859 the country surrounding the lake and the valleys of the Chúi and the Kotchgar were already topographically surveyed.

The next most important river in this country is the Amú-Dariá, or Jaihún of the Arabs, and the Oxus of the ancients; it may, indeed, be compared with the Nile as regards the influence it has in fertilising the soil. Its water is yellowish, and is not so drinkable when drawn direct from the stream as from canals and ditches, where it has been suffered to deposit the sand with which it is so profusely mingled, and which causes a sensation of grating between the teeth as if biting a gritty cake; but as regards its sweet and agreeable taste, the Khivans assert, and Vámbéry corroborates their opinion, that not even the Nile (*Múbarek*, 'the blessed') can equal it in quality.<sup>1</sup> It takes its rise from the high mountain lake Sári-Kúl (Turkish for 'yellow lake;' Humboldt spells it 'Sir-i-Kol'<sup>2</sup>), or Victoria Lake, which is situated, at an

<sup>1</sup> Vámbéry, *Ueber die Produktionsfähigkeit der drei turkestanischen Steppenländer* (*Unsere Zeit*, 1866, p. 295).

<sup>2</sup> The sources of the Oxus were discovered in 1838 to be in this lake by Lieutenant John Wood of the Indian Navy (*Journey to the Source of the River Oxus*). A scientific discussion relative to the sources of the Oxus created, some few years ago, a great sensation amongst the literati and men of science. The distinguished Russian traveller, Venyukov, published in 1861, in the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, a paper by an anonymous writer *On the Pamir and the Sources of Amu-Darya in Central Asia*. This paper gives a description of that country, and is, in fact, in accordance with the statements of a manuscript itinerary found in the Russian War Department at St. Petersburg. The author of this manuscript, dated in the year 1806, pretends to be a German, Georg Ludwig von . . . , who was commissioned by the East India Company to purchase horses in those countries which he has described. (Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1861, p. 274; *Zapiski of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society*, 1861.) This paper, of which the statements were considered as thoroughly reliable, and were accordingly made use of by the constructors of maps, is nothing more than a well-woven invention, according to the conviction of Sir Henry Rawlinson, who came to this opinion after a most profound and searching investigation, which he communicated at the meeting of the Royal Geographical Society of London on the 26th March, 1866.

elevation of 15,230 p. f. above the level of the sea, in the mountains bordering on the plateau of Pámír. Thence flowing in a south-westerly direction it bends towards the north-west, and finally falls into the southern end of the Sea of Aral. According to calculations that have been made, the amount of its discharge in its lowest course is 3,000 cubic mètres (French) per second, whereas that of the Rhine is 2,500, and that of the Rhone 2,000.<sup>1</sup>

The reports on the navigableness of this river differ considerably; some assert that it is difficult of navigation for the greater portion of its course, in Lenz's opinion for boats, and in Vámbéry's<sup>2</sup> in every respect; the whole of its upper course is icebound during winter, and even the lower course is frozen over in a severe winter. The river flows through the bleak and dreary mountain district of Wakhán, where it receives five affluents; thence on the

The principal arguments which he adduces in support of his opinion are the following:—In the manuscript mention is made of an active volcano on the north of Srinágar, whereas, in that country, which has been explored scarcely less than England, there was never anything known of the existence of a volcano. The author pretends to have accomplished long journeys in such short spaces of time as make it quite impossible—for instance, 125 English miles between Srinágar and the Indus in a mountainous and impracticable country in two days, and the distance between the Indus and Káshgar in 25 days. Searches in the archives of the India Office in England as well as in India, made by Sir Henry Rawlinson, prove that at that time no one was commissioned by the East India Company to purchase horses, and that Lieutenant Harvey, whom the author declares to have been his fellow-traveller, could not be found in the East Indian Army List. Besides these facts, Sir Henry Rawlinson brings forward from this paper a long series of statements that are partly proved to be false, and partly of an extremely suspicious character, so that its falsification becomes apparent. Notwithstanding this, none of the opposite views has as yet decidedly prevailed.

<sup>1</sup> Lenz, *Unsere Kenntnisse über den früheren Lauf des Amu-Darjâ*, St. Petersburg, 1870, 4to (*Mém. de l'Acad. Imp. des Sciences de St.-Petersbourg*).

<sup>2</sup> *Russland und das Chanat Chiva* (*Allg. Zeitung*, 1870, No. 38).

right it runs along the picturesque mountain tract of Badakhshán, celebrated for its beautiful climate and ruby mines. There it unites with the river Badakhshán, and then receives the name of Amú.

On the right of the Amú lies Khotl, a thinly populated mountain district; at some distance on the south expands the valley of Kundúz, and on the north is situated the oasis Hissár (Turkish for 'fort'), a place renowned for the manufacture of hardware. Westward of Kundúz stretches the valley of Khúlm, and beyond it the territory of Balkh, which is separated from the Amú only by a barren strip of land. Still further to the left spreads out the Turkomanian or Khárazmian desert, and on the right the desert of Kizil-Kúm. From the Kundúz it receives its most important tributary, the Aksarái, and from their confluence the Amú becomes navigable. At Kirkí the Oxus is 800 paces wide, with a strong current, and many sandbanks as well as shallows. Kirkí is a small town containing one hundred and fifty houses, inhabited by Turkomans and Uzbeks, who devote themselves to agriculture; it is also a frontier fortress on the road to Herát, and forms the key to the khanate of Bokhára. The width of the Oxus in its middle course varies from 2,100 to 2,400 p. r., and its depth from six to twenty-four feet. Just before falling into the Sea of Aral it forms a marshy delta, which is entirely overgrown with reeds; the centre part of this delta is slightly depressed, and its arms, having only two or three feet of water, are always undergoing a constant change, as was pointed out by Humboldt in his great work on Central Asia.<sup>1</sup>

The eastern arm of the Amú delta is called the Kuván-Dariá or Kuk (*gök* signifying in Turkish 'blue'),

<sup>1</sup> *Asie Centrale*, Paris, vol. ii. pp. 148-161.

but changes its name on approaching the sea to Yáni-Sú, or 'New River.' In the year 1849 the Amú discharged its greatest volume of water through this channel; and Admiral Butakov drew fresh water from the Aral at a distance of  $9\frac{1}{2}$  English miles from the mouth of this arm. A rocky shelf, lying  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to  $2\frac{3}{4}$  feet below the surface of the sea, stretches from a point  $22\frac{3}{4}$  English miles northward of this mouth right through the bed of the Yáni-Sú, which near its mouth is from 50 to 80 fathoms broad and from 5 to 8 P. F. deep. The eastern arm, after having separated from the Amú, flows towards the north-west and the north, throws out many smaller branches, and feeds a large canal—the Karábáili—which intersects the low central ground of the delta. The waters of the canal glide into the Úlú-Dariá (*úlú* signifying in Turkish 'great,' and *dariá* in Persian 'a river'), which thus increased finds its way into the Sea of Aral with a vast body of water. Westward of the Úlú-Dariá is the mouth of the river Taldyk, an arm of the Amú, falling into that sea. In 1849 its current was rapid with 3 P. F. of water at the bar; but in 1858 the depth of water had decreased to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  P. F.

The Amú is the chief river flowing through the khanates of Bokhára and Khiva. In the former country the Zarafshán and Sogd, the Kokcha and the Balkh, are the most important rivers. The Kôhik or Zarafshán (*zar* the Persian for 'gold,' 'the scatterer of gold'), the *Poly-metos* of the Greeks, has a course of eighty-seven German miles. It rises about twenty miles more eastward than was at first imagined, as was proved by the researches of a mixed military and scientific expedition, made in 1870, under General Abramov. It was then discovered that its source was a glacier extending nearly  $7\frac{1}{2}$  German miles,

almost under the meridian of Kokán at the line of perpetual snow on the chain of the Fán-Tágh mountains, and on the southern frontier of Bokhára, nearly parallel to the equator.<sup>1</sup> Beyond Panjakand (Persian for ‘five villages’) the river enters a wide valley that becomes below Samarcand an extensive open plain, and beyond Bokhára degenerates into a sandy steppe. To the west of Bokhára it turns suddenly to the south, and pours its waters into the small lake of Karákúl (Turkish for ‘black lake’).

The passes over the high ridge of mountains, that form the watershed between the rivers Zarafshán and the Sír-Dariá, were found to have an elevation of 15,000 to 16,000 p. f. above the level of the sea. Numerous canals have been constructed, which are fed by the Zarafshán. This river waters the city of Bokhára,<sup>2</sup> ‘*the noble*,’ the present capital of the khanate of the same name, and also Samarcand,<sup>3</sup> Tamerlane’s ancient residence, which is five days’ journey stream upwards from Bokhára, being a distance of  $240\frac{3}{4}$  or thirty-four to thirty-five German miles. The land between these two cities is partially under excellent cultivation. From the commencement of the valley nearly to Bokhára there stretches an almost unbroken chain of settlements along the level fertile plain,

<sup>1</sup> Humboldt, *Asie Centrale*, vol. ii. p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Bokhára itself lies, strictly speaking, on the Khyrabád, an affluent of the Zarafshán (*ibid.* vol. ii. p. 17).

<sup>3</sup> Concerning Samarcand little information is given by Marco Polo, who most probably had never been there. (*Le Livre de Marc Polo*, ed. Pauthier, vol. i. chap. i. c.) More accurate information was first obtained through the Spanish knight, Don Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo, who stayed in 1404 in Samarcand. Four centuries elapsed after his visit before an educated European went thither, if we make an exception of the Russian nobleman Khoklav, in 1623, and the Russian non-commissioned officer Efremov, who, in 1774, was sold as a slave in that city. Lehmann and Khanikov in September, 1841, visited that city, which has since become quite dilapidated.

which has been forsaken by the waters of the Zarafshán, that must have formerly possessed a much more abundant supply. Here the villages belonging to these settlements are spread out, together with their orchards and mulberry groves for the culture of silk, and here also the well-cultivated fields produce cotton, gourds, water-melons, wheat, barley, and maize. On the other side, however, there is a marked contrast in the barrenness of the adjacent desert of Melik. But further to the east the country is luxuriantly fertile. A wide tract of land, extending along the Zarafshán as far as the district of Samarcand, is covered with fields of rice—that ‘insatiable cereal.’<sup>1</sup> Between Samarcand and Kárshí<sup>2</sup> lies a desert, but by far not so dangerous as the other deserts; it can be traversed in all directions, and possesses wells and springs well supplied with tolerably good drinking water. Kárshí is eighteen German miles distant from Samarcand, and is situated on the river Ab-i-Shahr-i-Sabz, which rises in the khanate<sup>3</sup> of the same name.

The whole extent of country that we have above en-

<sup>1</sup> This territory was first scientifically explored by Alexander Lehmann.

<sup>2</sup> Kárshí, the ancient *Nakhshab*, is, from its size and commercial prosperity, the next most important town of Bokhára. It has ten caravanseras, a well-provided bazaar, in peaceful times a great transit trade between Bokhára, Kábul, and India, and contains 25,000 inhabitants, mostly Uzbeks, who form the *élite* of the Bokharian troops.

<sup>3</sup> According to the accounts of the Russian traveller Galkin, Shahr-i-Sabz (Persian for ‘green city’)—the ancient *Naucata*, the birthplace of the powerful Tamerlane—lies on the south-east of Bokhára. The country has an excellent climate and a very fertile soil; it possesses four fortresses and 70,000 inhabitants, who speak the Tartar language, are of the Sunnee religion, and are of a very warlike disposition. It is surrounded by mountains, except on the west. (*Globus*, 1868, xiii. p. 63. *Annales des Voyages*, 1867, vol. iii. pp. 240–244. Then *Der Schehri-Ssebszische District*, in *Izvestiya of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society of St. Petersburg*, vol. i. No. 7, of 1865, in the Russian language.)

deavoured to describe is divided at present into several independent states, though they are evidently coming to a rapid dissolution. The most important of them are the khanates of Khiva,<sup>1</sup> Bokhára, and Kokán;<sup>2</sup> and of them alone do we possess positive information. Concerning the other states of Turán, of which Kundúz, that lately conquered the state of Badakhshán, is the most important, we have only uncertain and unsatisfactory indications. One portion of Southern Turkestán is now an Afghán province, of which Balkh (Balch or Belch), where a sirdar with a garrison of 10,000 men resides, is considered the capital; it is situated in an oasis of a steppe, where the mountain streams become dried up and disappear in the marshes. It was called by the ancient Orientals Um-el-Bilâd, 'the mother of cities,' but it presents at this day nothing but the remembrance of its former glory in the enormous ruins, which extend over a circumference of four German miles.

Balkh, that in the early period of the Middle Ages was a centre of Islamite civilisation, stands nearly on the ruins of the ancient Baktra;<sup>3</sup> now only a few heaps of earth show where once it stood. This place

<sup>1</sup> Kühlewein's *Abriss einer Reise nach Chiwa und einige Einzelheiten über das Reich des Chans Said-Muhammed*, 1856-1860 (*Zapiski of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society*, 1861). Grigorev's *Description of the Khanate of Khiva and of the Road leading thither from the Fort of Sarai-chikov* (*Zapiski of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society*, 1861).

<sup>2</sup> Map of the Khanate of Kokán, on a scale of 1.4,200,000, with explanations, by Venyukov (*Zapiski*, 1862, vol. i.).

<sup>3</sup> This city was called *Zariaspa*, and was the capital of the district of *Bactria*, Βακτριανή, in ancient Persian *Bakhtri*, in Zend *Bachdhi*, whence in the Middle Ages the name *Bachl*, in modern Persian *Balch*, which spread over the fertile level valley of the middle course of the Oxus (in Persian *Wakscha*). Later the city was commonly called only after the name of the district, Baktra. Here died, in 1152, the celebrated Persian poet, Euweri.



is only inhabited during winter, for in spring every one leaves for Mesar (Muzar), which lies much higher, and where the heat is not so oppressive, and the air not so impure, as amongst the ruins of the ancient Baktra. Andchúi, westward of Balkh, that within memory of man contained 50,000 inhabitants, numbers still 2,000 houses and 3,000 tents with 15,000 souls, Turkomans, Uzbeks, and Tájiks, and is situated on the borders of the desert, or rather in the oasis. Although formerly an independent khanate, it has since 1840 acknowledged the ruler of Afghánistán as lord paramount, and has been incorporated with the Afghán province of Turkestán. The khanate of Maimaneh, defended by the brave Uzbeks, alone withstood the arms of the victorious Afgháns, and has to this day preserved its independence. The habitable part of this khanate is twenty miles in length and eighteen in breadth; its capital consists of 1,500 cottages built of clay, and there are besides ten villages and communities, containing altogether 100,000 souls, for the most part Uzbeks, who can bring into the field 8,000 well-armed horsemen.

The very name of 'steppe-country,' says Vámbéry, who traversed these parts so seldom visited, is one of the chief reasons why the inhabited portions of Turkestán are considered unimportant as regards their productive power. The natives on the other hand, as well as Oriental travellers and geographers, as Edrisi, Ibn-Haukal, Abulfeda, and the learned Prince Baber, fall into the opposite extreme; for they represent Turkestán as the richest land on the face of the earth, and only admit a preference in favour of India. Even Vámbéry himself does not hesitate to assert that Turkestán far surpasses, both in abundance as well as in variety of its productions, all parts

known to us of European and Asiatic Turkey, Afghánistán, and Persia; moreover, he states that it would be difficult to find any district of Europe, which has been so blessed with fertility and luxuriant vegetation, that could bear a favourable comparison with the steppe-country of Turkestán.<sup>1</sup>

The great variety of the productions is mainly attributable to the state of the climate that prevails along the shores of the Oxus and Jaxartes and the adjacent lying lands. The climate is not raw and bleak, yet it cannot be called mild. For although, on the whole, the climate corresponds with that of Central Europe, it must be borne in mind that the winter in the regions around the Sea of Aral and the mountainous tracts of Kokán is much more severe; and the summer, on the contrary, in the more southern regions, especially in those districts immediately skirting the great deserts of sand, attains an almost tropical heat, and is in any case warmer than in the centre of Europe. Severe winters usually predominate in Kún-Khodja-Ili and on the right bank of the Oxus, where the Karákalpáks dwell; there the snow lies often for weeks on the ground, and the stormy north winds (Ajamudshiz) not unfrequently rage. Under such circumstances, the climate cannot be considered mild; yet at the beginning of June the heat in Khiva is already unbearable, and sometimes in August around Kárshí and Balkh as oppressive and sultry, even in the shade, as it is rarely found in any parts of the tropics. This difference is also perceptible in the vegetable kingdom even in the smaller tracts of land; for instance, the cotton from Yáni-Urghendj is of much better quality than that of the more

<sup>1</sup> Vámbéry, *Ueber die Produktionsfähigkeit der drei turkestânischen Steppenländer* (*Unsere Zeit*, 1866, vol. ii. p. 294).

northern districts, and the silk from Hazárasp is esteemed in the khanate of Khiva as a product of the finest kind. Gürlen produces the best rice, and the finest fruits grow in the most southern parts of Khiva. The same conditions are observable in Bokhára and Kokán, and this alone will account for the great variety of productions found, in comparatively so small an area of ground, in each of these three khanates—in fact, such a variety as is only seen in those extensive countries that lie within the range of several different zones. The mulberry tree is everywhere cultivated, and the production of silk is one of the most important branches of industry. All kinds of grain, madder, flax, and hemp, thrive exceedingly well, and so do horses, horned cattle, asses, camels, and all kinds of domestic fowls, as well as bustards and pheasants.

In truth, the remarkable and extraordinary productiveness of the soil may be partly ascribed to the bounteous streams and rivers that intersect the oases and the plains, and partly to the rich quality of the soil. Moreover, the irrigation of the fields is carried out with great care, and with more facility than in other parts of Western Asia; but it must not be overlooked that, however beneficial these irrigation-canals may be for the purposes of agriculture, they act as a great hindrance to commerce by interrupting the general intercommunication.

It is difficult to decide which of the three khanates ought to be considered the most productive. As regards vegetation, Vámbéry gives the preference to Khiva, which possesses, indeed, less cultivated land than the other two khanates, but far surpasses them in the quantity and quality of its products. In the great variety, however, and excellence of its fruit it is possibly surpassed by Bokhára. As regards its mineral wealth, Bokhára, without doubt,

carries off the palm, whilst the superiority in the breeding of domestic animals remains the exclusive speciality of the nomad tribes. At present it is quite impossible to determine how many square miles of land in the three khanates are under cultivation or capable of being cultivated. The constant wars and troubles satisfactorily explain why so very many ruins<sup>1</sup> of once flourishing colonies meet the eye. As regards Khiva in particular, it may be assumed, without exaggeration, that the area of the land ravaged and laid waste by far exceeds that of the land under cultivation. With the exception of a few products which the khanates interchange with each other or export to Russia, only such articles are produced as are required for home consumption. In fact, there is no doubt that the quality of their productions at present could be substantially improved, and their quantity very materially increased.<sup>2</sup>

The eastern part of Turkestán is very rich in metals. Gold-washing is carried on at the sources of the Jaxartes, especially along its upper course and also in its tributaries. Silver and lead are found in the mountains of Káshgar-Dáván, Belút-Tágh, Bolordái, and in the Alá and Kará-Táu mountains. Copper is of not unfrequent occurrence, and very often there is excellent iron-ore; besides, there is no deficiency of sulphur, saltpetre, and salt. Coals<sup>3</sup> have been found in the mountain-slopes of the Káshgar-Dáván and Kará-Táu. Jasper and turquoise exist in abundance.

<sup>1</sup> As for instance Otrar and the adjacent ruins of Chankend (Yangui-ken), Túnkát, Kosh-Kurgán, Chán-Kálá, Kizil-Kálá, and, quite in the south, Faizábád.

<sup>2</sup> Vámbéry, *Ueber die Produktionsfähigkeit der drei turkestânischen Steppenländer* (*Unsere Zeit*, 1866, vol. ii. pp. 294-297).

<sup>3</sup> Vide *Journal de St.-Petersbourg*, February 7, 1866.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE HIGHLANDS OF CENTRAL ASIA.

WE cannot complete this geographical survey without casting a glance at the mountain ranges which gird the Turanian lowlands on the east and south.

From the high table-lands, which lie between the confluence of the river Kábul with the Indus and the uppermost course of the Amú, stretch in a west-south-westerly direction the mountains of the Hindú-Kúsh, being the watershed between the Amú and the Kábul; perhaps also the *Parapanisus* or *Caucasus Indicus* of the ancients. Another chain runs north-westward by the city of Kundúz as far as the Amú-Dariá; and, lastly, a third chain, which is the Belút or Bolút-Tágh, commonly called, though incorrectly, the Bolor (signifying in the Uiguric dialect 'the mountains of the clouds'). This range is known in classic antiquity as the *Imaus*, and contains the lofty plateau of Pámír (Pámer), or Po-mi-lo of the Chinese geographer Hwen-Thsang (in his book 'Pien-i-tien'), which the Kirghiz, from its great elevation, namely, 14,000 f. f. above the level of the sea, have significantly designated *Bam-i-Duniah*, 'the roof of the world.'<sup>1</sup> Since the discovery in 1838, by Lieutenant Wood, of the Indian Navy, of the Pámír mountain system, no greater results have been

<sup>1</sup> Concerning *Pámír* compare Peschel, *Geschichte der Erdkunde*, p. 159.

achieved in these regions than by the researches of M. A. Fedchenko;<sup>1</sup> in 1871 he undertook a journey across Kokán and southwards over the adjacent high table-land of the Alái mountains as far as the gigantic mountain ridge, recently discovered, which forms the southern boundary of the Alái plateau, and very probably separates it from the Pámír. Through the explorations of this English officer on the south, and of the Russian traveller on the north, the Bolút-Tágh, or the Pámír system, has been admitted to be a north-westerly continuation of the Himalaya range, although Humboldt represented it as having a meridional direction, and forming a transverse barrier connecting the Thián-Shán with the Himalaya mountains. The Hindú-Kúsh, properly the Hindú-Koh,<sup>2</sup> meaning the Indian mountains (in Sanscrit *Gravakasas*, signifying ‘the shining rocky mountains,’ hence *Graucasus* of Pliny<sup>3</sup>), may in like manner be considered to be a continuation towards the west of the Himalaya range. From the point of junction of the mountain ranges on the north of the river Kábul, it stretches in a west-south-westerly direction to the sources of the river Heri-Rúd (*Ἀρειος*, Arius,<sup>4</sup> of the ancients), and divides Tocharistán from Kábulistán. Very little is yet known of this mountain range except its western extremity, which is formed by the Koh-i-Bábá (‘father of mountains’), a mountain covered with perpetual snow and 16,870 p. f. high. This mountain ridge

<sup>1</sup> Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1872, chapter v. p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> *Koh* signifying in Persian a mountain.

<sup>3</sup> *Historia Naturalis*, vi. 17.

<sup>4</sup> This name, as well as that of Herát, is derived from the Old Persian form *Haraiwa*, meaning ‘rich in water.’ *Rúd* signifies, in New Persian, a rivulet, stream, or river. *Herát*, the only capital town, from *Aria*, founded by Alexander the Great. In classical history it bore the name of Alexandria (*Ἀλεξανδρεία Ἀρείων*).

becomes lost in a confused mass of moderately sized mountains towards Herát on the west and Balkh on the north. That portion of this mountain range which is situated on the north of Jalálábád on the river Kábul (the *Euasplés* of the ancients), where the Khond reaches a height of 18,984 p. f., strictly speaking, bears the appellation of Hindú-Koh, and forms the mountainous country which is partly inhabited by the Pagan Kafírs or Sijáposh. The highest peaks reach an elevation above the perpetual snow-line, which is here 12,979 p. f. above the level of the sea, and are covered with snow even in June. The valleys assume the form of terraces on the mountain sides as they gradually descend towards the rivers Indus and Kábul, and in their nature and climate assimilate to Kashmír. The outlying spurs sloping down to the plains are lovely and fruitful. They produce wine of excellent quality and of wide-spread repute; besides this, apricots, almonds, apples, and other fruit grow wild in the valleys. The villages hang one over the other like shelves on the mountain sides.

On leaving Balkh the ascent is southwards through frowning glens and lofty passes between the mountains of the Mongolian Hesáreh to reach the valley of Bámián, where<sup>1</sup> colossal figures sculptured on the face of the precipitous steeps betoken the former worship of Buddha in this valley, which abounds with caverns hewn out of rocks to serve as cells for its secluded votaries. Then ascending three passes, each surpassing the other in height, an elevation of 12,400 p. f. is attained; sideways from the ever snow-clad summit of the Hindú-Kúsh, the descent leads

<sup>1</sup> The greatest 120 feet high. They testify to Mohammedan religious zeal and hatred of idolatry, for the Great Mogul Aurengzéb (according to others the Persian Nadir Sháh) caused them to be destroyed by cannon-balls.

eastwards down to that hollow basin in the centre of Afghánistán—the valley-land of Kábul.<sup>1</sup> Here are seen, perched on rocky heights, the strongholds of the Afghán chieftains, whose horses climb the mountains with almost the same agility as goats.

Although the level plain of the valley lies 6,000 P. F. high, yet it is towards the west and the north, owing to the shelter of the snowy range above, verdant with meadow-land and luxuriant with gardens. Here the profusion of snow-white blossoms in spring and the rich abundance of fruit in summer and autumn have from time immemorial been sung with ecstatic praise. Even the cattle are fed on grapes for three months of the year. The valiant Sultán Baber, the Taimúride and \*founder of the empire of the Great Mogul in India, was enchanted with the climate, and declared it unsurpassed on the face of the earth. ‘Drink wine at the castle of Kábul,’ he cried, ‘and let the goblet pass round without ceasing.’

The valley of the river Kábul, with its numerous waterfalls, leads chiefly through narrow defiles from Kábul in the territory of the Gilji Afgháns down to the low-lying plains of India. This is the only route pointed out by the nature of the ground, and consequently, notwithstanding the obstacles met with, is the only one that has been in all ages used for the march of armies. To the south of Kábul, after crossing over high mountain-passes and through deep gorges, Ghizní is reached, which is situated on a high plateau, where the snow lies on the ground till March. The city itself is now little more than a vast

<sup>1</sup> Kábul, the *Káβουρα* of Ptolemy, called also *Ortospane*, bore formerly the name of *Κασπαρurus*, *Kasjaparura*. Compare the description of the city and country by Sir Alexander Burnes, *Cabool: being a Personal Narrative of a Journey to, and Residence in, that City, in the years 1836, 1837, 1838.* London, 1842, 8vo.



mound of ruins formed from the *débris* remaining from former periods.<sup>1</sup>

Very valuable information has been given by Captain H. G. Raverty<sup>2</sup> concerning the country of the Sijáposh or Kafíristán, which lies like a separate island in the very sea of Mohammedanism, and is very little known. The name of the country is derived from the Arabic word *kafír*, ‘unbeliever,’ and from the Persian particle *istân*, a ‘place’ or ‘abode.’ On the north this state is bounded by the Uzbek territories Badakhshán and Kundúz, and on the south separated by the river Kábul from Afghánistán. Kafíristán is watered by numerous streams, that flow like the veins of a leaf in parallel rows towards the east and the west, and discharge themselves into five principal rivers, which then intersect the country. The most eastward and important of these rivers divides Kafíristán from the territory of Káshgar, and is, at its confluence with the Kábul, called Kama, further upwards Kumar, and at its source Káshgar or Chitrál. Two streams, having a parallel course, at length unite on the west of the Kama under the name of Alingár, and pour their waters westward of Jalálábád into the Kábul; still further to the west there is a third stream, the Tagát or Tagao, which, after having received several affluents from the valleys of Kohistán, falls, forty English miles eastward of the city of Kábul, into the river of the same name. A river rises in the northern declivity of the Hindú-Kúsh, and unites with the Panja, an arm of the Oxus. Many small streams, gushing forth as torrents from the deep clefts and yawning abysses of the mountain steeps, and fed by the snow of the mountain

<sup>1</sup> Julius Braun, *Afghánistán* (*Neue freie Presse*, Nov. 19, 1868).

<sup>2</sup> In the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1859, No. iv.

summits, swell the larger rivers to such an extent at the time of the melting of the snows, that they become impassable except on rafts. Rich and extensive banks of alluvial soil extend on either side of the rivers.

The temperature and climate vary greatly, as the elevation of the land differs considerably. In the higher regions the summer heat is not unbearable, and during the winter months the snow lies on the ground for weeks. The low-lying valleys are sheltered from the severe storms of winter, and, although surrounded by mountains that are covered with perpetual snow, the heat from June till the middle of August is very oppressive. During the spring, and towards the end of August till the middle of September, the rainfall is very heavy. Violent snowstorms are not unfrequent in winter; and then the mountain passes become impracticable, and all communication between the different valleys is cut off for weeks.<sup>1</sup>

The northern termination of the Belút adjoins the western portion of a vast range of Alpine mountains that lie between the river Tarym and the lake Zaisang. This range is formed by a series of mountain chains, that run parallel to each other, and generally extend from west to east. Between the parallel mountain slopes the western lowland inserts long tongues of land, that penetrate far towards the east. This is the mountain system of the Thián-Shán, or *Ki-lien-Shan* (*Ki-lo-man-shan*) of the Chinese authors,<sup>2</sup> the *Tengri-Tágh* of the Turks of the middle ages, or the Múz-Tágh. The Thián-Shán, or *Celestial* mountains, stretch from Samarcand to Khamil, a

<sup>1</sup> Communications concerning Sijáposh, in Asiatic Kafiristán, in the *Globus*, 1865, viii. p. 341, and Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1860, p. 276.

<sup>2</sup> Humboldt's *Asie Centrale*, vol. ii. p. 7.

distance of 330 geographical miles. They commence eastwards of Samarcand under the name of Suzángirán-Tágh, with which, on the south of Kokán, unites the Ák-Tágh, or Asferah-Tágh, a mountain rich in minerals, and clothed with perpetual snow, where it forms the watershed between the rivers Sír-Dariá and the Zarafshán. On the east it is joined by the Terek-Tágh (or Káshgardaván<sup>1</sup>), a mountain which assumes between the uppermost course of the Sír-Dariá and the lake of Sengír-Kúl, the name of Múz-Tágh (the Turkish for 'ice mountain') or Músárt. In 75° E. long. from Paris, the Táben-Táu, which extends for a great distance northwards along the rivers Sír and Naryn, adjoins the Terek-Tágh; and southwards a third chain, the Gatshkal-Tágh, which on the west is called Cheberna-Tágh; and lastly the grand snow-clad Alpine chain of the Fán-Tágh, which, with its southern declivities, accompanies the course of the Zarafshán as far as Samarcand. The chains, then united, run towards the north-east under the name of Temertú-Tágh. On the west of the lake of Issik-Kúl commences another equally imposing snowy range—the true Thián-Shán, which skirts the southern coasts of the lake, and combines with the above-described southern chain into one mass at Tengri-Shán, where the vast gigantic glacier Tengri-Khán (i.e. 'the ruler of spirits') rears its lofty peak 20,000 p.f. above the level of the sea. Standing upon this high pinnacle, and looking down upon the valleys of the Naryn and the upper Sír-Dária, M. de Semenov could easily imagine himself in the very heart of Asia; for he was there just as far from the Black as from the Yellow Sea, and from Cape Severo (Syeverovostochnoi) as from Cape Comorin. Southwards from the lake of Issik-Kúl, the

<sup>1</sup> *Daván*, the Turkish for a 'passage.'

high pass of Saukú, more than 10,400 p.f., is crossed to reach the Chinese cities of Ush-Turfán and Ak-sú.<sup>1</sup> Eastwards of that lake the ascent of the pass Kok-Djár, on the west of the Tengri-Khán glacier, at an elevation of 10,800 p.f., leads to the valley of the upper course of the river Ak-sú, which cuts a deep passage through this snowy mountain range. M. Paul Syeverstov, in the autumn of the year 1867, undertook a geognostic survey of the profile of the Thián-Shán, near the Tengri-Khán, under the meridian of the point of junction of the valley of the Naryn and its tributary Apatshi with the valley of the Ak-sú. He found between the lake of Issik-Kúl and the river Naryn three mountain ridges, which were not, however, throughout their whole extent, sharply separated by the interjacent valleys.<sup>2</sup> In the year 1868, M. A. W. Bunyakovsky<sup>3</sup> and Captain Reinthal took numerous barometrical measurements, and contributed thereby vastly to our knowledge of the different elevations in this mountain region. In the summer of 1867, General (then Colonel) W. A. Poltaratsky and the Baron Frederick von der Osten-Sacken, the distinguished secretary of the Geographical Society of St. Petersburg, devoted themselves to the geographical, whilst the academician, F. J. Ruprecht, undertook the botanical, investigations of the Thián-Shán mountains. This exploring party, which pushed its researches into the valley of the Naryn, started from Fort Vyernoe, and followed the post-road as far as Kastek. The deep chasm forming the Kastek pass, which lies 3,768 p.f. above the level of the sea, leads from

<sup>1</sup> In Turkish *ak* means 'white,' and *sú* 'water.'

<sup>2</sup> Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1868, p. 265.

<sup>3</sup> In the *Izvyestiya* of the Russian Geographical Society, 1868, Nos. 7 and 8, pp. 375 and 401.

the plains watered by the Ili into the valley of the river Chúi, and cuts through the western spur of the so-called Alá-Táu.<sup>1</sup> These recent researches show that these mountains sink considerably from Tengri-Khán towards the south-west; in the more western parts, lying between Káshgar and the western shores of the Issik-Kúl, the summits very rarely reach the height of 16,000 P.F.; the average altitude of the main ridge along the southern bank of the Naryn is 12,000 to 12,500 P.F., and in no instance attains the snow-line, which is 12,670 P.F. high. The mountain chains in the western portion of the Thián-Shán bear throughout a subordinate character; but the prominent features are the plateaus, or high table-lands, which have an elevation varying from 5,000 to 10,000 P.F. in perpendicular altitude. The whole is an enormous and vast uprising of masses of land, of which the towering ridges extend severally in two principal directions—one from west-south-west to east-north-east, and the other from north-west to south-west.

The excessive dryness of the air is peculiarly striking, which is attributable to the absence of snow and glaciers, and is in a great measure induced by the kinds of plants growing in the steppe region. The vegetable kingdom, up to the height of 7,000 feet, consists of plants, such as are chiefly indigenous to the basin of the Aral and Caspian Seas and their adjacent steppes. On the north side of this mountain chain belts of trees begin to grow at an elevation of 5,000 feet, and above them only a poor

<sup>1</sup> Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1868, pp. 380 and 381. See a full account of the highly interesting expedition of Sacken and Poltaratsky in the *Sertum Tianschanicum (Botanical Results of a Journey in the Central Portion of the Thián-Shán Mountains*, by Baron Frederick von der Osten-Sacken and F. J. Ruprecht, 1849, 4to). Annexed to this valuable account is a very distinct map, arranged by Dr. Petermann, which indicates the Russian explorations of the Thián-Shán system.

Alpine vegetation prevails on the high plateaus, passes, and mountain summits; whilst some individual plants already announce the near approach to the Himalaya mountains.<sup>1</sup>

Along the northern shores of the Issik-Kúl runs a double mountain chain, which likewise bears on its summits huge glaciers or fields of ice. It is called the Trans-Ilian Alá-Táu, to distinguish it from a similarly named range lying more to the north in Central Asia; it corresponds exactly with the Thián-Shán mountains on the south of the lake. Between the meridians that pass through the western and eastern extremities of the Issik-Kúl extend two chains of granite mountains, which run parallel to each other, and are covered with perpetual snow. They are separated from one another by a deep valley, rich in metamorphic rocks; but in the centre they are joined together by a transverse mountain block, likewise covered with perpetual snow, so as to form from this barrier two distinct deep valleys—one watered from east to west by the great Kebin, a tributary of the Chúi, and the other from west to east by the Chilik, a tributary of the Ili.

On the northern lower extremity of the spur of this mountain lies the new fortress Vyernoe, where the river Almáty takes its rise in the mountain. It is here that the Alá-Táu, bold and precipitous as a gigantic wall, starts up abruptly from the plain that accompanies in a parallel direction the course of the Ili. From the western shores of the Issik-Kúl to the furthest extremity of this mountain range, there lies perpetual snow over an extent of thirty-four to thirty-five miles. On view of this, every traveller is struck with astonishment, as the contrast is so great from the mild and temperate climate of the valley

<sup>1</sup> Behm's *Geographisches Jahrbuch*, vol. iii. of 1870, pp. 520, 521.

of the Ili. In the middle of the ridge, the Talgaryn-Tal-Chokú rears its gigantic snow-capped head to the height of Mont Blanc. All the passes over which it would, between the two meridians above mentioned, be possible to cross the chain of the Trans-Ilian Alá-Táu, have an elevation of 8,000 to 10,000 P.F., and consequently they would scarcely be practicable for the passage of large bodies of troops. All the cross-valleys, which are from 4,000 to 7,000 P.F. high, are densely grown over with fir-woods.

On the west of the lake, between the rivers Chúi and Naryn, branch off from the Alá-Táu three mountain chains, of which the centre chain stretches towards the west under the successive names of Ketmentubja, Karábúra, and Kirghizyn-Alátáu. To this chain belong, on the north of Kokán, the side branches which descend from the west to the river Sír-Dariá, and embrace between their slopes the fertile valleys of the Fergána. More northwards, and on the right bank of the Chúi, stretches a mountain range that at first wreathes tortuously its ridge, crested with many a lofty peak, then, becoming gradually flatter, extends, under the name of the Muzbel heights, till it sinks down to the Argarly hills, when it at length collapses, and imperceptibly merges into the steppe of Bed-Pak-Da-La.

A new aspect, however, awaits the traveller who, coming from the north out of the plains of the Chenghiz-Táu and from the Tarbágátái mountains, moves onwards between the lakes of Balkash and Alá-Kúl, and then ascends the first series of the Arganantinsk hills on the north of the mouth of the Lepsa; these hills lie isolated between the mouths of the Ayagyz and the Lepsa, and project over the dreary sandy plains of the Balkash steppe, which is sparingly covered by the saksául (*Haloxyton ammodendron*).

Whilst, on the west of these mountain ranges, the landscape becomes lost in the broad silvery expanse of the Balkash, and the eye wanders over the interminable and monotonous steppe, that grows dusky as it vanishes in the grey distance, on the south, as far as the sight can reach, the land is overspread with a verdant mantle of rich pasturage; and on the south-east the sparkling snow-fields that encase towards the eastern horizon the summits of the unbroken chain of the Dzungarian Alá-Táu, dazzle with their brilliantly white and sharp contours, that assume the fantastic forms of clouds resting on the mountain heights.

A mysterious obscurity hovered long over these regions. The reports made concerning them by travellers in Asia during the early centuries, such as Carpini, Lonjumel, Rubruquis, and in the thirteenth century the Princes Yaroslav and Alexander Nevsky and Baikov (sent in 1654 to Peking by Alexis Mikhailovich), were altogether insufficient. It was in 1793 that fuller information concerning the country of Dzungaria was for the first time received through the Russian naturalist, M. Sivers, who soon found many followers, of whom we may mention—the miner Snegirev, who, at the end of the eighteenth century, went as far as Chógútshak; the Russian nobleman Madatov, who travelled from Semipalatinsk to India; Putimchev, who visited in 1811 Kúlja and Chógútshak; the merchant Bubeninov, who in 1821 penetrated to Káshgar; Herr Meyer, who in 1826 reached the mountains of Arkas and the Chenghiz-Táu. Finally, in 1831, the city of Ayagyz (Ajaguz),<sup>1</sup> the present Sergiopol, was founded northward of the Balkash on the

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river Ayagyz;<sup>1</sup> since that time the explorations of this district have made rapid progress.

From the southern affluents of the Alá-Kul the Dzungarian mountain Alá-Táu extends in a south-westerly direction, between 46° and 44° north latitude towards the basin of the river Ili. Its length is 300 versts, its ridge attains an elevation of 6,000 P.F., and its highest peak above 12,000 P.F. Towards the south it stands in connection with the Iren-Khabirgan mountain, which towards the east unites with the colossal and the highest massive block of the Alá-Táu mountains, the Bogdo-Oola,<sup>2</sup> which forms the central point of junction to the different ranges. Towards the west the Alá-Táu sinks in gradual descents down to the lowlands of the Balkash.

The most important of the side chains that shoot off from the Alá-Táu is the Kopál, which, stretching from east to west, subsides into the Burakoi hills, and with them diminishes to the level of the steppe. The Alamán and the Altyn-Emel chains must be considered as the west-south-westerly continuation of the Alá-Táu; they do not, however, reach the perpetual snow-line, although the pass of the Altyn-Emel, cutting through that chain, has an elevation of 4,370 P.F. The main ridge of the Dzungarian or Semiryechenskian Alá-Táu, and also the Kopál chain, consist of granite and syenite; the north-west declivity of the Alá-Táu, and the northern slope of the Kopál chain, are composed of clay-slate and layers of various

<sup>1</sup> This river forms the southern boundary of a private enterprise in the washing of gold in the Kirghiz steppe. It rises in the northern declivities of the Tarbágátái, flows at first towards the north-west, and then towards the south-west, and discharges itself, after a course of altogether 300 versts. at the north-eastern end of the Balkash lake. Its breadth averages 10 fathoms, and its depth 4 P. F.

<sup>2</sup> *Oola*, a contraction of the Mongolian word *aghola*, 'a mountain.'

kinds of slate. The Altyn-Emel and the Alamán heights abound in every kind of porphyry, and also in such mineral wealth as lead and copper-ore containing silver.<sup>1</sup>

Although, strictly speaking, not within the limits of our consideration, yet we cannot, on account of their proximity, avoid making a few observations on those countries which form the provinces, nominally subject to the Chinese Empire, of Tian-Shan-Pe-Lu or Chinese Dzungaria,<sup>2</sup> and Tian-Shan-Nan-Lu or Eastern Turkestán, of which the latter bears also the denomination of Ili, signifying ‘west land,’ and that of Sin-Kiang, ‘the new frontier land.’<sup>3</sup> Both these provinces have cast off their allegiance to the Emperor of China.<sup>4</sup> Rugged mountains and sterile deserts, that at the most only produce sustenance for herds of cattle and goats, form the greatest portion of Eastern Turkestán. Through the labours and researches of the brothers Schlagintweit we first acquired a clearer insight into this country. Around the slopes and spurs of these

<sup>1</sup> Spörer, *Die See'nzone des Balchasch-Ala-Kul und das Siebenstromland mit dem Ili-Becken* (Petermann's *Geographische Mittheilungen*, 1868, pp. 194-197).

<sup>2</sup> Valikhanov, *Sketches of Dzungaria* (*Zapiski of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society*, 1861, vols. i. and ii.) A very valuable work. Valikhanov is a Kirghiz Sultán by birth, and a descendant of Chinghiz-Khán.

<sup>3</sup> A learned Chinese scholar, Zakharov, consul at Kúlja, made an exceedingly interesting map of these countries from Chinese sources, which he was able to obtain at Pekin. But already in the last century, immediately after the conquest of Dzungaria, the Chinese emperor, Khianlung, sent thither European missionaries, under the direction of the Jesuit Fathers Felix d'Arocha, Espinha, and Hallerstein, for the purpose of making maps of his newly acquired provinces.

<sup>4</sup> On account of the continual disturbances in these parts, a great many inhabitants of this country retired to the Russian territory; their number reached, in 1863, 10,163, and, in 1866, 4,128. (Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1868, p. 345.)

three vast mountain chains which finally merge into the desert plain of the Tarym, which is 200 miles long and 50 wide, lie towns and cities as well as extensive tracts of cultivated land. In these mountain chains the affluents of the Tarym find their source. The land here is extremely well watered both by nature and by artificial means, and produces cotton, silk, and vines. Wheat and rice here yield abundant crops; barley and millet also grow, both requiring the influence of summer heat; hence it is natural to suppose that this table-land has not a considerable elevation.

These regions have been recently more minutely explored by Captain Valikhanov,<sup>1</sup> of the Russian Kirghiz Staff Corps, and Captain Golubev,<sup>2</sup> of the Russian Staff Corps. The villages in Turkestán consist of scattered houses, each house being enclosed by a wall, and possessing a garden and some fields; several farms of this kind are connected by alleys of mulberry trees and *elæagnææ*. In more populous places the houses are closer together, and not surrounded by walls. The Chinese designate such places 'cities,' but the country people call them *jasy*, 'villages.' The six western cities of Eastern Turkestán (*Altysnar*, *Altüshar*, or *Alty-Shähär*, signifying the 'Territory of the Six Cities'), some being important on account of their commerce, are:—KÁSHGAR,<sup>3</sup> formerly the most western city of the Chinese Empire, is situated in a country rich in fruits and field produce, and contains

<sup>1</sup> Concerning the condition of Altysnar, or the six western cities of the Chinese province Nan-lu (Little Bucharía), in the years 1858-1859, consult *Zapiski*, 1861.

<sup>2</sup> March-Itinerary from Turfán to Káshgar, in Little Bucharía (*Zapiski*, 1862, vol. ii.)

<sup>3</sup> It is here that Adolphus von Schlagintweit is supposed to have been beheaded by order of a Turkish chieftain (Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*,

between 50,000 and 80,000 inhabitants, mostly Uzbeks, a garrison of 500 men, and 16,000 houses (?) It is surrounded by a mud wall, measuring 12 versts in circumference. YÁNG-HISSÁR, with 8,000 houses, and a garrison of 2,000 men. YÁRKAND<sup>1</sup> (*Jár-Kiang* or *Jerkend*), the largest of all the cities in Eastern Turkestán, has 32,000 houses, and about 200,000 inhabitants, besides a garrison of 2,200 men. As it is the chief emporium of commerce, the Russians have obtained a concession to establish there a consulate. KHOTEN (*Ili-chi, Ilchi, Elchi*), with 18,000 houses, and a garrison of 14,000 men. AKSÚ, with 12,000, and USH-TURFÁN, with 4,000 to 6,000 houses. The inhabitants throughout the whole of Eastern Turkestán are Mohammedans.<sup>2</sup>

1859, p. 352). The position of Káshgar is, according to Poltaratsky, 76° 22' E. long. from Greenwich, and 39° 35' N. lat. Hayward found it nearly similar, namely, 76° 10' E. long. from Greenwich, and 39° 23' N. lat.

<sup>1</sup> The position of Yárkand was determined by Captain T. G. Montgomerie at 38° 19' 46" N. lat., at 77° 30' E. long. from Greenwich, its altitude 1,200 mètres, say 4,000 English feet, above the level of the sea (Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1866, p. 276, and *Globus*, 1866, vol. x. p. 254). Montgomerie's own treatise is to be found in the article entitled 'On the Geographical Position of Yárkand and some other places in Central Asia,' in the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, vol. xxxvi., 1866, pp. 157-172.

<sup>2</sup> Robert von Schlagintweit, 'The Inhabitants of Turkestán' (*Revue Internationale*, 1868, part 2, pp. 141-149; also Dr. F. Spiegel on 'Eastern Turkestán' (*Ausland*, 1867, No. 42 and following numbers); and, further, Sir Henry Rawlinson, 'On the Recent Journey of Mr. W. H. Johnson from Leh, in Ladakh, to Ilchi in Chinese Turkistan' (in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xi. ch. i., pp. 6-14). Through the contemporaneous travels of Mr. G. W. Hayward and Mr. Robert Shaw we have recently obtained most important additions to our knowledge of these regions in Central Asia.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE NATIONS OF TURÁN.

Two great races of mankind, differing vastly in their national propensities, energy, and ability, divide between them now, as four thousand years ago, the possession of Central Asia—the Iranians and the Turkish Tartars of the mountain regions of Asia. Since the study of ethnography has conduced to the solution of so many historical problems, it has become generally known that the Iranian and the Hindú compose the oldest branches of that Aryan family to which almost all the nations of Europe belong.

The Iranian or Persian race, according to Latham, spreads beyond the present frontiers of Persia as far as the steppes of Western China, embracing Afghánistán, Balúchistán, parts of Bokhára, Kohistán, a province of Kábul, and Kafíristán. The families of this race speak more or less dialects of the ancient Persian, which is more or less mixed with words of Turkish or Thibetan origin. The Turks, their neighbours, having a peculiar talent of observation and a faculty for generalisation, have classed all the Iranians between the rivers Tigris and Amú-Dariá under the collective designation of Tájik. The fundamental characteristic of the Tájik nations is a predisposition to peaceful avocations, and

especially to agriculture—a quality that distinguishes them most signally from the Semitic nomads of the West, who delight in all kinds of adventurous enterprises.<sup>1</sup> The peculiarity of a sharp cast of features and a smallness of the cheek-bones is observable throughout the whole of Persia, and forms the physical distinction from the more northern nations; their skin is of a dusky colour. All these families stood at the same time in the closest contact with the various people dwelling around the Euphrates, the Nile, and the Mediterranean, and also with the people of India; only in the remote district, the inaccessible highland of the watershed between the Oxus and the Indus, they have remained always unchanged and unmixed; and for that reason the Mohammedans have called the inhabitants of those parts *Kafírs*, ‘unbelievers.’ There each valley is inhabited by a distinct set of people, to whom, however, no generic name has been assigned. Everything bears a peculiar and specific character. All these populations have fair complexions.

The aborigines of these countries—the Tájiks of Central Asia—who were constantly and zealously devoted to commerce, have spread themselves far and wide over the neighbouring territories from the Chinese frontiers even to the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf, as well as throughout the whole of Chinese Tartary, where they are, however, easily distinguished from the original Eígers. A recent traveller, Mr. Robert Shaw, who had a short time ago visited Eastern Turkestán, consequently a part of the country formerly belonging to China, expresses his confirmed conviction, and has publicly expounded it in Dublin, that the people of those countries were

<sup>1</sup> Guillaume Lejean, *La Russie et l'Angleterre dans l'Asie Centrale* (*Revue des deux Mondes*, vol. lxxv. pp. 680, 681).



Aryans who had become gradually Tartars<sup>1</sup>—an opinion declared in 1857 by the Herren Schlagintweit immediately after their return from those parts. This assertion deserves to be prominently brought forward, and the more so because some six years ago Professor Spiegel, who professes a thorough knowledge of Turanian ethnography, decidedly pronounced that not a trace of an Indo-Germanic aboriginal people could be found in these countries, although such was formerly positively believed to be the case.<sup>2</sup> Now, however, Shaw not less positively declares that the inhabitants of Yárkand have a very decided Aryan appearance. They are tall, and have rather long faces, well-shaped noses, and full-grown beards. Besides, we know that since the Tartar invasions no immigration of Aryan blood into these countries has taken place. The fact that the name of the city of Khoten is derived, according to the soundest philologists, from an Aryan origin, argues also in favour of this assumption.

We learn from the Chinese annals that, in the middle of the second century before Christ, a Tartar tribe, the *Yue-tshi*, penetrated as far as Yárkand and Káshgar, and drove the inhabitants out of their dwelling-places.<sup>3</sup> This expulsion, however, could not have been wholly accomplished, if we judge from the strong admixture of Aryan blood that exists to the present day. The portion of the Aryan aboriginal population that was actually expelled

<sup>1</sup> Robert Shaw, *Visits to High Tartary, Yárkand, and Káshgar (formerly Chinese Tartary), and Return Journey over the Karakoram Pass*, London, 1871, 8vo, p. 22. This interesting book has appeared in a German translation, under the title *Reise der hohen Tartarei, Yárkand und Káschgar und Rückreise über den Karakoram-Pass*, Jena, 8vo, 1872.

<sup>2</sup> *Eastern Turkestán*, in the *Ausland*, 1867, p. 1022.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

wandered out towards the highlands of Pámír, whence they flowed in streams towards the valleys descending to the banks of the Oxus and the plains of Bokhára, where they found other tribes of kindred blood. A small fraction, however, remained behind in the district of Sári-Kúl, eastwards of the Pámír, and in the angle of land lying between that lake and the mountain of Múz-Tágh.

The last remnant of the Aryan immigrants beyond the Pámír was a few years ago forced to quit their old homes, because they had given too much trouble to Muhammed Jakúb Khán, who, in accordance with Oriental procedure, caused the whole tribe, numbering from 1,000 to 1,500 individuals, to be transported to new dwelling-places. This people speak a Persian dialect interspersed with a few Turkish words, but without the slightest admixture of the Dardú idiom, though that is the language of their southern neighbours. In the valley of Wakhán, near the sources of the Oxus, there dwells a tribe of the formerly dispersed Aryans, whose language, it is asserted, differs from that spoken in Badakhshán and from the Bokharian Tájik, which is almost pure Persian, and is distinguished from the latter by the presence of many words similar to the Sanscrit, or the Tákri. If this be true, then the Wakhán idiom may be considered as the remains of a quite distinct and a very ancient offshoot of the Indo-Germanic language at the period when the Aryans had not yet divided into the two great families whence arose the language of the Veda and that of the Zend.

The Aryan people who remained behind in Eastern Turkestán must have, in course of time, intermingled with their Tartar conquerors, on whom they eventually engrafted their features, and from whom in return they adopted their language. This is of frequent occurrence

in the East; a striking instance of this kind is afforded by the Hazáras in the north of Afghánistán. In their outward appearance they would be considered as perfect types of the Tartar race, yet their language is Persian. The Tartar invasion, which on the east of the Pámír succeeded in entirely blending the Aryan aborigines with their invaders, had on the west of that mountain to rest satisfied with the mere conquest of the people. We do not meet here, as in Káshgar and in Yárkand, with a homogeneous race, with perfect resemblance in feature and exterior; but, on the contrary, there is in Bokhára and in Kokán a very marked difference between the subjugated Tájik and the ruling Tartar. In Eastern Turkestán an inhabitant of a city or town is simply called by the name of the city or town to which he belongs—as a Yárkander from Yárkand, a Káshgarian from Káshgar—whereas in Western Turkestán he is not only called by the name of the city or town, but also by the name of the race or tribe from which he descends; for instance, a Bokharian, or inhabitant of Bokhára, might also be designated a Tájik or an Uzbek, Kipchak, Turkoman, &c.

It is essentially necessary to mark the distinction between Tájik (Aryan descent) and Tartar or Turk (Turanian descent). Besides these we meet with two class denominations, arising from the opposite pursuits and modes of life—the Kirghiz and the Sart. The former is a nomad or pastoral wandering people, whilst the latter is a sedentary people, having fixed abodes. The Kirghiz, however, form at the same time an ethnical family, for they all belong to the Turco-Tartar race, whereas the designation Sart or Sogdáger, signifying a tradesman or commercial man, is applied to all who are not nomads, irrespectively of the race, whether Aryan or Tartar, to which

they may belong. This affords the opportunity of removing the erroneous impression conceived by the Russians, who considered the Sart to be identical with the Tájik, because the first Sarts whom they saw happened to be also Tájiks. Mr. Shaw expressly says that all the Kokánese whom he met in Eastern Turkestán agreed in the opinion that Sart was a word in common use amongst the Kirghiz to designate all those who were not nomads like themselves. The Sarts, therefore, in Western Turkestán include both the Aryan Tájiks, as well as the Tartar Uzbeks, and others of the Turanian race. It may be certainly taken for granted that the greater part of the Sarts are Tájiks, wherefore the Mongols gave the name of Sartohl, or the land of the Sarts, to the kingdom of Bokhára.

The Tájiks are, in the narrowest acceptation of the word, Bokhárians, and form the dominant race of the population as far as the Sír-Dariá (the Jaxartes). In Kokán, on the contrary, they are not met with in a body, but individually, engaged as merchants, clerks, writers, and even in high official appointments, but never as mechanics or peasants. The Tájiks are a fine race of men, having European features, high foreheads, dark brown eyes full of expression, thin noses finely chiselled, the upper lip short, and the colour of the lips almost vermilion, black hair, and the complexion much less brown than that of the Persians of this day. The frame of their bodies is generally rather short and sturdy; the beard is full and thick, and inclining to a brownish and even sometimes to a reddish hue. The Tájiks are false, deceitful, and covetous, and also good-natured, obliging, and submissive, and at the same time relentless masters over their slaves; very industrious and clever as merchants, tradesmen, artisans, agriculturists, and engineers for the construction of works of irrigation.

Most of them can read and write. They also form the most civilised part of the population, especially in towns and in the industrial classes. But they know not how to rule, only to obey. In the Belút-Tágh mountains they have established many independent communities, where they are termed Galchas by their neighbours in Turkestán ; they are Mohammedans, partly Sunnites and Shiites. More or less they cast their eyes with holy reverence towards the Court of Bohkára, the sanctuary of the greatest piety next to the Sultán-i-Rom, the Sultan of Turkey, who is the spiritual head of Islamism. The inhabitants of Badakhshan, who are the nearest neighbours of the Tájiks, have a great resemblance to the people of the north of India. Mr. Shaw saw one of them at Yárkand, whom he immediately took for a Cashmerian till it was discovered that the man was from Badakhshan. This resemblance to the Cashmerians speaks likewise much in favour of their Aryan descent ; for the Cashmerian bears the impress of the Aryan type quite as strongly as the Jew.

A remarkable people are the Kafírs or Sijáposh (called by Strabo Σιβάξ, and by Diodorus Siculus Σιβούξ), dwelling on the Hindú-Kúsh. The English missionary, the Rev. W. Hancock,<sup>1</sup> has obtained in Pesháwar<sup>2</sup> (the Persian for ‘covered with bushes,’ from *bisheh*, ‘a bush’) much information concerning them. Their subjection has been attempted in all ages, but always without success ; they have maintained their independence to the present day, and preserved also their old heathen religion intact. The features of the Kafírs are quite European and very intel-

<sup>1</sup> His account is contained in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* of March, 1865. *Sijah-posh* signifies, in Persian, ‘blacklegged,’ because their leggings or trousers are made of goat-skins.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Mirássid-ul-ittilá*—Fershaur, Fershatur, commonly Bersavur.

ligent; amongst them blue eyes are as frequent as black; the eyebrows are arched and the eyelids long; the forehead is broad and open; the colour of the hair varies between black and light brown; and the figures of both sexes are slender and beautifully shaped. The Sijáposh are divided into eighteen tribes, which are not, however, distinguishable by a peculiarity of dress. Their towns and villages—for they never dwell in tents—are generally situated on the mountain-slopes, and sometimes contain between 400 and 500 houses. The Sijáposh understand well the breeding of cattle, and possess considerable herds of them besides flocks of sheep and particularly of goats. They are fond of wine. They are now provided with flint-guns, which originally came, in all probability, from the manufactories of the Russians. Their predatory expeditions are mostly reprisals to avenge the inroads of the Mohammedans. The religion they observe is an extremely simple and pure worship of idols, which has not a strict and elaborate system owing to their not possessing a written language. Many of their religious observances call to mind the rites used by the Parsees, to whom they perhaps are connected by some degree of affinity. They speak a language very nearly allied to the Sanscrit, although with different dialects, which leads to the inference that they are a remnant of the aborigines dwelling in the countries around Kábul and in the present Afghánistán. And this view has been corroborated by the historical writings in the Afghán language, and also by other Mohammedan authors.<sup>1</sup>

The rest of the inhabitants of Central Asia come within the group of nations occupying the highlands of Asia, and

<sup>1</sup> Communications concerning the Sijáposh in Asiatic Kafiristán (*Globus*, 1865, vol. viii. pp. 342, 343).

in fact belong as well to the Mongolian or Tartar as to the Turkish family. Among the former, which consists of numerous nomadic tribes roaming over Mongolia and Dzungaria, as well as over portions of the adjacent lowlands, may be included the Buraten or Buryaten, although they appear only in small numbers. To this family also belong the Western Tartars, who form the branch of the Kalmuks, and are known as Dzungarians in Dzungaria, as Torgots in the districts south of the river Ili, as Oelöten in the Altái mountains, and as Russian Kalmuks along the lower course of the Don and of the Volga, and around the Ural and Altái mountains.<sup>1</sup> The most powerful of the Mongol tribes is the Khalkas, living on the west of the Manchoorian Alpine region and on the north of the great desert of Gobi. The people dwelling in the northern parts of Western Asia, particularly in Siberia Proper, are altogether incapable of receiving European civilisation. ‘The various tribes of Siberia,’ thus writes one of the most competent judges<sup>2</sup> on this subject, ‘acquire, with the exception of the Samoieds, Ostiaks, and the Tungus, far more easily the habits of a settled life than the American Indians; but the vitality of these people and tribes is becoming exhausted, and they are now gradually dying out. This was very manifest to me during my journey in 1867 along the middle course of the Irtysh between Taru, Tobolsk, and Tümen. The Tartars, who are regularly settled here, forsook the richly-wooded districts formerly inhabited by them, and have now entirely withdrawn to the banks of the great rivers; there they dwell in small villages, and

<sup>1</sup> The latter speak a very pure Turkish dialect, in which, however, many Mongolian elements have been interspersed.

<sup>2</sup> Radlov in a short communication to the author, dated Barnaul, Oct. 26 (Nov. 7), 1869.

are every year decimated by sickness and by hunger, whereas the Russians residing in the surrounding villages, in spite of the cattle disease and frequent failures in the crops during the last few years, are thriving and have become rich. Here it must be remarked that the Russian villages possess much less land, and consequently for the most part rent the arable land from the Tartars. The same I can assert to be the case with the Tartars inhabiting the steppe of Barabinsk and the steppes on the north of the Altái mountains, and also with the Cholym Tartars. All these tribes are split up and dispersed amongst the Russians. Some have partially intermingled with the Russians, and form a very hard-working and industrious portion of the Russian population in the so-called "native administrative departments." That portion of the natives of the country who are opposed to intermixture with the Russians are visibly becoming extinct, as they die very fast in their squalid villages, partly built of mud huts. The real Kalmuks of the Altái mountains are, in my opinion, inaccessible to civilisation. The more the Russians advance into the valleys of the Altái, the more they withdraw into the woody and rocky mountains, and by contact with civilisation they become wild and ungovernable, rather than pliant and amenable to its influence.'

The Uzbeks, who are the ruling people of Turkestán, belong to a purely Turkish race. They constitute the military and governing class in the three khanates of Khiva, Bokhára, and Kokán, and were estimated by Meyendorff at one and a half million souls. They have entirely subjugated the Tájik people. The Uzbeks in Kokán have decidedly kept a purer race than in Bokhára, where they have intermingled with the Tájiks. They



differ in some respects from the Kirghiz in their personal appearance, being of a taller stature, having a rather more exuberant growth of hair about the face, and possessing a less ugly appearance. Their complexion inclines rather to a brown than a yellowish tint. The nose is broad, and the protruding end quite flat; the eyes are lengthy, and nearly covered by the lids; the lower part of the forehead is projecting, whilst the upper is receding; the beard is thin and scanty; the frame of the body is muscular, and the figure is generally tall and handsome. Mr. Shaw remarks particularly that they have less of a Tartar appearance than the Kirghiz, and ascribes it, not unjustly, to the admixture with the Tájik blood.<sup>1</sup> An example of such an admixture is apparent, according to Mr. Shaw, in the present powerful Atálik Gházi Jakúb Beg.

To add to the confusion of the ethnological relations in Central Asia, it so happens that, when a tribe has once attained to such a height of power as the Uzbeks, people of an entirely different descent assume without hesitation the name of this distinguished tribe. Thus at the present time some eminent families in Káshgar have already begun to represent themselves as Uzbeks, although the Uzbeks do not acknowledge the slightest relationship with them.

The Uzbeks live partly in settled places of abode, and partly in *kibitkas*, as nomad warriors in constant readiness for service. They are divided into numerous tribes, of which the most important are:—The Ming, from which the present Kháns of Kokán descend; the Chagátáis, settled at Namaghán; the Kurúmas, esta-

<sup>1</sup> Shaw, *Visits to High Tartary, &c.*, p. 29.

blished on the river Sír between Táshkend and Kokán, following agricultural pursuits; and, lastly, the Kipchaks, who were in 1853 almost extirpated, although for ten years previously they had been the ruling tribe. They form a connecting link between the sedentary and the nomad Turkish tribes, for they possess arable land in the khanate of Kokán, and also wander about for a portion of the year with their herds of camels and flocks of sheep. They stand in high repute on account of their courage, and have the credit of being thoroughly good soldiers. Their outward appearance brings to mind very distinctly the Kirghiz; their language is, however, different, not only from the Kirghiz, but also from that of the nomad Turkish tribes.

Nearly allied with the Uzbeks are the predatory and nomad Turkomans, who inhabit for the most part those districts of barren land that stretch beyond the Oxus, from the Caspian Sea as far as Balkh, and from the above-named river southwards to Herát and Astrabád, in Persia. During the last ten years M. Vámbéry visited these tribes, and we are indebted to him for many new and interesting details concerning them. As far as historical information reaches, the Turkomans appear never to have been incorporated into one separate community. They are divided into *khalks* or tribes, which are again divided into different hordes, *táifes*, that are further subdivided into divisions called *tires*. Vámbéry denotes as the most important—the *Chaudor*, with 12,000 tents (*chatnas*), spread over the country from the Caspian Sea to Old-Urghendj, Buldúm-sáz, and Kôtshege, in Khiva; the *Erszari*, with 50,000 tents, on the left bank of the Oxus, from Chehardchúi to Balkh; the *Alieli*, with 3,000 tents, whose chief place is Andchúi; the *Kará*, with 1,500 tents, in the great sandy

desert between Andchúi and Merv;<sup>1</sup> the *Salor*, with 8,000 tents, in and around Martshág or Merútshág; the *Sarik*, with 10,000 tents, in the neighbourhood of Pendshdeh, on the banks of the Murgh-áb;<sup>2</sup> the *Teke*, with 60,000 tents, in two chief encampments at Achál and Merv; the *Göklen*, with 12,000 tents, in the district of Gurgán, who are the most peaceable and civilised of the Turkomans, and are for the most part subject to the Sháh of Persia; and the *Yomúlt*, with 40,000 tents, on the eastern shores of, and in some islands in, the Caspian Sea; the tents altogether number 196,500. Calculating an average of five persons to each tent, the aggregate amounts to 982,000 souls. A remarkable peculiarity exists amongst these Turkomans, that they have no leader, and no one is accustomed to obedience. Nevertheless, neither disorders nor factions are prevalent, and offences against the laws and morality occur more rarely amongst them than amongst the other Mohammedan nations of Asia. Everything is governed by the all-powerful and inexorable *Deb*,<sup>3</sup> i.e. custom or usage; and religion has but little influence. The different tribes are in constant enmity with each other; they do not in the least dread their neighbours, the Persians; but, on the contrary, they have great respect for the Russian power. They adhere truly and firmly to

<sup>1</sup> Formerly a flourishing city, *Alexandria* or *Antiochia Margiana* of the ancients, which was the capital of Margiana (in old Persian *Margu*, in Zend *Móuru*, in New Persian *Maru* or *Merv*).

<sup>2</sup> This river, the ancient *Margus*, takes its rise in the eastern slopes of the high mountain *Ghúr*, and flows in a north-westerly direction past Martshág and Pendshdeh, and then disappears in the sandy plains of Merv. The statement is incorrect that this clear and rapid mountain stream discharges itself into the Amú-Dariá.

<sup>3</sup> *Deb* (*töre* amongst the Kirghiz) is a word derived from the Arabic *edeb*, signifying 'custom,' 'courteousness,' &c.

their own tribe; even children four years old know well the horde (*táife*) and the subdivision (*tire*) to which they belong, and feel proud of the power and the greatness of their horde.

The Turkoman is noted for the fearless and piercing glance of his eyes, which distinguishes him from all the other nomads and the dwellers in towns and cities of Central Asia. Predatory expeditions (*alámáne*) are the main object of his life, and an invitation to such an excursion finds everywhere a ready and prompt response. The plan resolved on is kept secret, but as soon as the chosen leader has been blessed by the Mollah, every one vaults into the saddle and hastens with all speed to the *rendezvous*. The attack takes place at midnight or at sunrise, and is generally successful. The Persian caravans are usually taken by surprise; those who offer resistance are cut down, and the remainder are carried off into bondage. The Turkoman is uncommonly indolent in his domestic life. At eventide he loves to listen to the fairy tales and the songs of the *Bakhshí*, or wandering minstrels, who accompany their melodies on the *dutara*, or two-stringed guitar. These songs are mostly ballads of Makhdumkúli, a national poet, who died more than eighty years ago. Some of their customs are the more remarkable, because they are seldom or never found amongst the other nomads of Central Asia.

The period when the Turkomans first left their original country cannot be with certainty determined. Some were already settled on the eastern parts of the desert, on this side of the Amú, at the time of the Arab occupation; others took possession of the country at present inhabited by them during the time of Chenghiz-Khán and Taimúr. The last rising of the Turkomans took place under Nadír-

Sháh and Ayá-Muhamed-Khán, who, with the aid of the Afgháns, at the beginning of the last century, roused Asia from her slumber. The Turkomans are, with the exception of the Kipchak Uzbeks, the most warlike people of Asia, and, from the position of their country, the natural guardians of the southern frontiers of the highlands of Turkestán.<sup>1</sup>

The Turco-Tartars appear to be a mixed race of Mongols and Turks, and they are usually called Kirghiz.<sup>2</sup> But in this general denomination a sharp distinction must be drawn between the two different branches—namely, the Kazaks or Kaizaks, passing under the name of Kirghiz, and the Kirghiz, or, more properly speaking, the Kará-Kirghiz<sup>3</sup> (*kará*, meaning ‘black’). The most numerous of these people have never called themselves otherwise than Kazaks, whence the appellation Kirghiz-Kazaks;<sup>4</sup> they first received the name of Kirghiz from the Russian Cossacks after they had seen the genuine Kirghiz people.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vámbéry, *The Turkomans in their Political and Social Relations* (Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1864, pp. 401 to 408), and in *Travels in Central Asia*. London, 1864, pp. 301–328; and especially in the *Globus*, 1865, vol. vii. p. 190. Also in the article *Amongst the Turkomans* (*Globus*, 1867, vol. xi. pp. 353–362), and the instructive chapter, ‘Aschurade und die Turkomanen’ (see Melgunov, *Das südliche Ufer des kaspischen Meeres*, pp. 72–101).

<sup>2</sup> The Kirghiz dwelt in the fifth century on the banks of the Yenisei and around the Sajanian mountains. The Chinese writers of those times call them Kian-Kuen, and later Hakas. Since the end of the last century they have disappeared from the Altái, and now inhabit the Thián-Shán mountains; on the other hand we know from Chinese writers of the thirteenth century that at that time the Thián-Shán were inhabited by the Kirghiz (Ritter, *Erdkunde*, vol. ii. p. 1120), probably the ancestors of the present Kará-Kirghiz.

<sup>3</sup> These are the Diřokamanny or Dikokamannoi Kirghiz.

<sup>4</sup> W. Schott, *Ueber die echten Kirghisen*. Berlin, 1865.

<sup>5</sup> W. Radlov, *Beobachtungen über die Kirghisen* (Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1864, pp. 163–168).

The Kará-Kirghiz, belonging originally to the Caucasian race, and called Burúk (hence Buryats) by the Chinese and the Kalmuks, dwell partly in Dzungaria and in Turkestán, and partly in the eastern portion of the Altái mountains; also in the mountain region where the Sír and its tributaries, the Chúi and the Talás, take their rise; in the Alá-Táu mountains; in the high ranges bordering on the lake of Issik-Kúl; and on the south as far as the sources of the Amú-Dariá in the Belút-Tágh. They speak a purely Turkish dialect.<sup>1</sup> They form two distinct tribes—the one on the right called *On*, the other on the left *Sol*; these are again divided into tribes and families. They might also be distinguished by the name of North and South Kará-Kirghiz. On the north of the Sír their pasture lands extend farthest from east to west, since on the north they adjoin the tribe of Kazaks, and on the south the fixed settlements of the people of Kokán and of Chinese Turkestán. On the south of the Sír, the lands possessed by these nomad tribes stretch from north to south; for on the east they come in contact with the sedentary populations of Eastern Turkestán, and on the west with those of Kokán and Bokhára. Their pasture lands around the Thián-Shán mountains are here and there dotted with strips of ground, occupied as dwelling-places by the warlike and fanatical mountaineer Sarts.

The northern Kará-Kirghiz are not bound together by the slightest band of union, nor have they any institutions calculated to promote any combined action. The numerous tribes are completely dissevered and constantly at war

<sup>1</sup> W. Radlov, *Die Sprachen der türkischen Stämme Süd-Sibiricns und der dsungarischen Steppe*, St. Petersburg, 1866; D. and W. Schott, *Altajische Studien oder Untersuchungen auf dem Gebiete der tatarischen (turánischen) Sprachen*, Berlin, 1867, 4to.

with each other; each individual tribe even subdivides into smaller branches, and then in like manner engages in internecine feuds. In this manner their martial strength becomes absorbed by endless internal conflicts, as well as by frequent disputes with the Kazaks, so that in spite of their inborn fierce courage they have been subjugated without difficulty by the Chinese and the Kokánese. Consequently, in recent times, one tribe after another, with but few exceptions, has willingly accepted the sovereignty of Russia.

The dwelling-places of the northern Kará-Kirghiz are separated from those of the southern by a wild and almost inaccessible mountain region, near the sources of the Chúi and the Naryn, where the small tribe of the Chiriks dwell, who have also acknowledged Russian supremacy.

The southern Kará-Kirghiz are bound by the closest bond of union with Kokán, to which country they are in no respect tributary, but form, in conjunction with the Kipchaks and the Sart mountaineers, the ruling race and the *élite* of the fighting men. They have adopted the half-civilised condition of the Kokánese, and become, by means of their energy, independent and even influential in Kokán.<sup>1</sup> They are also known under the designation of Alái-Kirghiz.<sup>2</sup> To this great tribe belong the hordes which, on both sides of the Pámír, lead a nomadic life on the mountain slopes as well as in the steppes. They are in possession of the district around the lake of Sári-Kúl. A small body of them, many years ago, pushed forward to the pasture lands of Sarikia, on the river Karákásh, near Sendshú, and that is the most southern point ever reached by these nomads.

<sup>1</sup> *Globus*, 1867, xii. pp. 145, 146; and *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, Berlin, 1867, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> Shaw, *Visits to High Tartary*, p. 31.

The kindred tribe, the Karákalpaks, noted for the excellent carpets they make, dwell in great numbers, encamped in felt tents, along the banks of the Sír-Dariá.

The Kazaks<sup>1</sup> may be considered as a people in a state of transition; for, as regards their outward appearance, many of them have Mongolian features, but as regards their language they belong to the Turkish race. They are for the most part subject to Russia, and are divided into three hordes:—The *Great Horde* (Úlú-djús), dwelling on the south of the lake of Balkash towards the lake of Issik-Kúl; the *Middle Horde* (Orta-djús), between the Balkash and the town of Omsk in Siberia; and the *Little Horde* (Kütchük-djús), dwelling in the western part of the steppe, are numerous as far as Táshkend<sup>2</sup> and the river Chúi. From this it appears that the extensive country stretching from the mouths of the Volga and the Ural in the west, towards Dzungaria in the east, and bounded on the north by Siberia, and on the south by Turkestán, belongs to the Kirghiz-Kazaks. This region will always remain in the possession of nomadic races, and is extremely well adapted to wandering herdsmen and shepherds.

Agriculture might also be carried on, but only under very favourable conditions and to a limited extent. It is true that spots of ground are not wanting where tillage would amply repay the labour; but a settled kind of life is extremely repugnant to the feelings of a Kirghiz.

<sup>1</sup> Alexis de Levschine, *Description des Hordes et des Steppes des Kirghiz-Kazaks ou Kirghiz-Kaissaks*, trad. du russe par Ferry de Pigny, Paris, 8vo; Fuhrmann, *Die Kirghisen und ihr Leben* (*Globus*, xv. pp. 180–183).

<sup>2</sup> The ancient *Κυροπολις* of the Greeks, *Kurukschaethra* (?), frontier fortress of the old Persian Empire founded by Cyrus, destroyed by Alexander the Great in the year 327 B.C.



Nature herself seems to have destined him for the occupation of a herdsman ; and he roams freely over a country where its condition agrees with his natural bent. In the steppe he appears in his true element, when he dashes across it with whirlwind rapidity in his light *tarantas*, or steppe cariole ; and during some months of the year he seeks the high mountain tracts for the luxuriant pasturage they afford his herds. As autumn approaches, he providently drives his cattle down to the valleys, taking with him his felt hut or tent, his only mode of shelter. But as soon as spring strews the wide plains with herbs of every variety, amongst which the imperial lily and the tulip<sup>1</sup> shoot forth their flowers in myriads, the winter *yourts* are taken down, and numberless herds are set in incessant motion. But whilst the Kazaks spread their tents over the boundless expanse of the steppe, rarely more than twenty of them being found in the same camping-ground, the Kará-Kirghiz erect their tents in the same valley, where they frequently occupy lines extending many versts in length.

The Kirghiz is rude, morose, and passionate, but more sincere and kind-hearted than the Kazak : he wages war, but he does not steal. Both of them are Mohammedans, but only so outwardly ; being without priests, mosques, and fanaticism, their religion is entirely confined within the narrow limits of a few rites and ceremonies. The Kirghiz and the Kazaks<sup>2</sup> are excellent breeders of cattle, and live mostly on food prepared from milk. The former follow agricultural pursuits more than the latter, though they are neighbours.

<sup>1</sup> They were brought to us in Europe from the countries of the steppes.

<sup>2</sup> Radlov, *Beobachtungen über die Kirghisen* (Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1864, pp. 63-68).

The life the nomads lead in the steppe would, on the whole, appear to us monotonous,<sup>1</sup> since only two different pursuits seem to engage their attention—namely, the tending of cattle and the waging of war. For the wandering herdsman is always armed and ready for self-defence; but the Kazak is besides especially prone to robbery. The Kirghiz usually undertake their predatory expeditions, termed *barantas*, against herds of cattle and flocks of sheep during the hottest part of the day, but against an *aúl* (here called *yourt* or *kibitka*), i.e. an encampment of huts or tents, at the close of night; then they attempt to take it by surprise, imagining that the herdsmen and watch-dogs, worn out by long night-watching, and lying down half asleep, are not so careful in their look-out. They take little interest in the actual conflict, as they are only intent on taking booty; to accomplish this purpose, they create great confusion amongst the herds, and then endeavour to capture and carry off as many head of cattle as they possibly can. On these occasions, however, they sometimes come to a desperate hand-to-hand fight.

On the death of a chieftain of a tribe, all feuds between the different tribes cease, and peace reigns far and wide throughout the steppes. The predatory expeditions are even discontinued; for friend and foe come from far and near to attend his obsequies.

The total number of the Kirghiz-Kazaks is computed to reach, at the most, about 700,000 individuals, who, at the present time, are almost entirely in a state of

<sup>1</sup> Zalesky, *La Vie des Steppes-Kirghizes, descriptions, récits et contes*, Paris, 1865, fol.; and Herr Wagner, *Reisen in den Steppen und Hochgebirgen Siberien's und der angrenzenden Central-Asiens*, Leipzig, 1864, 8vo.

submission to Russia ; for the Emperor has, in the course of time, more or less subjugated the several hordes, either by force of arms or by the influence of gifts. This was of the utmost importance to Russian policy, because along the whole extent of country from the Caspian Sea to the Altái mountains every caravan-route leading from south to north passes through the territories of the Kirghiz. In the south-east, beyond the lakes of Balkash and Zaisang, some Sultáns or chieftains still rove about in the Chinese Empire.<sup>1</sup> But amongst the Kirghiz dwelling in the plain of Zaisang, in the south of the Altái, and in the Tarbágátái mountains, there has been for some time past observable a decided migration towards the west.

Like the prairies and savannas of America, the steppes have an extremely rich and luxuriant growth of grass, a fine pasturage for cattle, and even in winter a sufficient supply of food for them ; but when the fields are tilled and properly cultivated, they yield crops of first-rate quality and of extraordinary abundance. It is quite natural that only a small proportion, scarcely worth mentioning, of the vast plains is made any use of, and a still smaller proportion mowed to produce a sufficient supply of hay for the winter ; the grass runs to seed, and becomes hard, rough, and useless. Autumn and winter spread over the arid plains a layer of snow, varying from five to ten feet in thickness. Under this layer, when the snow disappears in spring, the parched-up grass-land seems to be covered with a mantle of felt which is thick and firm enough almost to hinder the first efforts of the new vegetation. Large tracts of fertile pasturage become withdrawn from use through tangled masses of leafy and

<sup>1</sup> *Streifzüge in den Gebirgen und Steppen der Chalchas-Mongolen und Kirghisen* (Globus, 1863, iv. pp. 257, 258).

perennial plants and shrubs, or considerably reduced in the value of their produce.

On the return of spring the air and sun begin to shed their benign influence over all; the stormy wind sweeps again along the arid plain, drying up the stalks saturated with melted snow, and consumes the few remaining particles of ice that slowly melt upon the ground. Every year, as soon as the grass and herbs have become thoroughly dry, the fields are set on fire, and immense tracts of meadow-land are all ablaze. This is done not so much for the sake of manuring the soil as for the purpose of destroying the growth of noxious weeds. The felt-like covering that obstructed the vegetation is destroyed by the flames, and entirely disappears; two or three days later the magic effect of the conflagration becomes conspicuously apparent. Fresh and strong sprout forth the young stems of the new grass, and soon the smiling fields assume a charming aspect with their fragrant verdure, which is spread over the plain like a rich carpet of green velvet.

As soon as this season dawns upon the Kirghiz, for which he had sighed so ardently, winter, with all its toils, want, and misery, is forgotten. The golden days of his summer life now commence, which bring him plenty, peace, and joy. Day by day the steppe starts anew into life, while life in the same proportion languishes in the *aúl*. The Kirghiz gazes with delight, even during the darkness of night, upon the clear outline of the mountain ridge; and already the dawn of the morrow breaks upon the ever-restless monarch of the steppe as he wends his way to the paradise of his tribe. The gates of the hurdle-fences that surround the farmyards fly open, and the horses frisking about within them—still thin from their scanty winter

food, which they had to uproot from beneath the thick covering of snow—rush out sportively to feast upon the tender stalks of the budding grass. They are soon followed by a few cows, which are at stated intervals brought home again with the mares to be milked, and then they are turned out again to graze to their hearts' content. Towards the middle of May the *aúls* are entirely deserted, and the herds of cattle are driven into the steppe, where the Kirghiz find some suitable spot, not far from a river, to pitch their *kibitkas* or summer encampment. It rarely occurs to alight upon single tents in the steppe; for generally the whole, or at all events the wealthier portion, of the inhabitants of an *aúl* indulge during summer in this kind of life in the steppe, which then represents a picture of the most stirring and active life.<sup>1</sup>

The population of Eastern Turkestán is not dismembered into separate tribes like the Turanian lowlanders. However, nearly all the above-described races and tribes of Western Turkestán are represented in Eastern Turkestán, especially in Yárkand and Káshgar, whither they come as merchants or soldiers in the service of the Atálik-Gházi. Also many Baltís, a Mohammedan people of Thibet, have settled down near Yárkand, who chiefly devote themselves to the cultivation of tobacco and the growth of melons. We may add to them also the people of Badakhshán.

In order to complete our sketch we must cast a hasty glance over the people of Eastern Turkestán. The northern provinces of the Thián-Shán and Múz-Tágh

<sup>1</sup> *Ausland*, 1868, p. 619. Sponville gives a good ethnographical description of the Kirghiz in *Chez les Kirghis* (*Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Paris*, 1865, vol. i. pp. 438–475). Vide also the chapter, 'Kirghiz' Emigration to their Summer Pastures,' in T. W. Atkinson's *Travels in the Regions of the Upper and Lower Amoor and the Russian Acquisitions on the Confines of India and China*, London, 1860, 8vo, pp. 244–273.

mountains, namely, Aksú, Kutshe, Kárashar, are partly inhabited by the Kirghiz; next to them, but further towards the east, dwell a people of somewhat similar aspect, but of the Buddhist religion, who are called by their Mohammedan neighbours Kalmuks. According to Mr. Shaw's researches, the Kalmuks begin in the neighbourhood of Kárashar; in the mountainous tracts they are, like the Kirghiz, nomads, but they also form a portion of the town population. The borders of the deserts are inhabited by the Dúlans, a half-nomadic Mussulman horde with predatory habits. They are supposed to dwell in caves and mud huts. Also there is a tradition of a wild race of men who live on fish, and are clothed with garments made from the bark of trees. They are supposed to dwell near the great lake of Lob-Nor, in the heart of the desert, in the district of Kurdam-Kák, where the united streams of Turkestán disappear in the sand. But no one belonging to this mythical race of wild men has hitherto been seen.

Beyond the Thián-Shán or Celestial mountains expands the extensive territory of Dzungaria. The inhabitants of this country are assumed to be of Kalmuk origin; but there exist at present two other ruling tribes of different descent, namely, the Dúnganís and the Tarantshís. According to tradition, the Dúnganís are a mixed race formed from Tartar invaders and Chinese women. They are strict Mussulmans, but speak Chinese. Mr. Shaw declares that those whom he saw were tall, powerfully built men, with strongly marked Mongolian features. The Tarantshís are likewise a people with fixed habitations, but of more recent date; probably their original native country was more westward in Turkestán. There is also in Dzungaria a strong admixture of Chinese blood, be-

cause this province was made use of by the Chinese rulers as a penal settlement for convicts and political offenders. Further to the east of Dzungaria is the Chinese province of Kansú, the population of which is composed of a very numerous Mohammedan element. On the north it adjoins the almost unknown interior of Mongolia.

Our knowledge concerning the territories lying on the north of the great desert of Gobi is certainly obscure enough; but how much more are we overwhelmed with darkness as regards the southern belt of that vast region! Only two points faintly gleam through this dim and dubious twilight.

One point is that Chartchand—distant, so it is said, one month's journey from Khoten—lies on a road leading thither, which runs along continuously between the ridge of the Kuen-Luen mountains and the great desert of Gobi or the Taklá-Makán. At the present time no other road is known to traverse these mountains further to the east than the one from Polú, which goes direct to the lake of Pangong, in the west of Thibet. There is, however, a road which leads to the east, and consequently to China; but it was never used by the Chinese even when in possession of this country. Chartchand is now independent of the Chinese, as well as of Jakúb-Khán. The city appears to have been inhabited by a non-Mussulman people, notwithstanding that Marco Polo<sup>1</sup> maintains a contrary opinion. At present no caravans ever leave Khoten to visit this territory.

The other point is Zilm, concerning which Mr. Shaw obtained some information. It is a city and district

<sup>1</sup> Compare with this Pauthier, *Le Livre de Marco Polo*, vol. i. pp. 146-149; and Büreke, *Die Reisen des Venetianers Marco Polo*, pp. 158-160; also *Ausland*, 1870, p. 1056.

situated six weeks' journey from Aksú or Khoten, and nearly the same distance from Lhasa. It borders on the high mountain lands that stretch thither from Lhasa, and is bounded on the north by the great desert of Gobi. There are carpet manufactories in Zilm, besides many other branches of industry, and a commercial intercourse is established between this place and Lhasa. According to this description there exists but little doubt that Zilm is the city of Sining-fu, on the Shensi frontier of Thibet. Mr. Shaw has—but, of course, only approximately and in the roughest manner—determined its position at about 38° N. lat. and 90° E. long. of Greenwich, or south of the lake Lob-Nor, and eastwards of Chartchand. Although Marco Polo has left us no accurate description of the route he pursued to enter China, still it appears probable that he must have gone from Kancheu to Sining, which he calls *Sinju*. In that case Sinju would be identical with Zilm.

These districts are also inhabited by Kalmuks, who call themselves Sokpos, and are divided into western and eastern tribes. The Western Sokpos, including those of Zilm, are Buddhists, and are called by the natives of Lhasa *nang-pa*, i.e. 'of our faith;' on the other hand, the Eastern Sokpos are called *tshi-pa*, 'of another faith,' and accordingly despised most profoundly. There is also a difference in the dialects spoken by the Western and Eastern Sokpos. Lastly, there are the Kalka-Sokpos, who worship a Grand Lama—the *Yezun-Dampa*. He is supposed, like the *Dalai-Lama* at Lhasa, never really to die, as his soul always passes into another body. These Kalka-Sokpos are probably no other than the Kalkas-Mongols of the Russians and the Chinese, and the *Yezun-Dampa* is evidently identical with the *Guison-Tamba*, or



Lama-King of the city of Kúren or Urga,<sup>1</sup> in the neighbourhood of the Siberian frontier. It is reported that, either annually or biennially, his envoys appear at Lhasa to do homage to the *Dalai-Lama*.

<sup>1</sup> *Urga* means properly an encampment; the Mongols, however, called a city *Kúren* or *Ta Kúren*, i.e. 'an enclosed space.' It is situated about one mile northwards of the streamlet Tolla, and forty miles south of the Siberian frontier near Kiachta.

## CHAPTER VII.

RUSSIA'S FIRST ADVANCE INTO CENTRAL ASIA.<sup>1</sup>

DIPLOMATIC and commercial relations have long existed between St. Petersburg and Khiva; even Peter the Great had especially directed his attention to these affairs.<sup>2</sup> Continually interrupted, however, by mutual animosities, they created more hatred than sympathy. Hence it was easy to foresee that Russia would make the first move against Khiva. And in fact, in 1839, when Lord Auckland directed the invasion of Kábul, the Emperor Nicholas of Russia, fearing that England would march against Turkestán and take possession of that country, commanded General Perovsky to equip an expedition against Khiva. Valid reasons for this undertaking were not wanting. The Khán of Khiva (who takes the title of *Taksir Khán*) had instigated to rebellion some Kirghiz who were tributaries to the Czar; he had let loose some hordes of plunderers on the caravans, and dragged off some hundreds of Russian subjects into bondage. General Perovsky's

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to the kindness of the Austrian Major-General Pelikan von Plauenwald for the greater and most valuable portion of the materials requisite for the composition of this chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Between 1716 and 1719 the line of the Irtysh was established. In 1716 the unfortunate expedition of Prince Bekovich took place. In 1819 the Russians, under Ponomarev and Muravev, made a fresh attempt to settle down on the eastern coasts of the Caspian Sea.

expedition,<sup>1</sup> however, was a complete failure. A portion of his troops was entirely destroyed in the steppe that surrounds the Sea of Aral, and the remainder reached Orenburg with the greatest difficulty. But Khiva still maintained her independence.<sup>2</sup>

Enlightened by the experience of this disaster, the Cabinet of St. Petersburg determined to choose a more vulnerable part of Turán as an object of attack, and for this purpose the khanate of Kokán was selected. This territory was, in 1840, conquered by the Amír of Bokhára, Nasr-Allah-Khán, who caused the native ruler of that khanate to be beheaded, and his son to be carried off as a hostage to Bokhára.<sup>3</sup> The cousins of the deceased prince, who had in the meanwhile fled to the Kirghiz, soon found the opportunity of re-establishing the throne of Kokán. On this occasion, however, numerous predatory inroads were made into the Russian territory. Russia had, consequently, a sufficient cause to chastise this hostile Khán. But in the first place it was necessary to smooth the way for this enterprise; consequently, travellers were despatched to examine the barren districts on the frontier, and scientific expeditions were undertaken to explore the country as far as possible. At the same time, Russia began gradually to push her boundary line forwards more towards the south in the steppe that separates Siberia from the river Sír-Dariá, or the Jaxartes of the ancients; and

<sup>1</sup> The German traveller, Alexander Lehmann, accompanied General Perovsky on this expedition.

<sup>2</sup> Émile Jonveaux, *Les Russes dans l'Asie Centrale (Revue des deux Mondes, 1867, vol. lxxvii. pp. 971, 972).*

<sup>3</sup> Concerning the former history of these countries consult that minute and valuable book of Vámbéry, *Geschichte Bochára's oder Transoxaniens von den frühesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart*, Stuttgart, 1872, 8vo, two vols., of which an English translation has recently appeared in London. Vide *Athenæum*, No. 2361, of the 25th January, 1873.

thus she incorporated three millions of Kirghiz, over whom she had previously held only nominal rule. Russia asserted, and justly too, that a well-regulated government could not possibly suffer a desert, inhabited only by nomadic tribes, to become its frontier; it must necessarily, for the sake of good order and civilisation, be continually advancing its boundary line.

Based upon the previously acquired knowledge of the country by explorations as well as by topographical surveys, a military expedition set out in 1847 to 1849, under the command of Captain Leo von Schultz, of the Imperial Staff Corps, which led to very valuable strategical results. In 1848, the foundations of three forts were laid—namely, the Karabutalski and the Ural-skoi on the river Irghiz, and the Orenburgskoi on the Turgái. These forts had a twofold purpose: one was to facilitate the watching over the nomad hordes, the other to form links in the chain which was intended hereafter to connect the old Russian frontier with the new one—the so much coveted line of the river Sír-Dariá. In the same year was also commenced the Fort Aralsk on the Sír-Dariá, near its mouth in the Sea of Aral; its position is extremely favourable, and it is distant about 750 versts, or 110 geographical miles, from Orenburg. A dreadful catastrophe occurred here in 1849, which is worthy of remark, and made a deep impression upon the Oriental mind. A body of troops several thousand men strong, whilst marching in the neighbouring state of Khiva, was entirely buried in the snow. In the years succeeding 1849, the colonisation of these parts commenced, and made such rapid progress that in 1852, after the erection of the Fort Kos-Aral, the Aral became what might be termed a Russian sea. Already in 1851 the Russians, in

consequence of a fresh inroad into their territory, whereby a capture of 75,000 head of cattle was made, were compelled to raze the Kokánese Fort of Kosh-Kurgán.

At length the oppressive measures put in force about that time by the Uzbeks of Kokán against the Kirghiz dwelling on the banks of the Sír-Dariá gave the Russian Government a sufficient pretext for intervention. In consequence of this oppression many of the Kirghiz forsook their cultivated fields, and resumed the nomadic life of the steppe. Others sought the assistance of the Khivans, who, being jealous of the power of Kokán, had built several forts on the left bank of the Kuván-Dariá, one of the most important confluent of the Sír-Dariá. They soon, however, discovered that they had found in Khiva only a new tyrant instead of an ally. The condition of these people became worse than ever, and when Russia appeared upon the scene she was hailed with shouts of joy as the liberator of the Kirghiz. But not without the deepest mistrust could the khanates of Khiva and Kokán behold a power like Russia settling down at the mouths of the Sír-Dariá. Without proceeding to an open declaration of war, they provoked the Russian troops by continual skirmishes, and oppressed the Kirghiz more and more in order to chastise them for having afforded aid to the Europeans.

At first these incursions were only feebly repulsed, because the Russian garrison of Aralsk was numerically weak, and it was extremely difficult and wearisome to maintain the communications. But, notwithstanding this apparent inactivity, the Russians took comprehensive measures of preparation. Considerable stores were collected at Orenburg, three sailing vessels were launched on the Sea of Aral, and these were soon afterwards followed

by two iron steamers. The latter had to be brought from Sweden in separate pieces, and then with the greatest trouble transported through St. Petersburg to Samara and Aralsk. At last, in May 1852, all the preparations were completed, and the armaments thoroughly provided. Lieutenant-General Perovsky then determined to carry out his long-cherished project of erecting a series of fortified places along the Sír-Dariá. It was not his intention by these means to extend the territory of the Russian Empire, because the Kirghiz dwelling on the right bank of that river were already tributary to the Czar. Kokán, however, regarded this first step in the light of an invasion; and Khiva, too, though less directly threatened, became conscious of the danger. 'We are lost,' cried the Khivans, 'if the Russians drink the waters of the Sír-Dariá.'

That very important Kokánese fort, Ak-Mesjed, was about forty German miles distant from Aralsk, or about three hundred English miles from the mouths of the Sír-Dariá, and situated close to the frontier of Kokán. A detachment of five hundred men was sent under the command of an officer, as skilful as he was brave, to reconnoitre this fort, and at the same time to deliver an order to the Kokánese to retire from a position which they had unjustly wrested from the Kirghiz. Informed of the enemy's approach, the Kokánese burst open the dams of the river for the purpose of inundating the adjacent country. This obstruction did not, however, impede the Russian advance; for they marched onwards, waist-deep in water, till they reached Ak-Mesjed, of which they destroyed the advanced works without finding any serious opposition. But after this first success they were obliged to fall back. The Kokánese, in expectation of reinforce-

ments, refused to surrender; and the Russians, who had neither scaling-ladders nor heavy ordnance, dared not attempt an assault of the place. After having razed three other forts of less importance, which were situated on the lower course of the Sír-Dariá, the Russians, relying on the future, returned to Aralsk.

In the following year, 1853, General Perovsky sent, in successive detachments, an expeditionary force of considerable strength, with twelve guns and two thousand horses, besides as many camels and beasts of burden for conveyance of baggage, stores, and materials of war, across the desert of Kará-Kúm to Aralsk, which the Russians, in spite of the heat, the extraordinary fatigue, and the tortures from thirst, reached without any considerable loss. Towards the end of June they were directed to march upon Ak-Mesjed. But the Kokánese, on their part, did not idly waste their time, but set to work to entrench themselves as strongly as possible. The outer wall, which had become useless, was thrown down, and a wide and deep ditch was dug to supply its place. The walls of earth that protected the rear of the fortifications were seven mètres thick, and of sufficient height to prevent an escalade and to necessitate a breach. In short, the place must be regularly besieged.

General Perovsky endeavoured to intimidate the Uzbeks by a well-sustained cannonade, and then summoned them to capitulate. His words, however, though full of confidence and threats, ill concealed a degree of uncertainty, and were consequently uttered without effect. If the Kokánese surrendered Ak-Mesjed at discretion, they renounced their sovereignty over the Sír-Dariá, and opened Central Asia to the Europeans. They therefore replied that they would fight on as long as a lance and a

musket remained in their hands. The bombardment was reopened with increased vigour. By means of a covered sap the Russians succeeded in crossing the ditch that surrounded the citadel, and they laid a mine under the principal tower, which was blown up into the air on the 27th July, 1853. By its destruction a breach of sixty feet in width was effected, into which the Kokánese threw themselves in all haste, determined to dispute the passage of the enemy. The garrison, only three hundred strong, notwithstanding the loss of their chief, fought with lion-like courage, and two hundred and thirty fell dead on the scene of conflict, which they had defended inch by inch, but all in vain. A vast quantity of arms and warlike stores fell into the hands of the Russian conquerors, who from this time forth named the place Fort Perovsky.

The capture of Ak-Mesjed dealt a heavy blow against the power of Kokán. It was therefore natural to expect that the Khán would strain every nerve to retake the place. The Russians, however, with prudent foresight, abstained from endeavouring to make further conquests, and remained contented for the next few months with strengthening their position along the Sír-Dariá. Two forts—one on the delta of the small river Kasály, the other at Karmákchi, distant one hundred and twenty English miles from the mouths of the Jaxartes—connected Aralsk with Fort Perovsky. In the latter they left a garrison of one thousand men, with sufficient provisions and forage to last for more than a year. These four forts together form the so-called ‘line of the Sír-Dariá.’ This precaution was not unwise.

The Khán of Kokán, who had lost the fort of Ak-Mesjed partly through the revolt of a vassal, the Governor



of Táshkend,<sup>1</sup> whom he pretended to chastise, caused an extraordinary levy of troops to be made. He then, on the 17th December, 1853, suddenly turned against Ak-Mesjed and the Russians with fifteen thousand Kokánese and some seventeen guns. The Russians, aware that their prestige among the Turanian races would be materially impaired by exposing themselves to a regular siege, determined, although the garrison was reduced to a single battalion of infantry and five hundred Cossacks, to make under their gallant leaders a most obstinate resistance. In this mood they ventured on a sally against the enemy, who were tenfold superior in numbers—an act of daring that would have cost them dearly had they not finally succeeded in crushing their besiegers so much stronger numerically. The Russians, surrounded on every side, were almost on the point of succumbing, when a fortunate diversion threw the enemy's ranks into disorder, who took to flight, leaving two thousand dead and wounded on the field, besides their seventeen guns.

In the meanwhile the Kirghiz, hitherto the faithful allies of the Russians, began to regret having afforded assistance to the enemies of the Turkoman nation. A

<sup>1</sup> Táshkend was in the year 1800 the capital of a separate khanate, which was in 1810 conquered and subjugated by Kokán on account of its internal dissensions and inherent weakness. This weakness was owing to the circumstance of this khanate being constituted from three separate provinces composed of the sedentary populations of Táshkend, Chemkend, and Turkestan, who were again separated from each other by the nomadic tribes of the Kirghiz. The sedentary populations of these different provinces were constantly exposed to the predatory incursions of the Kirghiz during the existence of the khanate of Táshkend. This khanate in earlier periods frequently fell to pieces, but was just as often re-established. These different provinces were continually at variance with each other, and more especially so at the time when they acknowledged the suzerainty of Kokán. (*Globus*, vol. xii. p. 146.)

bold leader, Izzet Kutebar, understood how to awaken their patriotic feelings. He visited the *kibitkas*, and caused the chieftains of the tribes to blush with shame when he compared their conduct with that of their ancestors. The youth he inflamed with a passion for war. 'Steeds and arms they have,' he cried; 'have we not the like? Are we not as numerous as the sands of the desert? Where-soever ye turn—whether towards the east or the west, or towards the north or the south—ye surely find Kirghiz. Wherefore then should we submit to a handful of strangers?' Kutebar's fiery eloquence resounded with a lively echo, and a considerable number of partisans flocked around his standard.

The Russians soon became conscious of the presence of a dangerous adversary. No caravan could traverse the desert without being attacked; consequently the supply of provisions and stores to the fortified places became questionable. Under these circumstances, General Perovsky, following the maxim *Divide et impera*, determined to employ the Kirghiz themselves to suppress this fearful rebellion. By means of presents and promises he won over a nomad chief, Sultán Araslán, who engaged with nine hundred men of his tribe, supported by some *sotnias* of Cossacks, to bring back Kutebar's head. This was, however, no easy undertaking; for Kutebar, with the rapidity of lightning, rushed upon those who vainly imagined that they could elude his vigilance. His followers stole unobserved into Araslán's tents, surprised and killed him, as well as many of his horde. The Cossacks with great difficulty regained the Russian fort.

This success emboldened Kutebar in his audacity—so much so that the Russian General Commanding-in-Chief deemed it necessary to oppose him with an army in the

field. For this purpose, numerous detachments of Cossacks and Bashkirs, and battalions of infantry and batteries of artillery, marched out of Orsk, Orenburg, and Uralsk, but all in vain. In spite of the most profound and inviolable secrecy observed by the Russian officers, Kutebar invariably gained, as if wafted to him by the winds across the steppe, the quickest information of all that was designed against him. If the Russians chanced to come upon the positions held only on the previous day by the rebel troops, they found nothing but the extinguished camp-fires. Inured to hardships and accustomed to the greatest deprivations, the Kirghiz fled to the inaccessible steppes of the tableland of Ust-Urt.

To give a detailed narrative of Kutebar's deeds would lead us too far from our subject. Suffice it then to say that for five long years he played his game of cutting off the enemy's communications, isolating the Europeans in their fortified places, and managing to escape every attempt to capture him. At length the Russian Government, convinced that force would be of no avail against so wily an enemy, resolved to pursue a totally different course. It made very flattering proposals to Kutebar and his subordinate chieftains, and promised to all a general amnesty. Thus diplomacy gained what arms could not accomplish. In the middle of the year 1858, Kutebar gave in his submission.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Émile Jonveaux, *Les Russes dans l'Asie Centrale* (*Revue des deux Mondes*, 1867, vol. lxxvii. pp. 973-980).

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE WAR WITH KOKÁN.

VARIOUS circumstances had, in the meantime, protracted the struggle already commenced on the Sír-Dariá. The Amír of Bokhára, Mozaffer-ed-din Khán,<sup>1</sup> aware of the difficult position of Kokán brought on by the European invasion, and encouraged by the Russians in his warlike intentions, fell on the hardly pressed neighbouring khanate, in the hope of being able to annex the richest provinces of his old rival. The condition of Kokán was favourable to his projects, as several pretenders were contesting for the throne, who seized one after another the

<sup>1</sup> Mozaffer is the son of Amír Nasr-Allah, 'the victory of faith,' who in his latter days was an extremely dissolute and cruel tyrant. Lejean describes him as a kind of Louis XI. made up of a Heliogabalus (*Revue des deux Mondes*, vol. lxi. p. 686). He punished his subjects with death for immoral acts, which he himself committed in the most barefaced manner. On the contrary, according to Vámbéry's testimony, Mozaffer is a well-intentioned man, very strict, and of irreproachable character as regards his personal conduct. He is much respected and extolled by his subjects. In other respects he adheres firmly to the political principles of his father, and, being a Mollah and a conscientious Mohammedan, he is a declared and, as Lejean states, a fanatical enemy of the unbeliever; he is also opposed to all reforms and innovations, even if their use and advantage be self-evident. He assumed the motto, 'Govern by justice;' and, at least according to Bokharian conceptions of this maxim, he has remained true to this principle. He is extremely severe towards the dignitaries of state, and punishes them with death for the smallest offence; but at the same time he is more lenient towards those in a humbler position. For this reason the people say of him, 'He destroys the elephants, but protects the mice.'

reins of the ephemeral government. One of these was Khudayar, who found, on his return from an expedition against Fort Perovsky, the gates of his capital closed against him, and one of his rivals installed as regent of the country. Powerless at the head of a weak and demoralised army, but still determined on vengeance, Khudayar turned towards Bokhára for assistance. The Amír Mozaffer, long and anxiously awaiting a pretext for interference in the affairs of Kokán, joyfully listened to his appeal, and, placing himself at the head of his army, proclaimed aloud that he would bring under subjection the whole land, even as far as the frontiers of China; and he fulfilled his promise. Mozaffer's march, in spite of the most vehement and exasperated resistance, was naught but a series of triumphs. Kokán, 'the charming city,' Táshkend, and Khojend fell successively into his hands. He then divided the conquered country into two equal parts, delivering one to Khudayar, and appointing to the other as regent a mere child, of whom he declared himself the guardian. Through this apparent moderation he was enabled to exercise unopposed a sovereignty to which he dared not openly offer even the slightest claim. The cities of Bokhára and Samarcand celebrated his return with pompous festivities, as they justly discerned in him the actual ruler of Central Asia. Amongst them he was accounted a new Taimúr, destined to subjugate China, Persia, Kábul, India, and Europe. At that time the Amír could not foresee how dearly his victories would cost him. When he made Kokán a vassal state, he undertook at the same time to protect it against the attacks of foreign powers, and thus hastened on the moment that would bring him into collision with the Russians. Simultaneously, Mozaffer's Bokharians, who for a while partially

garrisoned Kokán, took active part in the constant hostilities of the Kokánese against the Russians. For the moment, Russia could certainly do nothing, as she was fully occupied with the Crimean war; and her adversary, England, would have readily sent an auxiliary force from India to succour Kokán. Whilst Russia, however, was observing a strict neutrality towards Turán, General Perovsky displayed untiring activity, and made such skilful use of his troops that he was not only enabled to hold, during the whole period, the citadel of Ak-Mesjed, but also to seize upon the Kokánese fort of Khodja-Nisház,<sup>1</sup> whence the Khivan allies of Kokán were in the habit of annoying the Russians. Moreover, General Perovsky endeavoured to strengthen his position by selecting posts situated as favourably as possible in *échelon*, in order to secure for the future a solid basis of operations. For what had hitherto been obtained by great efforts had in reality brought but little positive advantage. Still, confined within uncultivated regions, Russia must strive her utmost to acquire possession of the rich and fertile districts lying between Fort Perovsky and the colony of Vyernoë. In fact, as soon as Russia had recovered from the disasters of the Crimean war, she set earnestly to work, and opened her operations very fortunately by the conquest of the khanate of Kokán, where proportionately there prevailed the least social order, the weakest government, and the greatest aversion to war.

In the first place, in 1859, the Russians took the fortress of Chulák-Kurgán and destroyed it, and in 1861 they took the enemy's fort of Yáni-Kurgán on the Sír-Dariá. For the year 1863, the invasion of Kokán was planned from two points, and with the line of the Sír-

<sup>1</sup> Situated on the Duván-Dariá.

Dariá as a basis. These points were the Kirghiz territory and Ak-Mesjed. One corps was to operate against Aulie-átá, the other corps against Hazrét-i-Turkestán.<sup>1</sup> Both these places were three hundred English miles apart. The outbreak of the Polish insurrection and the apprehension of a war with Western Europe caused this plan to be deferred. It was, however, carried out in the following year.

From the year 1864 the operations began to assume larger dimensions. Slowly but securely the Russians advanced on a line parallel to the Sír-Dariá, remaining in constant communication with the flotilla of steamers which they had fitted out on the Sír-Dariá. The extremely well-situated series of forts, which the Kokánese had erected along the mountain chain of the Kará-Táu and the Boroldái-Táu for the purpose of protecting their frontiers from foreign aggression, fell successively into the hands of the Russians. But this success was not sufficient, as the country was unable to furnish provisions and forage enough for their wants; also the forts were erected too near to the borders of the deserts. Consequently they must still press onwards. In the month of June 1864, they reached the two points of their destination—namely, Hazrét-i-Turkestán, the most important bulwark on the east of Kokán, and Aulie-átá, situated on the road leading from Turkestán to Kúlja. In July and August the communication between them was established. And in this manner Russia gained a new frontier line several hundred English miles further southwards than her former line; in fact, she gained a great portion of the territory of Kokán. That was a great result in one campaign, but Russia obtained still more.

<sup>1</sup> A town with 1,000 houses.

Soon after the taking of Turkestán and Aulie-átá, the Kokánese were too disheartened to undertake an expedition against the enemy. They began, however, to construct strong fortifications near Chemkend (to the south of Hazrét-i-Turkestán, in the interior of the country, about fifteen German miles distant from the frontier, and on the flank of the road between Turkestán and Aulie-átá), with the intention of making this a basis for further attempts. The Russians could not permit such a position on their flank, especially as their subjects, the Kirghiz, would be continually exposed to predatory incursions. For this reason the new Russian Commander-in-Chief, Major-General Chernyaev, determined, after having learned that the Kokánese had only left ten thousand men in garrison at Chemkend, quickly to take possession of that city. In the first two weeks of September, 1864, troops advanced from two points on Chemkend, and concentrated there on the 19th of September. On the evening of that day a battery of four guns was erected, to which the Kokánese replied with a fire from seven guns and two mortars, whereupon the Russian commandant approached nearer with a second battery of six guns and four mortars. The unusual hardness of the ground and a sally of the enemy prevented the completion of this battery during the night of the 21st and 22nd of September. The Kokánese, encouraged by the dilatoriness of the siege operations, assumed the offensive, opened some trenches, pushed forward some batteries, and threw out swarms of skirmishers—in fact, in such a manner that it led to the conclusion that an experienced foreign officer was there to direct them. Lieutenant-Colonel Lerche, however, took advantage of the audacity of the Kokánese to attack their infantry, for which purpose



he advanced with four Russian companies, two guns of position, and other pieces of artillery. In spite of the heavy fire from the town and the citadel, he soon drove the Kokánese infantry back into the fortress, the gates of which were defended at the point of the bayonet. During this engagement General Chernyaev approached the citadel, and took it by surprise, his troops entering the city by creeping in single file along an aqueduct. In the space of an hour the Russians became masters of the city, and also of the citadel, which was perched on the top of an almost inaccessible height, notwithstanding that it was defended by 10,000 men, and well provided with artillery and all sorts of munitions. Amongst the trophies were four standards and twenty-four sets of colours, twenty-four guns, including a rifled cannon, eight mortars of large calibre, a number of culverins and wall-pieces, &c. How strong the Russians were in this engagement has not been made known; it was only mentioned that they had amongst their artillery two light batteries similar to those which the Prussians had in use during the Danish war.<sup>1</sup>

The result of this splendid affair was to insure the complete safety of the Russian line from Ak-Mesjed to Aulie-átá, and consequently to expose the chief cities of the khanate, Táshkend, Khojend, and even the capital itself, to a hostile attack. In short, with Chemkend, the Russians possessed the key to one of the richest districts of Kokán. Now was the time to reap the rich harvest of so many years' hard labour, and to connect, by means of the annexation of a part of the Uzbek territory, the two strategical lines, resting on the right upon the fortresses on the Sír-Dariá, and on the left on Vyernoë, on the river Almáty.

<sup>1</sup> *Neue Preussische Zeitung* of the 29th January, 1865.

The intelligence of the Russian advance upon Kokán awoke considerable uneasiness in England. She considered, and certainly not without some foundation, that the independence of the khanates in Central Asia was an indispensable guarantee for the safety of her possessions in India. A circular of the Chancellor of the Russian Empire, Prince Gorchakov, dated St. Petersburg, November 9 (21), 1864, appeased in the meanwhile the agitation of the English. For this despatch referred in particular to the imperious necessity for this extension of territory ; but at the same time it declared that the frontiers of Russia would not in future be extended any further.

This circular note delineates so clearly and so precisely the motives and the efforts of the Imperial Russian policy in Asia, and gives so deep an insight into the condition of these affairs, that we cannot refrain from laying before our readers the contents of this memorable despatch.

‘The position of Russia in Central Asia is that of all civilised states which are brought into contact with half-savage nomad populations, possessing no fixed social organisation.

‘In such cases it always happens that the more civilised state is forced, in the interest of the security of its frontier and its commercial relations, to exercise a certain ascendancy over those whom their turbulent and unsettled character makes most undesirable neighbours.

‘First, there are raids and acts of pillage to be put down. To put a stop to them, the tribes on the frontier have to be reduced to a state of more or less perfect submission. This result once attained, these tribes take to more peaceful habits, but are in their turn exposed to the attacks of the more distant tribes.’

‘The State is bound to defend them against these depredations, and to punish those who commit them. Hence the necessity of distant, costly, and periodically recurring expeditions against an enemy whom his social organisation makes it impossible to seize. If, the robbers once punished, the expedition is withdrawn, the lesson is soon forgotten; its withdrawal is put down to weakness. It is a peculiarity of Asiatics to respect nothing but visible and palpable force; the moral force of reason and of the interests of civilisation has as yet no hold upon them. The work has then always to be done over again from the beginning.

‘In order to put a stop to this state of permanent disorder, fortified posts are established in the midst of these hostile tribes, and an influence is brought to bear upon them which reduces them by degrees to a state of more or less forced submission. But soon beyond this second line other still more distant tribes come in their turn to threaten the same dangers, and necessitate the same measures of repression. The State thus finds itself forced to choose one of two alternatives—either to give up this endless labour, and to abandon its frontier to perpetual disturbance, rendering all prosperity, all security, all civilisation an impossibility, or, on the other hand, to plunge deeper and deeper into barbarous countries, where the difficulties and expenses increase with every step in advance.

‘Such has been the fate of every country which has found itself in a similar position. The United States in America, France in Algeria, Holland in her colonies, England in India—all have been irresistibly forced, less by ambition than by imperious necessity, into this onward march, where the greatest difficulty is to know where to stop.

‘Such, too, have been the reasons which have led the Imperial Government to take up at first a position resting on one side on the Syr-Daria, on the other on the lake of Issyk-Kaul, and to strengthen these two lines by advanced forts, which, little by little, have crept on into the heart of those distant regions, without, however, succeeding in establishing on the other side of our frontiers that tranquillity which is indispensable for their security.

‘The explanation of this unsettled state of things is to be found, first, in the fact that between the extreme points of this double line there is an immense unoccupied space, where all attempts at colonisation or caravan trade are paralysed by the inroads of the robber tribes; and, in the second place, in the perpetual fluctuations of the political condition of those countries, where Turkestan and Khokand, sometimes united, sometimes at variance, always at war either with one another or with Bokhara, presented no chance of settled relations, or of any regular transactions whatever.

‘The Imperial Government thus found itself, in spite of all its efforts, in the dilemma we have above alluded to—that is to say, compelled either to permit the continuance of a state of permanent disorder, paralysing to all security and progress, or to condemn itself to costly and distant expeditions, leading to no practical result, and with the work always to be done anew; or, lastly, to enter upon the undefined path of conquest and annexation which has given to England the empire of India, by attempting the subjugation by armed force, one after another, of the small independent states whose habits of pillage and turbulence and whose perpetual revolts leave their neighbours neither peace nor repose.

‘Neither of these alternative courses was in accord-

ance with the object of our august master's policy, which consists not in extending beyond all reasonable bounds the regions under his sceptre, but in giving a solid basis to his rule, in guaranteeing their security, and in developing their social organisation, their commerce, their well-being, and their civilisation.

‘Our task was, therefore, to discover a system adapted to the attainment of this threefold object.

‘The following principles have, in consequence, been laid down :—

‘1. It has been judged to be indispensable that our two fortified frontier lines—one extending from China to the lake of Issyk-Kaul, the other from the Sea of Aral along the Syr-Daria—should be united by fortified points, so that all our posts should be in a position of mutual support, leaving no gap through which the nomad tribes might make their inroads and depredations with impunity.

‘2. It was essential that the line of our advanced forts thus completed should be situated in a country fertile enough not only to insure their supplies, but also to facilitate the regular colonisation, which alone can prepare a future of stability and prosperity for the occupied country by gaining over the neighbouring populations to civilised life.

‘3, and lastly. It was urgent to lay down this line definitively, so as to escape the danger of being carried away, as is almost inevitable, by a series of repressive measures and reprisals into an unlimited extension of territory.

‘To attain this end, a system had to be established which should depend not only on reason, which may be elastic, but on geographical and political conditions which are fixed and permanent.

‘This system was suggested to us by a very simple

fact, the result of long experience—namely, that the nomad tribes, which can neither be seized nor punished nor effectually kept in order, are our most inconvenient neighbours; while, on the other hand, agricultural and commercial populations attached to the soil, and possessing a more advanced social organisation, offer us every chance of gaining neighbours with whom there is a possibility of entering into relations.

‘Consequently our frontier line ought to swallow up the former, and stop short at the limit of the latter.

‘These three principles supply a clear, natural, and logical explanation of our last military operations in Central Asia. In fact, our original frontier line, extending along the Syr-Daria to Fort Perovsky on one side, and on the other to the Lake Issyk-Kaul, had the drawback of being almost on the verge of the desert. It was broken by a wide gap between the two extreme points; it did not offer sufficient resources to our troops, and left unsettled tribes over the border, with which any settled arrangement became impossible.

‘In spite of our unwillingness to extend our frontier, these motives had been powerful enough to induce the Imperial Government to establish this line between Lake Issyk-Kaul and the Syr-Daria by fortifying the town of Tchemkend lately occupied by us. By the adoption of this line we obtain a double result. In the first place, the country it takes in is fertile, well wooded, and watered by numerous watercourses; it is partly inhabited by various Kirghiz tribes which have already accepted our rule; it consequently offers favourable conditions for colonisation and the supply of provisions to our garrisons. In the second place, it puts us in the immediate neighbourhood of the agricultural and commercial populations

of Kokand. We find ourselves in presence of a more solid and compact, less unsettled, and better organised social state, fixing for us, with geographical precision, the limit up to which we are bound to advance, and at which we must halt, because, while, on the one hand, any further extension of our rule, meeting, as it would, no longer with unstable communities, such as the nomad tribes, but with more regularly constituted states, would entail considerable exertions, and would draw us on from annexation to annexation with unforeseen complications; on the other, with such states for our future neighbours, their backward civilisation, and the instability of their political condition, do not shut us out from the hope that the day may come when regular relations may, to the advantage of both parties, take the place of the permanent troubles which have up to the present moment paralysed all progress in those countries.

‘Such are the interests which inspire the policy of our august master in Central Asia.

‘It is needless for me to lay stress upon the interest which Russia evidently has not to increase her territory, and, above all, to avoid raising complications on her frontiers, which can but delay and paralyse her domestic development.

‘The programme which I have just traced is in accordance with these views.

‘Very frequently of late years the civilisation of these countries, which are her neighbours on the continent of Asia, has been assigned to Russia as her special mission.

‘No agent has been found more apt for the progress of civilisation than commercial relations. Their development requires everywhere order and stability; but in Asia it demands a complete transformation of the habits

of the people. The first thing to be taught to the populations of Asia is, that they will gain more in favouring and protecting the caravan trade than in robbing them. These elementary ideas can only be accepted by the public where one exists: that is to say, where there is some organised form of society, and a government to direct and represent it.

‘We are accomplishing the first part of our task in carrying our frontier to the limit where the indispensable conditions are to be found.

‘The second we shall accomplish in making every effort henceforward to prove to our neighbouring States, by a system of firmness in the repression of their misdeeds, combined with moderation and justice in the use of our strength, and respect for their independence, that Russia is not their enemy, that she entertains towards them no ideas of conquest, and that peaceful and commercial relations with her are more profitable than disorder, pillage, reprisals, and a permanent state of war.

‘The Imperial Cabinet, in assuming this task, takes as its guide the interests of Russia. But it believes that, at the same time, it is promoting the interests of humanity and civilisation. It has a right to expect that the line of conduct it pursues, and the principles which guide it, will meet with a just and candid appreciation.’

(Signed)

‘GORTCHAKOW.’

No sooner was this circular-note despatched to all the foreign courts than hostilities recommenced in a more determined manner than ever. For the Kokánese, exasperated by the loss of the fortresses of Turkestán and Chemkend, put forth all their power to attack the



Russians, and endeavoured to their utmost to regain possession of these places. An important victory which they obtained at the end of the year 1864 permitted them actually to buoy up their hopes for a short time; but soon events took a different turn. For the Amír of Bokhára invaded Kokán and seized upon the city of Khojend and several other places. The Russians took advantage of this diversion to act on the offensive.

In the neighbourhood of Táshkend, on May 9, 1865, they attacked the Kokánese army, which was commanded by Alim-Kúl, the regent of the country during the minority of the Sultán. This time the Russians gained a splendid victory; Alim-Kúl fell; and it seemed probable that General Chernyaev, who had succeeded General Perovsky in the command, would now have marched upon the city. But five weeks were allowed to elapse before the Russians made the attempt; for they had reason to suppose that the people would make friendly advances towards them. But the inhabitants of Táshkend were by far too zealous Mussulmans to throw themselves willingly under the yoke of the unbelievers. They preferred rather to implore the aid of the Amír of Bokhára, who was still occupying Khojend. But General Chernyaev, as soon as apprised of this, took the initiative of the Amír, surrounded the fortress, and commenced the bombardment during the night of June 15, 1865.

Thus was the fate of Kokán sealed. Even if the occupation of Táshkend, which was taken after a very obstinate resistance, were only intended to be provisional, it would have been extremely unwise on the part of Russia to abandon a position that placed in her hands the most important lines of communication throughout Central Asia, as well as the whole commerce of Khiva and Bokhára.

Táshkend,<sup>1</sup> with a population of perhaps 300,000, is the centre of commerce and Islamism, covers an area of nearly twelve versts, and lies literally in a forest of fruit trees. The town is irregularly built, and has an Oriental appearance. The inhabitants are peaceably inclined, and fond of commercial speculations. Living is extremely cheap. The town, even at that time a place of considerable traffic, might some future day become the chief emporium of Central Asia; for here assemble the merchants and commercial agents from the whole of Asia, not excepting the most distant parts of India. The mart of Táshkend is of considerable importance for the sale of Russian manufactures.

Although the annexation of the province and the establishment of a Russian administration in a city containing more than 100,000 Mussulman inhabitants did not in the beginning seem necessary, yet it was indispensable to place Táshkend in security against the arbitrariness and pillage of the Kháns of Kokán and the Amírs of Bokhára. Russian troops therefore remained in Táshkend, to show clearly to the Asiatic rulers that Russian protection was strong and lasting, at the same time also to maintain and to strengthen the influence of Russia in these countries. The Russian governor promised to guarantee to the inhabitants self-government under Russian supremacy, and free exercise of their religion; with these con-

<sup>1</sup> Táshkend ('the stone city') contains only 80,000 inhabitants according to Klöden (*Handbuch der Erdkunde*, vol. iii. p. 192). It is distant  $17\frac{1}{2}$  German miles from Kokán, four German miles in circumference, and situated in a gorge. It is surrounded by a mud wall; the streets are narrow, and deep in mire. There are 270 *maals*, 310 mosques, partly in ruins, 17 colleges, 11 baths, 15 bazaars filled with shops, and 11,000 mud cottages. The waters of two rivulets are distributed through the city by many canals, which also serve as a water-power for mills of various kinds.

ditions they expressed themselves completely satisfied, especially as the influential classes of the citizens were allowed still to retain their power.

After the occupation of Táshkend, General Krzhizhanovsky, aide-de-camp to the governor of Orenburg, came to Kokán in August 1865. He convoked the elders of the city and the priesthood, and invited them to construct a government for the administration of their internal affairs, whereupon they offered him bread and salt upon a silver dish, and presented to him an address, in which they solicited the permission of becoming subjects of the 'White Czar.' 'One sea,' they said, 'cannot contain two seas; two kingdoms cannot subsist in one. Wherefore, we ask for the union of our country with Russia, so that our country may belong to her in like manner as the other provinces belong to the empire.' Consequently Táshkend was admitted into the privilege of becoming subjects of the Russian Empire. The Russians promised to protect the city with their troops, to observe respect towards their manners and customs, and to confirm the native dignitaries in their appointments.

Yet the security of Táshkend demanded the further conquest of the country about the Chirtchik, a river falling into the Sír-Dariá, south of this city, especially as the Russians were persisting in their plan of constructing fortified places about that country. Already small forts had been erected, such as Uch-Kajuk, Din-Kurgán,<sup>1</sup> Chúlek, Ak-Mesjed (Fort Perovsky), Kumysh-Kurgán, Chim-Kurgán, Kosh-Kurgán (the three last-named lie below Fort Perovsky), and Yáni-Kurgán,<sup>2</sup> formerly only strongholds,

<sup>1</sup> In 1860 erected by the Kokánese.

<sup>2</sup> In 1857 erected by the Kokánese; this fort as well as Din-Kurgán as taken by the Russians in 1861.

which, now that they are in the hands of the Russians, afforded to the nomad tribes a protection which they had long needed.<sup>1</sup>

Between Táshkend, Turkestán, and Fort Perovsky, there has been established a postal communication, which is carried on with safety and regularity. The Kirghiz, who dwell in this country, have behaved well and extremely peaceably towards the Russian Government, and have regularly paid their tribute.

Already in the following year, on August 30, 1866, the Russians laid the foundation-stone of a church in Táshkend,<sup>2</sup> and on this occasion arranged a public festival, which was held in the presence of General Krzhizbanovsky and in the midst of an assemblage of more than 30,000 Sarts and Kirghiz.<sup>3</sup>

The newly-conquered district was formed by an imperial decree into the province of 'Turkestán'—a designation which on account of its ambiguity excited in England some degree of irritation; for it might imply the whole of Central Asia just as well as the districts lying between the Sea of Aral and the Lake of Issik-Kúl, and between the Kirghiz-Steppe and the Sír-Dariá. The Russians explained, however, this designation to be in accordance with the customs of the East, where they were in the habit of calling a district after the name of the chief town, which in this case is the city of Turkestán.

<sup>1</sup> Admiral Butakov's Voyages on the Jaxartes (*Globus*, 1865, vol. viii. p. 114).

<sup>2</sup> The *Journal de St.-Petersbourg* of November 21 and December 3, 1865, gives from the pen of the Governor-General of Orenburg instructive accounts of the city of Táshkend, the country, the extremely entangled political relations in the Central Asian Khanates, and also the most recent operations of war.

<sup>3</sup> *Deutsche Petersburger Zeitung* of October 22 and November 3, 1866.

## CHAPTER IX.

## EVENTS PREVIOUS TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKESTÁN.

THE first victories of the Russians in Kokán did not strike great terror into the heart of the Amír Mozaffer ; on the contrary, they afforded him the wished-for opportunity of enhancing his *prestige* in Turkestán by setting himself up as the champion of the holy cause of Islamism, which had become threatened by the ‘unbelievers.’ After having first prudently caused his ward, the young Khán of Kokán, to be delivered over to him as a prisoner, he sent an auxiliary force to the aid of Táshkend, which did not, however, prevent that city from falling into the hands of the Russians. But the capture of Táshkend entirely frustrated the designs of the ambitious Mozaffer on Kokán, as that khanate now only nominally existed, and, besides, Khudayer Khán was almost wholly restricted to his capital.

Mozaffer, when he became the guardian of the Khán of Kokán during his minority, also undertook the obligation of upholding the cause of the nationality of the Uzbeks, and consequently equipped a strong corps against the Russians. For this purpose he had succeeded through the English in obtaining some excellent rifled field-pieces and some Minié rifles ; with the latter he armed his regular infantry, *the Sarbázes*, and also a portion of his mounted riflemen. He then became master of Khojend,<sup>1</sup> and sent an insolent

<sup>1</sup> The ‘*Ἀλεξάνδρεια Ἐσχαίη*’ founded by Alexander the Great was probably situated in the position of the present Khojend.

and imperious summons to the Russian General to evacuate the conquered territory, threatening, in case of non-compliance therewith, to kindle a religious war. He confiscated the property of the Russian merchants in Bokhára, for which the Russians retaliated by reprisals on the property of the merchants of Bokhára and of Kábul then resident in Russian territory—a measure, however, which was as quickly relinquished as it was adopted.

Meanwhile Mozaffer's courage partly failed him to cross over the Sír-Dariá, and partly he was prevented from so doing by the rebellion which had broken out at Shahr-i-Sabz, in the south-east of Bokhára. In this dilemma he had recourse to diplomatic negotiations, and sent Khodja-Nedjm-eddin on a mission to St. Petersburg to notify, though certainly rather late, to the Czar his ascension to the throne of Bokhára, and to take this opportunity of amicably settling the pending difficulties.

Nedjm-eddin was not the first Bokharian diplomatist who had appeared in St. Petersburg. For in former days Nasr-ullah-Khán had sent a mission to Russia, but showed on that occasion a feeling of contempt, peculiar to Oriental courts when negotiating with Christian powers, by entrusting it to a very subordinate official. As Russia had at that time differences with China, she pretended not to observe this affront, and treated the Bokharian *Mehrem*, 'door-keeper,' with more civility than could have under other circumstances been expected. But now, in 1865, things were different; so that on his arrival at Orenburg Nedjm-eddin was informed by the Russian Governor-General of that province, the General Krzhizhanovsky, that it was quite unnecessary to proceed farther on his journey, because, as governor, he was fully empowered by

his august master to treat and regulate all affairs connected with Central Asia.

As soon as the Amír heard this, he complained to General Chernyaev, the Russian Commander-in-Chief in Turkestán, that his embassy to the Czar had been unduly detained. He professed to have discontinued all opposition to Russian policy in Bokhára, and to have withdrawn himself within his residence; he now requested on his own part to receive a Russian embassy to facilitate measures for rendering the intercourse across the frontiers more active. General Chernyaev, in full reliance on the honourable intentions of the Amír, despatched one of the most prominent representatives of science, the distinguished astronomer, Councillor of State von Struve,<sup>1</sup> who was just at that time engaged in a scientific mission in Turkestán. He was accompanied by Lieutenant-Colonel Tatarinov of the Mining Engineers, and two other officers, the Cavalry Captain Glukhovsky<sup>2</sup> and Ensign Kolesnikov of the Topographical Corps. Immediately after their arrival, the Amír ordered the two last-named officers to be thrown into prison even without allowing them into his presence. He also ordered all the Russian merchants on whom he could lay his hands to be imprisoned.

Such an outrage General Chernyaev could and would not tolerate, but insisted upon the unconditional release of these prisoners. On January 30 (February 11), 1866, he

<sup>1</sup> According to some reports it was not the Hofrath and astronomer Von Struve, but a Colonel Struve, who was entrusted with this mission.

<sup>2</sup> He published a very valuable report of his journey to Bokhára and his captivity there. The portion relating to geography is very important, and appeared in a translation in French under the title: *Captivité en Boucharie par M. Gloukhovsky (données géographiques), traduit par M. P. Woelkel avec notes par M. de Khanikoff*, in the September number of the *Paris Bulletin de la Société de Géographie* in the year 1868, pp. 265-296.

advanced with fourteen companies of infantry, six squadrons of Cossacks, and fourteen field-pieces, altogether about 2,000 men strong, and crossed the Sír-Dariá<sup>1</sup> with the declared intention of compelling the Amír, in case of necessity, to set free the prisoners, and of marching direct against Samarcand.<sup>2</sup>

The Russians, after seven forced marches through the waterless desert, reached Djizzak on February 5 (17), 1866, but were soon convinced that their force was numerically too small. Besides this, Chernyaev, otherwise an able officer, suffered himself, when only distant twelve or fifteen German miles from Samarcand, to be kept in suspense by deceitful promises. It was rumoured that an alliance had been formed between Russia and the Amír, in which it had been agreed to transfer to Russia 700 (?) villages and towns belonging to Kokán. But Russia desired further to have the permission to establish two military cantonments, whereupon the Amír became alarmed, and sought counsel of his relative, the sovereign of Kábul. At last Mozaffer entreated the Russian General to suspend hostilities and to make a retreat, promising at the same time the immediate release of the imprisoned members of the Russian embassy.

According to some sources of information, Chernyaev gave entire credence to these fair words, as he notified to the Amír that he would make a halt on the Sír-Dariá until the promise was fulfilled. Some assert that this was not the case. One thing is, however, certain, that he retreated; but this may be chiefly ascribed to the want

<sup>1</sup> According to reports spread at that time, one Russian column was said to have reached Balkh, and another to be on the march to Kandáhar—which was quite impossible, for Bokhára must have been first entirely subdued.

<sup>2</sup> Lejean, *La Russie et l'Angleterre dans l'Asie Centrale* (*Revue des deux Mondes*, 1867, pp. 693-696).



of sufficient provisions in the almost impassable desert. He had only to choose between two alternatives—namely, either to seize Djizzak by a *coup de main*, and then advance upon Samarcand, which was quite impossible with so small a force, or to make a retreat. Very unwillingly he resolved on the latter alternative, which brought the whole operation to a sad end. During his retreat, according to some accounts, the Amír was able to inflict upon him some loss.

It is universally admitted that the retreat was conducted in the greatest order; and although the Russians were surrounded on every side by swarms of Bokharians, yet the loss was too inconsiderable to accord with the bombastic reports of victory that were at that time trumpeted forth by the Bokharians throughout the Islamite world.<sup>1</sup> It is only positively known that some guns from the small fort of Niazbek opened fire upon a Russian detachment as it was approaching the river Chirtchik, and that simultaneously a numerous body of troops advanced from Táshkend and attacked the Russians. Notwithstanding that this attack was quite unexpected, the Kokánese were beaten and dispersed, in consequence of which the garrison of Niazbek marched out, leaving 370 prisoners, six pieces of heavy ordnance, and a quantity of small arms in the hands of the Russians, whose loss on this occasion was seven soldiers slightly wounded, and three contused.

Chernyaev<sup>2</sup> was, however, replaced by the young,

<sup>1</sup> Vámbéry, *The Rivalry between Russia and England in Central Asia* (*Unsere Zeit*, 1867, ii. p. 580).

<sup>2</sup> Chernyaev began his service in the Guards. He then passed through the Military Academy, and was attached to the Army Corps, serving on the Danube as an officer of the *État-Major-Général*. Afterwards he was amongst the defenders of Sebastopol, and then took part in the war which resulted in the complete subjugation of the Caucasus. In 1862 he was

highly-gifted, and energetic Major-General Dimitri Ilyitch Romanovsky.<sup>1</sup> The disastrous retreat of the Russians

appointed chief of the staff to the Orenburg Army Corps, and in 1864 he received the order to place himself at the head of a small detachment for the purpose of uniting the Siberian frontier-line with that of Orenburg: we saw how splendidly he carried out this difficult task. For his victories he received in the course of two years a sword of honour set with brilliants, the third class of the Order of St. George, and the first class of the Orders of Stanislas and of St. Anne. He quitted the service after his recall from the *Sir-Dariá*, selected Moscow as his place of residence, and, as he had no private fortune, he endeavoured to gain a livelihood as a notary. On November 28, 1867, the conqueror of Tashkend passed the requisite examination to enable him to practise as a public notary in the district of Moscow; it is said that the caution-money, amounting to 10,000 roubles, which had to be deposited on this occasion, was guaranteed by a kind-hearted capitalist. But Chernyaev, in consequence of suggestions from influential persons, left his position as notary in Moscow, and in October 1868 solicited a concession to establish a line of steamers between Tver and Rybinsk. So at least it was reported in the newspapers of that period.

<sup>1</sup> Romanovsky, a nobleman of Tver, was born in the year 1825, and received his first education in the principal Engineer School at St. Petersburg. In the year 1842 he was appointed ensign (a probationer) in the Sappers and Miners, promoted in 1843 to a sub-lieutenancy, and in the following year to a lieutenancy; in 1846 he went to the Caucasus, where we find him again as staff-captain in Prince Chernychek's regiment. After having been decorated for bravery in 1848 with the order of St. Anne, third class, and the Vladimir, fourth class, he entered the Staff Corps Academy, from which he passed out one of the first of his year with the distinction of a prize medal. He was then advanced to the rank of captain in the *État-Major-Général*, but had the misfortune, in consequence of a duel, which is very severely punished in Russia, to be reduced to the ranks. He was put into a regiment then employed in active service against the Turks, where he distinguished himself so highly by his bravery that he was restored to his former grade. Soon afterwards he was presented with a sword of honour for the part he took in the capture of Kars. In the year 1856 he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and appointed chief of the *État-Major-Général* attached to the army posted in the Asiatic provinces. In the year 1859 he became colonel, and in 1862 undertook the editing of the military intelligence in the *Invalide Russe*, which had hitherto been a much-neglected channel of communication for the Ministry of War; he so thoroughly understood the art of improving that paper that the number of subscribers was increased

encouraged the Bokharians. Numerous encounters took place on the right bank of the Sír-Dariá. On April 5, 1866, Romanovsky attacked in the direction of Khojend a large body of Bokharian cavalry, defeated them, and pursued them for a distance of twenty versts. He captured their guns as well as the booty they were carrying off, namely about 14,000 sheep, and then dispersed them in all directions. However mildly and pacifically Russia was disposed towards the populations bordering on Turkestán, yet it was impossible, with their restless and unruly character, to avoid having recourse to arms in order to protect their own subjects from inroads and depredations. General Romanovsky therefore ordered two steamers, the 'Perovsky' and the 'Sír-Dariá,' stored with ten days' provisions, to proceed from the Sea of Aral up the Sír-Dariá as far as Chináz, when he received intimation on May 18 that Mozaffer-Khán was on the march, who had in the meanwhile employed his time in raising his army to 40,000 men. In fact, he now stood at the head of 5,000 well-armed Bokharians and about 35,000 Kirghiz, with 21 guns, entertaining the firm resolve to recapture Táshkend.

Although Romanovsky had only 14 companies of infantry, 5 sotnias of Cossacks, 20 guns, and 8 rocket-stands at his disposition, he determined nevertheless to march against his twelve times stronger enemy on the road to Samarcand.

tenfold in the space of one year. But he was obliged on account of his declining health to relinquish his editorial duties towards the end of the year 1864. He then made a tour through Germany, France, and Italy, to study foreign armies, and on his return home was entrusted with special inspections by the Ministry of War. In the year 1865, being in the meanwhile promoted to the grade of major-general, he proceeded on service to Turkestán.

On May 19 the Russians reached the village of Rávát, about seventy-five miles distant from Táshkend. During the march the heat was extremely oppressive, reaching 40 Réaumur; they were, notwithstanding, continually engaged in skirmishes with the enemy's cavalry, and even accomplished in one day's march more than thirty versts, four and a half German miles. In the meanwhile the main body of the enemy had taken up a position, having a front of two and a half miles in extent, on the plain of Yedshar (Irdshar). It was here that on May 8 (20), 1866, a decisive battle was fought.

On the morning of May 20, the Bokharian cavalry, confident of their numerical superiority and of their excellent English arms, showed themselves in small bodies in front of the Russian squadrons, and opened the engagement by a succession of unimportant skirmishes, firmly convinced that they could make prisoners of the small Russian force opposed to them. Towards noon first commenced the artillery fire, which continued without intermission to the end of the battle. Soon afterwards Captain Abramov, with six companies of infantry and eight field-pieces, advanced upon the village of Yedshar, and was assailed during his march with great impetuosity in front and flank by the enemy's cavalry. From the right wing Lieutenant-Colonel von Pistolkors pushed forward with the Cossacks, the rocket battery, and six guns. A support followed under Major Pistchemuka, which consisted of three companies of riflemen and half a battery of artillery. The baggage was protected by four companies of infantry and two guns under Lieutenant-Colonel Foritsky. The latter officer had a difficult task. Attacked on all sides, he managed to defend himself with calmness and presence of mind, and even without retarding for a moment his onward

march. Notwithstanding that the movement of this column was checked by the necessity of protecting the baggage, as well as by the constant engagements with the enemy, on which occasions the artillery under command of Lieutenant-Colonel von Silversvan took a very distinguished part, still the Russians advanced, but so slowly that they did not reach till five o'clock in the afternoon the position occupied by the Amír's artillery.

The Amír then opened a murderous fire, to which the light field-pieces of the Russians replied with success. After the lapse of an hour, when irresolution in the enemy's ranks was first perceived, Romanovsky made an advance with all his troops upon the Amír's entrenchments, and then ordered a general attack. Captain Abramov stormed with great bravery the Bokharian entrenchments. The enemy's artillerymen were killed at their guns by a charge of bayonets; six Russian field-pieces were dragged into position in the entrenchments, and directed against the disheartened and decimated Bokharians.

Pistolcors charged with his Cossacks the enemy's cavalry, amongst whom the rockets produced great confusion; the artillery advanced at a gallop and shot down with grape-shot masses of the enemy. Towards the end of the battle there arrived, just at the right moment, a column under Kraevsky, which had marched out of Kirutshi. It formed up on the right bank of the Sírdariá, and then sent from its rifled guns some well-directed shot into the enemy's rear. This decided the fate of the day. The Uzbek army, only two hours before flushed with the hope of victory, became panic-stricken at the awful havoc made in their ranks by the Russian artillery, and sought safety in flight, without even pausing upon the

defence of their two camps that were pitched in *échelon* on the road facing the south.

Mozaffer himself fled with 1,000 Sarbázes and two guns to Djizzak. The enemy's camp, where the meals were cooking, the tea was boiling, and the *Kaliune* 'pipes' were in readiness for the Begs, was captured in a moment, and the fugitives were pursued till night came on. On the following day, the Russians seized upon the Amír's own encampment, together with his magnificent tent, as well as a park of artillery, besides magazines of powder and a stock of provisions; consequently a plentiful supply of warlike materials fell into the hands of the conquerors. The enemy's loss was computed at more than 1,000 men, and that of the Russians incomparably less; it was said only some dozens of wounded. This was the battle of Yedshar, which decided, as it were, the fate of half of Turkestan,<sup>1</sup> and caused Major-General Romanovsky to be decorated with the Order of St. George.

The Russians could have at that time marched direct against Samarcand and Bokhára, but they contented themselves with the capture of Náu on May 26. It is a small fortress on the road leading from Bokhára to Kokán, which in the space of two days they thoroughly armed and provisioned. By this skilful manœuvre they cut off all communication between the two khanates, and prevented Mozaffer from affording succour to the places on the right bank of the Sír-Dariá.

From this fortress it was easy to seize on Khojend, one of the most important cities of Turán as regards commerce and its value in a strategical point of view, for it may be considered the key to the valley of Turkestan.

<sup>1</sup> *The Campaigns in Turkestan (Ueber Land und Meer*, vol. xvi. pp. 734, 735).

This city, although belonging to Kokán, was occupied by a strong Bokharian garrison under the command of a relative of the Amír Mozaffer, and was surrounded by a well-armed double wall, which was left incomplete at one spot, where the bed of the river Sír-Dariá formed a natural defence.

On May 29 the Russians appeared before the city in two corps, of which one took up a position, five versts distant, on the road from Bokhára, and the other on the right bank of the Sír-Dariá. The inhabitants had, in the meanwhile, adopted every measure for defence; they had inundated the adjacent country, felled trees and cut down bushes to form abattis, and driven back into the city the people living within its precincts. The party sent by Romanovsky to hold a parley were received with musket-shot. After a reconnoissance which occupied the whole day of the 30th, the general ordered the siege of the city to commence. He cut off at once all communication with Kokán. On the 1st of June the Russians opened a heavy fire from two mortars and eighteen field-pieces, which caused considerable damage to the city. On the following morning a deputation of Kokánese merchants waited on the general to offer a surrender. Hostilities then ceased whilst the deputation was returning to the city; but, during their absence, the fanatical war party had gained the ascendancy, and again received the Russian *parlementaires* with musketry fire. Thereupon Romanovsky recommenced the bombardment, which was sustained with great vigour till June 5, when at break of day he formed his storming columns, which he directed to move against the opening in the wall above described. In rear of these columns he posted his reserves under Major Nazarov.

The Russians, well masked by the ruggedness of the ground, approached within fifty klafters of the city, brought up quickly some guns into position, which soon silenced the fire of the besieged, and disabled their barbette battery. At three o'clock the breach was wide enough to permit the infantry company of the gallant Captain Baranov to apply the scaling-ladders and to mount up the wall amidst shouts of hurrah. The second inner wall was also scaled; but still the conflict was not ended. The inhabitants defended themselves from house to house with extraordinary courage, but at last they could not withstand the Russian arms. After a siege of seven days, on June 6, the city of Khojend surrendered at discretion. The enemy's loss in killed and wounded was estimated at 2,500 men.<sup>1</sup> In this affair, however, the Russians sustained only a loss of from 100 to 150 killed and wounded.

When Khojend fell, the most important places in Kokán were in the hands of the Russians. The mock-sovereign, Khudayer Khán, to whom Mozaffer had resigned a great part of Kokán, sat helpless and inactive in the still unconquered portion of his territory, after having in vain endeavoured to stir up Bokhára, Khiva, and the Afgháns of Turkestan to a religious war against Russia. Foreseeing that this portion of Kokán must eventually fall to their lot, the Russians turned the tide of war chiefly against Bokhára, especially as the Amír Mozaffer Khán was the most energetic representative of Uzbek tenacity. His ill-success had not yet humbled him. When he was obliged to withdraw his army to Samarcand, he deemed it prudent to send back to Táshkend—and it is reported

<sup>1</sup> Lejean, *La Russie et l'Angleterre dans l'Asie Centrale* (*Revue des deux Mondes*, 1867, vol. lxi. pp. 699-701).



with rich presents—the Russian envoys, whom he had detained in confinement since the autumn of 1865. He also promised to set free the Russian merchants whom he had at the same time imprisoned. Moreover, he requested permission to send an ambassador to sue for the restoration of peace. But in his innermost heart he never intended to enter into any negotiations at all; for, on the whole, he maintained with remarkable obstinacy a hostile bearing towards Russia, which could only be subdued by fresh disasters. Convinced, like all Turks, that the Christian potentates of Europe are mere vassals of the Sublime Porte, in October 1865 he applied to the Sultan Abdúl Aziz for succour, which was, however, refused.

He was still undecided how to act, when Count Dashkov succeeded in command Romanovsky, whose victories he soon continued. Once more the troops of the White Czar moved onwards towards the frontiers of Bokhára. After a siege of eight days the important Bokharian fortress of Uratypa was, on October 2, 1866, taken by storm, when the Russians captured 16 guns, 4 standards, and made many prisoners. The enemy's loss was very severe; but the Russians had only three officers and 200 men killed and wounded.

At length Mozaffer's stronghold, the fortress of Djizzak, which was defended by the Amír's best troops and served as his last *point d'appui* in the valley of the Sír-Dariá, was, on October 18, after a vigorous siege of eight days, taken by storm by the Russians, and the garrison was for the most part either killed or taken prisoners. The trophies of war on this occasion were 26 stand of colours and 53 guns. Europeans were now for the first time enabled to establish posts along the Amú-Dariá, the Oxus of the ancients, and to navigate this river, which

flows through the very heart of Bucharia. Thus peace appeared for the moment to be restored, and the following intelligence from Orenburg could be reported on November 26, 1866: 'Perfect tranquillity reigns throughout the country of Turkestan. The war with Bokhára, as far as regards Russia, is at an end. The Governor-General hopes for a long continuance of tranquillity, provided the Amír of Bokhára abstains from a renewal of hostilities. Amicable relations with Kokán are confirmed, and commerce is everywhere re-established. Many caravans come from Bucharia and go thither. Even the West-Siberian corps, ordered to the territory of Turkestan, returns home again.'

Meanwhile Mozaffer found his position by no means enviable, and he only tolerated with ill-will what he could not prevent. The defeat of the Bokharian army at Yedshar and the series of disasters that followed closely afterwards had aroused great discontent amongst Mozaffer's subjects, who at the instigation of the *Ulemas*—the priesthood—demanded an energetic and decisive war against Russia.

Inspired with the most intense hatred against Russia, Mozaffer now hoped by means of foreign aid to effect his purpose. Although in 1865 he offered the Amír of Kábul an alliance against Russia and England, yet he did not now disdain to apply to the same country, England, for assistance. His envoy, Belisár, however, left Calcutta in February 1867 with the definite reply that the Governor of the Punjáb would communicate to him the resolutions of the English Government. But England both in 1854 and in 1864 had taken no notice of similar requests from the Khán of Kokán; for, since the unfortunate campaign of Afghánistán, the Indian Government had always pursued the policy of non-interference in the affairs of Central Asia. Thus passed the first months of the year

1867 in a state of considerable tension; for, as the *Invalide Russe* of March 22 declares, 'Russia, since the taking of the Djizzak Pass, had entertained no negotiations or diplomatic relations with the Amír Mozaffer.' It was, however, evident that the Cabinet of St. Petersburg was accurately informed of the Bokharian embassy to Calcutta as well as of its purport, and expected therefore nothing but perfidy from the Amír. It must have been very agreeable to Russia when a deputation, consisting of seventeen persons from the cities of Táshkend, Khojend, Uratypa, Djizzak, and several Kirghiz tribes, set out for Europe under the guidance of Major Sycrov of the Ural-Cossack forces. They arrived at Moscow on March 17, 1867, for the express purpose of declaring their allegiance to the Emperor of Russia. The Amír was unable to prevent the *mise en scène* of this deputation, the more so as he was fully occupied with the insurrection of the small tribe at Shahr-i-Sabz. In fact, he suffered a defeat from them, and was compelled to consent to the conversion of this province into an independent khanate. The Beg of that country had acted for some time past as an independent ruler, and had drawn many of the malcontents from Bokhára under his protection.

The Kitái-Kipcháks, a half-nomadic Uzbek people, who dwell scattered over the basin of the Zarafshán between Samarcand and Kermina, declared themselves almost openly against the Amír.

Soon after his return to Bokhára, Mozaffer, fearing the advance of the Russians, went to Samarcand to construct fortresses, and invited the English to organise his army. He then broke off all relations with the Russians. Russia, however, took no notice, but contented herself with the good understanding in which she stood at that moment

with the Khán of Kokán, who was too unimportant then to cause her any uneasiness. The conclusion of treaties of peace with the khanates of Central Asia seemed to be inadmissible till the arrival of the new Governor of Turkestan.

In July 1867 an Imperial ukase changed the military and civil administration of the Russian provinces bordering on China and Central Asia. Hitherto there existed in Turkestan a governor-generalship and a military district command; now the military and civil administration was combined in one, whilst the internal administration was entrusted to natives selected from the body of the people. Finally, General von Kaufmann, Adjutant-General (*A.D.C.*) to the Emperor, was appointed ‘Governor-General of Turkestan.’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A ukase of July 11 (23), 1867, is the act which fixes the political frontiers of the new province, and, according to the *Journal de St.-Petersbourg* of July 16 (28), 1867, it runs in the following terms, namely:— ‘Whereas we hold it to be expedient to modify the civil and military organisation of the territories bordering on China and the Central Asian khanates, which formed portions of the Governments of Orenburg and West Siberia. We ordain by these presents that: 1. A Governor-Generalship be forthwith established in Turkestan, which shall consist of the province of Turkestan, the circle of Táshkend, the districts lying beyond the Sír-Dariá which were occupied by us in the year 1866, and the portion of the province of Semipalatinsk that lies to the south of the Tarbágátái mountain range. 2. The boundaries of the Government of Turkestan shall henceforward be: (a) with respect to the Government of West Siberia, the ridge of the Tarbágátái mountains and their offshoots as far as the present frontier line, which divides the province of Semipalatinsk from the country inhabited by the Kirghiz of Siberia, shall form the frontier on that side as far as the lake of Balkásh, then extending farther in a curve drawn through the middle of that lake and equidistant from its shores, and then in a straight line to the river Chù, thence following the course of that river till its confluence with the Sír-Dariá; (b) with respect to the Government of Orenburg, the frontier line shall be drawn from the middle of the Gulf of Perovski in the Sea of Aral over the Termembes mountain, the place called

Terekli, over the Kalmás mountain, the place Múzbill, the Akkúm and Chúbar-Túbiá mountains, the southern point of the sandy desert Myín-Kúm, and the place Myín-Búlák to the confluence of the rivers Syry-Sú and Chú.

3. The new Government shall be divided into two provinces—one the Sír-Dariá, the other Semiryechensk—and the river Kurogoty will form the boundary line between them. 4. The chief administrative power over the country thus constituted will be entrusted to a Governor-General, and the provinces of the Sír-Dariá and the Semiryechensk to Military Governors; as regards the military administration and the military establishments, the two provinces shall form the military district of Turkestán, and the command of the whole of the troops stationed within the district shall be entrusted to the Governor-General, with the title “commander of the forces in the district,” and the Military Governors shall command the troops in their own provinces, with the title “commander of the forces in their respective provinces.” 5. On the establishment of the provinces of the Sír-Dariá and the Semiryechensk, the civil authorities therein employed shall remain at the disposition and under the control of the respective Military Governors until general regulations for the guidance of the administration of the whole district shall be promulgated.’ (Petermann’s *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1868, No. iii. pp. 85–86, and Behm’s *Geogr. Jahrbuch*, 1868, vol. ii. p. 51.)

According to the *Journal de St.-Petersbourg* of July 19 (31), 1867, the province of Sír-Dariá was divided into eight, and that of Semiryechensk into five, districts; namely, in the former Kazalin, Perovski, Turkestán, Chemkend, Auliet, Táshkend, Khojend, and Djizzak, and in the latter province Sergiopol, Kopal, Vyernoé, Issikkúl, and Tokmák. (Behm’s *Geogr. Jahrbuch*, 1868, vol. ii. p. 51.)

## CHAPTER X.

## THE MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST SAMARCAND.

WHEN Mozaffer perceived that no direct aid from England was to be expected, he made a fresh attempt at an alliance with the Sultan, and sent Mohammed Farissa to Constantinople to implore protection against Russia. This, however, proved fruitless; for the Sultan, as might be foreseen, rejected this appeal in the most decided manner. In face of the notoriously hostile demeanour of the Amír, Russia established a permanent camp not far distant from Samarcand, which was under the protection of a vessel carrying twenty-four guns. To this camp troops and numerous convoys of war materials were ordered. It was not long before there arose a new cause for hostilities. Some robbers in Bokhára took a Russian officer (Second Lieutenant Slushenko) and three soldiers prisoners. On the summons of the Russian authorities to deliver up the prisoners the Amír gave a very unsatisfactory and evasive reply, whereupon the Russian commander ordered the chastisement of the cantons in fault. Amír Mozaffer, on the other hand, began to raise numerous recruits and to prepare for war. General Kaufmann, on his part, determined to punish the village of Ummy, which was mixed up with this affair, and to entirely destroy this nest of robbers as a punishment upon the whole district. Colonel

Abramov, the commandant of the Djizzak detachment, seized the opportunity for the accomplishment of his plan when the tax-gatherers from Bokhára with 1,000 soldiers had appeared in the canton of Bagdán-Átá to collect the taxes.

On October 12, 1867, he sent Major Baron von Stempel with two companies of infantry, two sotnias of Cossacks, and two field-pieces, to follow the robbers. At a distance of sixteen versts from Ummy, Stempel left his infantry and guns in position, and pushed forward with the Cossacks to the village. On his approach the villagers dispersed and fled into the mountains; the deserted village was set on fire and destroyed. Soon afterwards a revolt against the Russians broke out in Kokán; but it was put down with great loss to the insurgents. In the beginning of December 1867 Khiva, having concluded a treaty with the Turkomans, armed against the Russians, and constructed a fort on the frontier. In consequence of this, and also for the purpose of making a diversion, the Russians occupied, at the commencement of the year 1868, Chehardchúi,<sup>1</sup> the most important place on the

<sup>1</sup> The *Calcutta Despatch* calls this town Charput, the most important place on the Lower Oxus. Now *Charput*, or *Kharpout*, is situated 37° E. longitude from Paris in the valley of the upper course of the Euphrates in Asia Minor. In no case can this place be meant; consequently it must be intended for Chehardchúi. But it is still very obscure; for how could the Russians on their march from Djizzak reach this place, which lies on the road from Bokhára to Mashad, without having first seized upon Samarcand and even Bokhára? They might indeed have advanced from Khiva up the river Amú, and thus have reached Chehardchúi. But, on the one hand, we are quite in the dark with regard to the position of the Russians in the Khanate of Khiva, and, on the other hand, if the Russians did actually reach Chehardchúi, they would have gone entirely round the position of the Amír of Bokhára, and could then at any moment have taken the city of Bokhára in the rear. In such a case the war would in all probability have

lower course of the Amú-Dariá; they seized at Urghendj, situated on the same river, the chief magistrate, who had shown himself refractory, and sent him as a prisoner to St. Petersburg.

Soon afterwards, through the mediation of the commandant of Fort Alexander, Atánúrat—a Turkoman Khán and a vassal of the Khán of Khiva—and twenty neighbouring Begs supplicated the Governor-General of Orenburg to grant them permission to be received as Russian subjects, in the same manner as all the Turkomans dwelling in the territory of Khiva; they also requested that a fort might be erected on the Balkan mountains close to the coast. While at that time many Turkomans were constantly leaving to settle on Russian soil, the relations with the Khán of Khiva became exceptionally favourable; for that circumstance had induced him to become excessively pliant.

Affairs in Bokhára wore quite a different aspect. It is true that, in the beginning of December 1867, an ambassador from Kokán, and soon afterwards one from Bokhára, arrived at Táshkend. In their presence there was a display of military manœuvres, on which occasion the throwing of a pontoon bridge and the storming of a position were represented; but none of these brought forth the slightest expression of astonishment on the impassive features of these reserved Asiatics. The Kokánese ambassador soon took his departure, accompanied by Lieutenant-Colonel von Schaufuss and Doctor Abiyev; and a commercial treaty<sup>1</sup> with Kokán was shortly after-

taken quite a different turn from what it did, unless, indeed, the Russians had deliberately foregone the advantages they had obtained.

<sup>1</sup> The *Russian Correspondence* gives the principal articles of this commercial treaty which was concluded with the Khán of Kokán; they are



wards, on February 13, 1868, actually brought to a conclusion. The ambassador from Bokhára, however, remained longer in Táshkend. Nevertheless they arrived at no definite arrangement, as the Amír, under various pretexts, declined to accept the conditions of peace proposed to him by General Kaufmann. But the unfortunate Lieutenant Slushenko<sup>1</sup> and his three fellow-prisoners were released and sent back.

The provocations of the Bokharians did not end here; on the contrary, they became more frequent, till at length they were of daily occurrence. At the same time the Russians, whilst endeavouring to obtain possession of the two routes to India, which traverse the difficult passes of Karákorum, to enter the valley of Shang-tshen-mu, and

the following:—‘All cities, towns, and places are, without exception, open to Russian merchants. The same rule applies to the Kokánese merchants as regards Russian markets. The Russian merchants are permitted to establish warehouses for their goods in every place throughout Kokán, and to appoint everywhere commercial agents to superintend commercial affairs and to collect the custom dues; similar rights are granted to the Kokánese merchants within the Russian Government of Turkestán. Russians and Kokánese are to pay for goods imported the same duty, namely, 2½ per cent. *ad valorem*. Russian caravans are to pass free and unhindered through the khanate of Kokán on their way to the neighbouring countries; in like manner Kokánese caravans are permitted a free passage through the Russian territories.’ Vide also *Russia and the Central Asian Khanates* (*Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1872, No. 325).

<sup>1</sup> Concerning the fate of Sub-Lieutenant Slushenko the Bokharians give the following account:—He was placed in a ditch, in which a gibbet was erected. He was allowed the choice to turn Mussulman, and to take unto himself two Bokharian beauties as wives, or to remain Christian and ———. As the threats took a very decided turn, the unfortunate Slushenko at length yielded. Now he is, if one can put faith in the Bokharian reports, circumcised, married, and a commandant of a battalion of Sarbázes, whom he drills in the ‘manual exercise’ and in the ‘slow march,’ as he assures them that these are the chief excellences of good troops. It is said that he beats them unmercifully, very probably to avenge the insults he has suffered at their hands. (*The Riga Invalide*, 1868.)

for this purpose to seize upon points commanding these roads, came into collision with Jakúb Beg, the Kushbegi of Yarkand and the ruler of Altysnar (Djitishar or Káshgar). But in order to understand these affairs we must lead our readers back to an earlier period.

In the year 1759 the two provinces Thian-Shan Pe-Lu, or Chinese Dzungaria, and Thian-Shan Nan-Lu, or Eastern Turkestán, also called Ili, were conquered by Khiva, and threw off their allegiance to China either entirely or partially. The province of Ili latterly only served China as a penal colony, in which detachments of Manchoo soldiers had established standing camps. The Chinese military governor had his head-quarters in the capital Kúlja (on the river Ili, 42° N. lat.), which rejoices in the epithet 'glistening,' but is called by the Chinese Hoi-juan-tshing. The six western cities of Eastern Turkestán (Altysnar) form separate and independent districts, which belong nominally to the province of Nan-Lu. The Chinese, however, had no direct influence over the internal administration of these districts. During the last ten years most violent revolutions have taken place in these parts, from which a new conqueror and ruler arose in the person of Mohammed Jakúb Beg.

Jakúb Beg is a Kokánese by birth, and was commandant of the fortress Ák-Mesjed on the Sír-Dariá, which he successfully defended against the Russians when besieged by them in 1863. He was, however, attacked, conquered, and driven out by Alím-Kúl, well known by his bold razzias against the Russians in 1864 and 1865, but who fell in the battle of Táshkend. In consequence of the intrigues at the Court of Kokán, Jakúb Beg, after the death of Alím-Kúl, was obliged to flee the country with a few followers; he repaired to Káshgar, there to

seek his fortune in that country without a ruler.<sup>1</sup> When he arrived there, he found the rebellion of the Dunganís in full force. These Dunganís dwelt originally in Turkestán proper, and formed in the sixth century a tolerably powerful state, of which the capital Karashár was situated on the southern declivities of the Thián-Shán mountains. They professed the Buddhist religion, but were converted in the eighth century to Islamism. The Chinese sovereigns of the dynasty Tan conquered the capital, and for the sake of securing tranquillity to their

<sup>1</sup> A former servant of Jakúb Khán gives the following account of his master's previous doings (vide *Wanderer* of December 18, 1872):—'It is now about five years ago when the Russians appeared on the frontiers of Yárkand. Jakúb Sháh was then Governor of Kál merely as a *locum tenens* for Khudayer Khán, the ruler of Kokán. As the Russians approached Kál, a Russian general, Triffel by name, came to Jakúb and proposed to purchase Kál, giving him at the same time the assurance that the Russians would allow him to seize Yárkand and retain it on his own account, if he would assist them in the annexation of Kokán. The arrangement was concluded, and Jakúb sold Kál to the Russians for 1,180,000 rupees. He then pretended to fly for refuge to the Khán of Kokán. Six months later the Russians sent for Jakúb to take counsel of him relative to the conquest of Kokán, which was easy to attack from Kaltshúk, where there is a junction of three roads. In consequence of Jakúb's suggestions, the Russians constructed a fortress near Kokán. At that time the Russians had no immediate designs upon Yárkand; for it was then only a dependency of Kokán, and consequently the latter had to be weakened first. In the meanwhile Jakúb had taken possession of Yárkand, and called himself Jakúb Beg. After the Russians had become masters of Kokán, and had placed there Khudayer Khán as their vassal prince, they established cantonments at Kette-Kurgán, and made preparations for an attack on Samarcand and Bokhára. On this occasion Jakúb Beg gave every assistance in his power to the Russians. He received Khillats from them, and returned to Yárkand, where he doubled his army, made war on his weaker neighbours, and on the adjacent states which were at the time without acknowledged rulers. He found but little difficulty in annexing all these states. Afterwards he assumed the title of Jakúb Sháh, collected by oppressive measures and extortions large treasures, and raised an army of about 70,000 men, composed of the three branches of the service.'

frontiers transposed a great portion of the population into the interior of the empire. But in spite of this colonisation, which continued for centuries, the Dunganís, though they adopted the language and assumed the outward appearance of the Chinese, preserved two characteristics—the Mussulman faith and stricter morals than those of the ruling race. Their submission to the Chinese authorities was always of a doubtful character, and was constantly interrupted by insurrections. It is probable that the continual struggles which they carried on, especially under the present dynasty, have arisen from political as well as from religious causes. Nevertheless the Chinese sovereigns, as long as they asserted their supreme authority, were always able to quell these revolts. The rebellion which was raging at the time of Mohammed Jakúb Beg's arrival burst forth in 1862; it was provoked by the mutual hatred of the Dunganís and the Taipings towards the Manchoo dynasty, or else by some other cause. At all events, it found a powerful ally in the embarrassments of the Chinese Government. The first insurrectionary movements took place in Urúm-tsi amongst the Dunganí settlers. The army of 20,000 men, which occupied this district, was composed of native militia; the officers likewise almost entirely belonged to the same subjugated race. And this explains the rapidity with which the insurrection spread. The number of victims sacrificed on this occasion is computed at 130,000; the losses in goods and materials were enormous; more than 31,000 chests of tea were burnt.<sup>1</sup> The insurgents betook themselves from Urúm-tsi on one side to Kúlja, and on the other side to Kutshe in Eastern Turkestán, where they met with the sympathies of the inhabitants, who were of

<sup>1</sup> Supplement to No. 88, *Neue preussische (Kreuz) Zeitung*, 1869.

the same race and the same religion. However, those who fled to Kutshe and Aksú were cut down by the Chinese; but in Yárkand and in Khoten they had the upper hand. At length, led on by a certain Sadik, they attacked Káshgar, which, after an heroic resistance of sixteen months on the part of the Chinese, was forced to surrender. Whilst the victorious Dunganís abandoned themselves to the horrors of devastation, there suddenly appeared on the scene of action Mohammed Jakúb Beg with his fighting men from Kokán and Andidshán, and with him also a certain Búzburg Khán. They fell upon the Dunganís, totally defeated them, and killed their leader, Sadik. This occurred in January 1864.

Búzburg Khán now commenced, on his own account, to besiege the fortress of Káshgar (Yangi-Shar), which had not yet fallen, and the Kushbegi—for so Jakúb Beg was called—advanced in the autumn of that year upon Yárkand, which place had been captured by the Dunganís in 1863. During the winter of 1864–1865 he succeeded in totally defeating them near Kizil; whereupon he went back to Káshgar, to which Búzburg Khán was still laying siege, but without producing substantial results. It was only in the year 1865 that Jakúb Beg succeeded in taking this fortified place. Master of Yárkand and Káshgar, Jakúb Beg now aspired after supreme power. Búzburg Khán, to whom Jakúb Beg served as second in command, abandoned himself to indolence and every kind of excess. It was, therefore, not very difficult to set him aside in a kind of honourable confinement. Then Jakúb Beg assumed the title of Atalik-Gházi, under which denomination he still rules. In the course of years he extended his sway over Maralbáshi, Khoten, Kutshe, Ush-Turfán, and Sárikúl; in short, he became the most powerful ruler in all Eastern Turkestán.

During his manifold warlike expeditions the Kushbegi could not fail to come into collision with the Russians. Already in 1867 he refused the Russian agents permission to throw a bridge across the Naryn and to construct a road over the Thián-Shán mountains. Now he interdicted the entrance of Russian trading caravans into his country, invited the Khán of Kokán to take part in the holy war against the Russians, and even sent his adopted son with a detachment of 250 men over the Thián-Shán to the river Naryn to discover what was going on amongst the Russians. His son found on the other side of the mountains a Russian settlement which had been abandoned; he destroyed the houses, brought the surveying instruments home, and endeavoured to enter into relations with the Kirghiz of the district of Tokmák, which was under Russian dominion.

Under these circumstances the Amír of Bokhára recommenced hostilities, but without openly declaring war. In consequence of this, on May 1 (13), 1868, General Kaufmann, who had constantly been disturbed by attacks on detachments of his army, gave the order to advance from the position of Tásh-Kuprjúk, situated half-way between Yáni-Kurgán and Samarcand. On approaching the rivulet the Russians were received with a sharp fire from the enemy, who were posted in the valley and partially concealed in gardens. Colonel Petrushevsky led the advanced guard, consisting of some hundred Cossacks; his instructions were to cease firing directly the enemy offered no further obstruction to the advance of the Russians; for the general had been assured by several Begg that neither the Mollahs nor the people were desirous of war. Near the rivulet Colonel Petrushevsky met the Bokharian *parlementaire*, Nedjm-eddin-Khodja, the same who had been sent in 1859 as ambassador.

The Amír sued for peace, making the same propositions as before, but adding the condition that the Russians were to advance no farther. General Kaufmann, however, did not give his assent to this, but declared that he would enter into further negotiations after he had taken up quarters for the night.

In the meanwhile the bulk of the Russian troops had arrived at the river Zarafshán. On the opposite steep bank a considerable force of Bokharians was posted, who seemed determined to oppose with all their might the passage of the river. General Kaufmann declared to the *parlementaire* that he could not in the presence of the enemy pitch his encampment for the night. If the Amír really desired peace, he must withdraw his troops; or else he would take the opposite bank by storm.

Meanwhile Lieutenant-Colonel Strandtmann, with 400 Cossacks, four guns, and half a rocket battery, dislodged the Bokharian division which was in position opposite to the right flank of the Russians.

After the lapse of two hours General Kaufmann threatened the *parlementaire* with a further advance, and then after a tedious negotiation declared that if the Bokharian troops had not evacuated their position by a quarter past 3 A.M. he would give the signal to attack. The ambassador took his departure, promising at the same time that he would effect the withdrawal of the Bokharian troops. He left in General Kaufmann's hands the proposals of peace which had been entrusted to him by the Amír, and were nominally the same which had been offered on the former occasion. Taking a rapid glance over these documents, the general was soon convinced that they did not in any way treat about the same conditions of peace which had been formerly accepted by the Russians. On

the contrary, these documents had been arbitrarily altered by the Amír, who was playing false; for he declared through Nedjm-Eddin his willingness to revert to the original stipulations.

When the appointed time had elapsed, the Bokharian troops, who still held their former position, opened fire. The Russian army, consisting of twenty-one and a half companies of infantry, sixteen guns, half a rocket battery, and 450 Cossacks, amounting to about 8,000 men, was drawn up in order of battle. The first line was commanded by Colonel Abramov. General Kaufmann, accompanied by his staff, placed himself on the left wing, which was to attempt the passage of the river, and then to attack the opposite heights, that were strongly occupied by the enemy; this duty was entrusted to Major-General Golovachev. The Russians waded breast-high through the Zarafshán without suffering their passage to be obstructed by the fire of the enemy's artillery or by the swarms of troops that harassed their flanks. The Russian right wing was, whilst wading through the water, exposed to a brisk cross-fire from the enemy, and had to march upwards of a verst on marshy ground intersected by ditches and covered with bushes. The left wing marched two versts along a marshy plain, and cleared the surrounding villages and gardens of the enemy's skirmishers; it then rushed into the stream, effected its passage, and attacked the enemy's right flank, which immediately took to flight in the wildest confusion, and so rapidly that it was impossible to reach the fugitives again. On the heights conquered from the enemy the Russians established their bivouac for the night. Simultaneously the baggage train victoriously repulsed a Bokharian attack. All the enemy's guns that were in position on the heights



fell into the hands of the Russians; those which were in the valley were recovered by the Bokharians. The camp, with twenty-one guns, composed the first trophies of the Russians, whose loss in this affair was very inconsiderable—namely, three officers and twenty-eight rank and file wounded, one surgeon and six rank and file contused, two men killed.

Although the Russians were unable to pursue the enemy farther, the inhabitants of Samarcand, exasperated by excessive extortions and a two years' anticipatory payment of taxes, closed their gates against the Amír and resisted the entrance of the Bokharians into the town. Early on the following morning there appeared in the Russian camp a deputation from Samarcand to declare their submission to his Majesty the Emperor of Russia. General Kaufmann detained some of the deputies in camp, and informed the inhabitants through the remainder that they were to open their gates and receive his troops. He himself approached the city with a portion of his army. At the gates he was received by the inhabitants with joy. General Kaufmann declared in the name of the Emperor that they were to resume their occupations, to open their shops, and to recall into the city the families that had fled. The citadel was garrisoned by the Russians; the inhabitants came back in crowds into the city, and soon showed full confidence in the power of their conquerors.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Samarcand, the ancient *Maracanda* of the Greeks, bore the Chinese name of *Tshin* from the natives in ancient times and after the period of Alexander the Great. When in the year 643 the Arab Samar introduced there Islamism, Samarcand (signifying the town or village of Samar) was 'the refuge of peace and learning,' as well as the residence of the ruling dynasty of the Samanides from 833 to 1000 A.D. The Arabian geographer Ibn Haukal (950) has described the city from ocular testimony. In the year 1219 it was conquered by Chenghiz Khán, and fell about two hundred years later

In this memorable battle of Samarcand the Amír of Bokhára had placed Sikánder Khán, the son of Sultán Ján of Herát, at the head of his army, consisting of 400 Afgháns, who mostly went over to the Russians, and 8,000 auxiliaries. His eldest son, Abdúl Melik, was present in the battle-field, but fled to Bokhára; whilst the Amír himself remained in Kermina, whither also the beaten army retreated. Sikánder, however, laid down his arms, and, according to some reports, even deserted to the Russians. The loss of the Bokharians amounted to between 300 and 400 killed and 200 wounded; some even state 3,000 men.<sup>1</sup>

For the moment Russia wished to halt here and make it a resting-place whilst making preparations for the future, on which account she did not appear disinclined to make peace with the Amír, who was to pay to Russia

into the hands of Taimúr, who raised it to be the capital of his great empire, and adorned it with magnificent edifices which now lie in ruins. Samarcand has in the present time entirely lost its political importance, and its commerce will bear no comparison with that of Bokhára. For a very detailed description of Samarcand vide Vámbéry's *Travels in Central Asia*, pp. 197, &c.; also Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1865, pp. 224-229. The delightful valley of Soghd, near Samarcand, is one of the four Paradises sung by the Persian poets. (*Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, vol. x., 1841, pp. 2-3; also Rückert's *Makamen Hariri's*, p. 261.)

<sup>1</sup> The dates of the battle of Samarcand are still very uncertain and undetermined. The battle is supposed to have taken place, according to some authorities, on the 22nd, according to others on the 29th of May, 1868. Our statement of May 1 (13) is that of the *Invalide Russe* of June 17, 1868; and, in fact, the report published in that paper seems to be the only trustworthy account. Similar discrepancies prevail as regards the lists of the killed and wounded; some compute the Russian loss at 2,000, and that of the Bokharians at 10,000 killed, besides an enormous amount of wounded. If this were true, the army of Bokhára must have been at any rate stronger than from 8,000 to 9,000 men. Also the intelligence that the Amír Mozaffer was killed in the battle afterwards proved to be false.

a contribution of half a million of roubles. Mozaffer complied with all the demands of the Russians, with one exception—namely, the erection of a Russian fort in his capital. This deferred the final conclusion of peace; meanwhile the Bokharians, to whom the Amír of Shahr-i-Sabz hastened with succour, enacted an interlude of a most bloodthirsty kind.

During the advance of the main body of the army under General Kaufmann, a detachment consisting of 97 artillerymen and 658 men, inclusive of the non-combatants and the sick, was left under Major Baron von Stempel in garrison for the defence of the citadel of Samarcand. They had provisions and munitions of war in abundance. They had 24 guns, taken from the Bokharians; 90 poods of powder (3,000 lbs.); 220,000 cartridges, shells, and rockets, besides a store of flour for two months and drinking-water in sufficient quantity. The hostile force consisted of 25,000 men from Shahr-i-Sabz under Djúra Beg and Bábá Beg, 15,000 Kitái-Kipchaks under Abdyl-Tádj, and 15,000 Samarcandians under Hassán Beg, Abdúl-Gafda Beg, and Omár Beg.

Through the treachery of the Aksákáls (the elders of the city) a large body of the enemy succeeded in gaining entrance into the city; but fortunately Major Baron von Stempel, having made a sortie for the purpose of driving the troops of Shahr-i-Sabz back into the roads leading from Bokhára, returned just in time to have the gates closed in the citadel. Major Albedil and Ensign Anichkov on June 13 repulsed during the day four, and during the night three, of the enemy's attacks. When the enemy set fire to the gate, the sappers and miners under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Nazarov constructed under a heavy storm of musketry a work of earth-bags sufficiently

large to admit one gun, which, charged with grape-shot, drove back the assailants. On the same day the Samar-candian gate and the churchyard were attacked by hosts of the enemy; but, thanks to the energetic conduct of Lieutenant Lepeshin, the assault was repelled, though with great loss to the besieged in killed and wounded. The brave Lieutenant Lepeshin and the commissariat officer Ivanov were amongst the former, and Ensign Adoratsky and the commercial clerk Samarin amongst the latter. On the following day every point was simultaneously attacked. A body of Sarts threw themselves into the breach at the Bokharian gate to try to widen it. Then 25 convalescents left their beds to join the subdivision of Lieutenant Borodayevsky for the purpose of driving back the enemy that had penetrated into the citadel. During these two days 150 men were placed *hors de combat*. If the loss had continued to be so considerable, the Russians would have given up the idea of defending the whole line. The commandant of the garrison had come to the determination that, in case the enemy should succeed in taking the citadel by storm, he would unite his troops in the palace of the Khán and there defend himself to the last extremity, and in the event of being worsted he would blow up the place. The days of June 16, 17, 18, and 19 were fully employed in fresh attacks, but they were all repulsed without having even lost one inch of ground. At length, on the 20th, General Kaufmann came—and it was indeed time that he should come—to the relief of the citadel. This heroic defence cost the Russians 3 officers and 46 rank and file killed, and 5 officers and 167 rank and file wounded. But it convinced the Amír that it was impossible for him to fight against the Russians with any hope of success. In

fact, as soon as he received intelligence of what had happened at Samarcand, he concluded peace, by which he was forced to pay to Russia as a war indemnity 125,000 tilla<sup>1</sup> (which at four thalers to a tilla equals 500,000 thalers). Of this amount 10,000 tilla were delivered immediately to General Kaufmann by Mútha Beg. The Russians promised on their part to leave Bokhára, the capital of the khanate, unmolested; but the country about the middle course of the Zarafshán, together with Samarcand and Kette-Kurgán, was ceded to the Russians, who acquired by this the right of establishing cantonments at Kermina, Chehardchúi, and Kárshí. They also incorporated the southernmost part (40° N. lat.) of their Central-Asian possessions, and likewise the western province of Sír-Dariá, with the recently formed general government of Turkestán. The other articles of the treaty were chiefly the following:—1. The right of trading freely throughout the khanate of Bokhára is granted to all Russian subjects without distinction of creed. The Amír holds himself, within the limits of his territory, responsible for the security of the Russian merchants, their caravans, and their property.

2. Russian merchants have the right of appointing commercial agents in all towns throughout the khanate.

3. A duty of at most 2½ per cent. *ad valorem* is fixed upon all Russian goods imported into the khanate.

4. Russian merchants are allowed free passage through the khanate to the neighbouring states.<sup>2</sup>

This treaty was concluded on May 11 (June 18), 1868, but has remained for a long time a dead letter. General

<sup>1</sup> Tilla (gold) = 12 roubles 82 kopecks, according to Klöden's *Handbuch der Erdkunde*, vol. iii. p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> *Augsburger allgemeine Zeitung*, 1869, No. 26, and 1872. No. 325.

Kaufmann repaired to St. Petersburg to report in person upon the recent occurrences.

And for the rest, the Russians are doing their utmost to settle down as quickly as possible, and trying to make themselves comfortable in Central Asia. Even at present they feel quite at home in Turkeistán. Táshkend now boasts of its casinos, balls, and *soirées musicales* just like any other European town; although perhaps these social entertainments do not yet possess sufficient powers of attraction to entice elegant ladies of fashion from the amusements of Paris or the delights of the German baths to the shores of the Caspian.

Coal mines of a very promising character have been opened. There exists great competition amongst the projectors of new railroads, and new plans for transit by water and communications by land throughout the breadth of this country are under consideration. In the beginning of October 1868 the roads between Bokhára and Samarcand were cleared of insurgent bands, so as to make it possible to commence commercial intercourse without molestation. The construction of a road to Balkh and Badakhshán in the valley of the Upper Oxus is being vigorously pushed forward. The Russians have taken energetic measures to lay down a railway from Samara in Russia to Orenburg,<sup>1</sup> and thence to Táshkend and Kokán; whilst the fixing of telegraph wires through the steppe is already an accomplished fact. For some time past a flotilla of steam gunboats has swept the Jaxartes and the Caspian; such will soon be the case with the Oxus and the Sea of Aral.

During the last quarter of the year 1867 not less than 250 officials passed from Orenburg to Turkeistán to work

<sup>1</sup> It was intended to commence the construction of this line in the beginning of 1871.

hand in hand with the functionaries already stationed there in the administration of that country. Unfortunately most of them were unacquainted with the languages usually spoken in Turkestán—namely, the Bokhári and the Persian.<sup>1</sup> In spite of this defect the Russians have the credit of being excellent colonists after their own fashion, and on Asiatic soil indeed they have the advantage of the Anglo-Saxons. Although the latter are unsurpassed when they have in hand the colonisation of virgin land, or the foundation of new cities and states by means of a free association, yet they seem abroad in the art of completely subjugating barbaric or semi-barbarous nations and of assimilating them by a thorough process of amalgamation, which the Russians have so successfully achieved along the southern borders of their Asiatic possessions. The Anglo-Saxon colonises after the manner of the Greeks, but the Russian after that of the Romans.

The pioneers of the Russians are not those squatters who, fully conscious of their boundless and unrestrained individuality, only breathe freely when without the pale of civilisation, beyond which they hurry on hundreds of miles, and thus prepare the way for its onward course, but they are merely military colonists. By means of the system of military colonisation, however, the nomad tribes of the Tartars, Kalmuks, and Kirghiz have been forced into the political system of the

<sup>1</sup> In general the paucity of persons acquainted with these languages is perceptibly felt; for when a written communication is received from the Amír, which is of course composed in Persian, the diplomatic language of the country, a Sart is sent for (thus are called the citizens who understand both Bokhári and Persian) to translate the original into the Tartar language, from which the official translator or interpreter retranslates it into Russian. In the same manner ordinances which the administration cause to be posted up in the bazaars have to be translated by the Sarts into the Persian and Tartar languages.

Russian Empire. In this manner they have become accustomed to military service and to the payment of taxes, and thus by degrees prepared to become thoroughly Russian. Within the space of five-and-twenty years the descendants of those wild sultans and chieftains, who less than half a century ago led a predatory life at the head of their barbarous hordes on the borders of China and Siberia, will belong to the class of obedient military nobles or pliant courtiers about the court of the Czar, just in the same manner as are now the sons of the princely houses of Transcaucasia.<sup>1</sup>

Arms must, it is true, first clear the way; but commerce and intercommunication, which have since 1850, with some few interruptions, been always on the increase even in the Russian Empire, have made rapid strides in advance in Central Asia. Even many Prussian goods find there a saleable market. Besides, very many Germans have already settled there. The most noted hotel with restaurant in Táshkend belongs to a German, who has a thriving business.<sup>2</sup> The constant progress transforms the warlike successes of the Russians into lasting conquests.<sup>3</sup> In this manner the Russians in 1862 dignified with the rank of a city Akmolinsk (Akmolly), situated in the district of the Siberian Kirghiz. It is the central point of *rendez-vous* for the caravans coming from Táshkend and Bokhára, but unfavourable circumstances have not yet permitted the development of great activity. Notwithstanding that not less than 1,500 camels arrived there in the course of the month of September 1866, and in the following May, June, and July, goods were disposed

<sup>1</sup> *Die Russen in Bactra* (Presse, January 24, 1869).

<sup>2</sup> *Norddeutsche allgemeine Zeitung* of December 9, 1868.

<sup>3</sup> *Die russischen Eroberungen in Mittelasien* (supplement to the *Augsburger allgemeine Zeitung*).



of in the market of Akmolinsk to the value of 170,300 silver roubles.<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the treaties with Kokán and Bokhára, which resemble one another in most of their stipulations, the goods of Russian merchants are admitted at the same small tariff as those of the Mussulmans; the Russians seem now inclined wisely to profit by their new advantages. Throughout every part of Tartary civilisation follows in the train of the Czar's armies, so much so that open adversaries to his policy must admit that a civilising mission virtually goes hand in hand with the advancement of Russian power in those territories of Central Asia.<sup>2</sup>

The relations with Khudayer, Khán of Kokán, have assumed a friendly character ever since the conclusion of the commercial treaty with him, notwithstanding that the greater portion of his territory had been absorbed in the Russian Empire. He even sent an ambassador<sup>3</sup> to St. Petersburg, whom, in the middle of November 1868, the Emperor received, and accepted from his hands a written communication from Khudayer. The ambassador made assurance of his master's most devoted attachment to the Russian monarch and of his readiness to further the interests of Russia; he at the same time most energetically protested against the rumour that Khudayer Khán was willing to afford assistance to the Amír of Bokhára in his struggle against Russia. Whilst the commercial relations with Russia improved from day to day, the Khán still saw the necessity of making preparations for a campaign in order to chastise Káshgar, Kúlja, and Yárkand, whose tributary sovereigns had thrown off their allegiance to Kokán.

<sup>1</sup> *Globus*, 1867, vol. xi. p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> *Augsburger allgemeine Zeitung* of January 1, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> He arrived at Moscow on October 29, 1868.

The defeat of Bokhára served as a warning to the presumptuous ruler of Káshgar, whom the Russians had already punished for the destruction of their settlement on the Naryn. They advanced again with an armed force, and put to flight the troops of the Kúshbegi, which were defending the Naryn. In the year 1868, however, a Russian officer, Captain Reinthal, paid a visit to Jakúb Khán, who now determined on sending a mission to St. Petersburg to sue for peace. For this purpose, after the fall of Samarcand, he despatched his nephew, whom he had adopted as a son, to the Governor-General of Turkestán. But as the Governor-General von Kaufmann was on the point of departure for St. Petersburg when the embassy arrived, Shádi-Mirza resolved to accompany him on his journey to the Russian capital.<sup>1</sup> About that time the first Russian caravan, under the direction of a merchant named Pervushin, was sent from Táshkend through Kokán to Káshgar. All the goods of this caravan, as well as those belonging to Khludov, which had just arrived here by way of Semiryechensk, were purchased by Jakúb Beg at very advantageous prices.<sup>2</sup>

In anticipation of amicable relations with the Kúshbegi, the Russians, on their part, now determined to repair the caravan road from Tokmák to the frontiers of Káshgaria, and at the same time to construct a bridge across the Naryn at the very spot where once stood the old Chinese bridge now in ruins. Of course the Russians were far-seeing enough to erect also a small fort near the

<sup>1</sup> According to intelligence from Calcutta, October 26, 1868, a Russian corps was then supposed to be threatening Káshgar, the capital of Jakúb Kúshbegi, and the Russian commander to have demanded permission of the latter to re-establish cantonments at different places—namely, at Gúmáh, between Khoten and Yárkand.

<sup>2</sup> *Globus*, vol. xiv. p. 380.

bridge, not only to protect the road, but also the people dwelling on the south of the lake Issik-Kúl, from the inroads of the inhabitants of Káshgar. In the autumn of 1868 these works were completed, so as to admit of a garrison of one company of infantry and a sotnia of Cossacks.<sup>1</sup>

Rumours were then rife that the peace concluded between General Kaufmann and the Amír of Bokhára had not been ratified by the Emperor of Russia; also the newspapers announced that hostilities would recommence against Bokhára by the end of October. Both these statements were immediately pointed out by the *Invalide Russe* as totally unfounded, for at that very moment Mozaffer Khán seems to have been most dangerously threatened in his own khanate. Concerning these events in Bokhára the information is still very confused and does not give a clear insight into the circumstances of the case. It is indeed certain that a strong party inimical to Russia existed in this country, and that the fanatical priesthood especially belonged to that party. But in all probability the Amír-el-Múminin, the head of the faithful, took amiss the treaty of peace with the hated Russians; for at the instigation of this party the Amír, it was presumed, was thrown into prison.

In September 1868 the Russians were despatching reinforcements<sup>2</sup> to Turkestán for the purpose of raising the strength of the army in that government, but on intelligence of this affair they were induced to march upon Bokhára in order to set the Amír free. Then a most positive report was spread that Mozaffer Khán had died of a very sudden illness about the middle of August 1868, if not indeed from a

<sup>1</sup> Detailed accounts of these proceedings may be seen in the *Journal de St.-Petersbourg* from May 5 and 6 to June 7, and May 31 to June 12, 1868.

<sup>2</sup> Said to have been ten regiments.

worse cause, and that his son, a mere boy who had been educated by a relative at Shahr-i-Sabz, had succeeded him in the government. Whilst all the newspapers in Europe were evolving from this event the most far-seeing combinations, it so happened that Mozaffer Amír was not dead, but, on the contrary, was involved in fresh internal struggles. After the fall of Samarcand, Mozaffer-Eddin Khán had engaged, as we have seen, to pay a war contribution and to afford protection to Russian commerce.

Immediately after the conclusion of this treaty of peace his eldest son, Abdúl-Melik, whose title is *Kette-Töre*, Great Prince, supported by the Begs from Shahr-i-Sabz, rose up against the Amír; so did also the dwellers in the steppes under their confederate Sádik. Southwards from Samarcand, about twenty-one German miles from the city, stretches beyond the Altyn-Tágh mountain range, which forms the boundaries, the territory of Shahr-i-Sabz. It belonged formerly to Bokhára, but managed to become entirely independent. The people are extremely brave and warlike, but much given to predatory habits; they are particularly expert in the use of arms, and are first-rate shots. All the efforts of the Amírs of Bokhára to bring the state of Shahr-i-Sabz again under their subjection have signally failed. This small state, at the head of which stand the Begs Bábá and Djúra, knew how to maintain its independence; it even went so far as to act on the offensive, and pressed hard upon Bokhára. Abdúl-Melik received the necessary assistance from Shahr-i-Sabz, and very nearly succeeded in driving his father from the throne.<sup>1</sup> Abdúl-Melik then went to Kárshí, and was there proclaimed Amír of Bokhára. He began to carry on war energeti-

<sup>1</sup> *The Russian Campaign against Shahr-i-Sabz* (*Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1870, No. 296).

cally against his father, Mozaffer Khán, who looked upon himself as entirely lost.

At that time Major-General Abramov, commanding the district of Zarafshán, received orders from General Kaufmann to render assistance to the Amír, Mozaffer Khán, in the event of his requesting succour. The Russians feared lest the Amír should be overthrown, and the treaty of peace, which is not, according to Asiatic custom, binding on the successor, should become null and void. In fact, the Amír, seeing himself forsaken on all sides, was compelled at length to implore aid from the Russians. The result was a Russian intervention. In consequence of this the Russians assembled seven companies of infantry, two sotnias of Cossacks, six stand of rockets, and six field-guns at Dzámú.<sup>1</sup> This is probably the place marked Djâm in Kiepert's map of Turán, and is nearly half-way between Samarcand and Kárshí. In October 1868 this force marched against Kárshí, defeated the pretender there on October 21, and dispersed his army, which was about 8,000 men strong. On October 23 the city itself was captured and handed over to the troops of the Amír, and on October 30 the Russians went into winter quarters around Dzámú.<sup>2</sup>

Abdúl-Melik, the Kette-Töre (sometimes written Katty-Tura and Katty-Türja), fled at first to the Begs at Shahr-i-Sabz, who refused him refuge. He afterwards turned to Hissár, where he likewise found no friendly reception. According to Major-General Abramov's reports of December 18, 23, and 26, 1868, Abdúl-Melik had entreated the General to afford him refuge and to intercede with his father on his behalf. When pardon was promised him, he formed the resolution of proceeding to Samarcand

<sup>1</sup> The *Kölnische Zeitung* writes Dschuma.

<sup>2</sup> Vide *Kölnische Zeitung*, No. 7, of January 7, 1869.

with his retinue, numbering 300 persons. Násár Beg, on the road thither, stirred up the people against Abdúl-Melik, and demanded of him that he should march into the very heart of Bokhára, and then, taking advantage of the Amír's absence, should seize upon the cities of Kárshí and Kermina. Accordingly he quitted the road coming from Dzámú, and, making forced marches through the steppe, arrived at Kárshí on December 14, where he caused the Beg of that place—Rachmet Beg—who had come out to meet him, to be put to death.

After a short stay at Kárshí, which Abdúl-Melik entrusted to the care of the Aksákáls, or elders of the city, he set out for Kermina, and had many of those devoted to the Amír's cause executed during the march. When General Abramov heard these things, he immediately reported them to the Amír, requesting him at the same time to march as quickly as possible with his troops into the interior of Bokhára. The General himself moved out on December 19 *en route* for Kette-Kurgán, where he had ordered the concentration of his forces. From Kárshí the Amír advanced upon Kermina at the head of an army mustering, according to report, 15,000 men and 18 guns. About the same time Abdúl-Melik, having approached that city, had summoned the Beg to surrender. But as soon as he received intelligence of the Amír's advance, he fled to Núr-Áttá, whither the Amír after his entrance into Kermina sent a flying column, which soon drove the fugitive away. Abdúl-Melik was supposed to have taken the road to Khiva, but, accompanied by his former tutor and chief adviser Khodja-Said-Ahmed, he repaired to the Court of Kábul, there to seek assistance.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'A New Turn in the Central-Asian Question,' by Vámbéry (*Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1869, No. 308).

The Amír wrote to the General that he entertained suspicions of the Beks of Shahr-i-Sabz having taken part in these proceedings. As long as this accusation was not substantiated General Abramov determined to take no measures against these Beks, who now showed a very respectful demeanour towards the Russians, but henceforward to watch them very narrowly. After having begged the Amír to pursue closely his son and to strengthen the garrisons of the cities of Núr-Áttá, Kermina, and Kárshí, the General broke up the force assembled at Kette-Kurgán and withdrew to Samarcand on December 22. This concentration of troops had the result of convincing the inhabitants of the principal towns of Bokhára how impossible it was to render assistance to Abdúl-Melik. They even declared that no sooner had he taken possession of a town than the Russians were sure to follow his footsteps.

After these events perfect tranquillity reigned throughout Turkestán and Bokhára. Amír Mozaffer has ever since been the firm friend of Russia, and, overflowing with gratitude, heaps no end of presents on his protectors. Towards the end of the year 1869 he sent his fourth, youngest and favourite son, Abdúl-Fettah-Mirza, a boy of twelve years of age, with an embassy to St. Petersburg, partly to implore Russia's protection for the future, and partly to pay over the tribute due to the Russian Government according to a stipulation in the treaty of peace; but, on the other hand, Russia was to undertake to secure the succession of this prince to the throne of Bokhára. On November 3, 1869, the Czar received the Amír's son and his embassy, on which occasion his Majesty expressed a wish that the amicable relations existing between Russia and Bokhára, which had without any fault of Russia been interrupted, might be again

cemented and further expanded ; the Czar observed also that the Amír proved the sincerity of his assurances by sending his son with this mission. The embassy then offered to the Emperor and Empress of Russia presents from the Amír in the usual number of *nine*, a custom observed by all Turco-Tartar nations, as follows ; namely, 1, a ring with a diamond of a remarkably large size ; 2, a lady's head-dress set with precious stones ; 3, sets of horse appointments of silver and studded with turquoises for four entire horses, which were shortly to arrive from Turkestán ; 4, three robes made from the skins of black horses and lined with the finest cashmere ; 5, three robes of grey lambswool lined with Bokharian stuff known as 'sháli ;' 6, two cashmere dresses ; 7, a piece of wonderfully fine and beautiful cashmere ; 8, eighteen pieces of silk manufactured in Bokhára ; 9, eighteen pieces of the stuff known as 'attri,' half silk and half wool. The embassy left the capital on December 18, but not without the Emperor having offered appropriate return gifts for the presents he had received. He sent to the Amír a plume of brilliants for his turban, a silver tea-service, a fowling-piece, a bronze table-clock, and some pieces of silk ; for his son Tura-Dján, an oriental garment of brocaded silver-cloth, a girdle studded with small brilliants and other precious stones, a silver dressing-case ; for the Amír's uncle, a gold snuff-box with watch set with brilliants, an oriental garment of velvet, a revolver, and some pieces of silk ; for Mirza-Mirarkhur, a silver cup, an oriental garment of velvet, a revolver, and some pieces of silk ; to the secretary of the embassy, a gold watch and chain, a portefeuille, a compass, and a garment. Each servant received besides a silver watch and a garment.

Through the exchange of these presents the friendly



dispositions between Russia and Bokhára were confirmed, and they have not since that time been disturbed, at least outwardly. The Russians have endeavoured ever since to make themselves as much at home as possible in Bokhára ; the Russian soldiers stroll about the streets of Bokhára without being molested by the inhabitants. In Samarcand they have their quarters in the citadel ; the commandant alone resides in the city, but under the protection of the fortress, to which he can retreat at a moment's notice. Life in the city is peaceful and free from danger. The citadel is fortified in such a manner as to defy the attacks of a Bokharian army, and so are all the other fortified places in this country which are in the hands of the Russians. The citadel, the palaces of the Amír and the Beg in Samarcand, have almost entirely lost their Asiatic character. The Amír's palace is now turned into an hospital and a magazine for stores and provisions, whilst the Beg's palace affords accommodation for the administrative bureaux of the Russian officials. The intention of transforming the mosques into churches of the orthodox Greek religion has already been carried out in one instance. A club even has been established by the officers of the garrison. At first there was a great want of tradespeople, which was a perceptible inconvenience, particularly as the few who had settled there had filled their shops with all kinds of useless articles, such as articles of the toilet, children's toys, gaudy finery for ladies, and such like, instead of a supply of articles of daily use and the necessaries of life ; and such piece-goods and manufactured wares as could be obtained after a long delay were either unserviceable on account of their damaged condition or unpurchasable on account of their high prices, and sometimes for both causes together. At length a kind of restaurant was established, and two bakers' shops were opened, one by a

Tartar and the other by a German. After some time a conjuror even found his way here, and he was soon afterwards followed by an Italian organ-grinder and his monkey, who thus wandered into the very heart of Asia. At the commencement of the year 1870 a Russian newspaper, the *Turkestanskiya Vyedomosti*, appeared in Táshkend for circulation in Turkestán.<sup>1</sup>

Whilst the Russians were doing their utmost to relieve the wants that beset their first occupation of their newly acquired possessions, they directed at the same time their chief attention to the means of rendering the stores of natural treasures as profitable as possible. With this view a 'Company for the Encouragement of Industry and Commerce' was started, to carry out the idea of producing cotton in the provinces of Central Asia, for the purpose of becoming independent of America in this article of produce. This company sent a deputation to the Grand Duke Constantine Mikhailovich and to Prince Gorchakov to solicit their support in this undertaking. They both expressed great interest in its success and prosperity. Part of the plan of these enthusiasts in the cotton-growing speculation is to conduct the course of the river Amú-Dariá from the Sea of Aral into the Caspian by following pretty nearly the direction of its former bed.

At the same time the re-establishment of a permanent communication between Russia and Turkestán was taken into consideration, and the utilisation of three different routes was proposed to meet that view. The first was a railway between Orenburg and Táshkend, which, owing to the difficulties of construction during the present state of affairs, caused some demur, and the project was for the moment abandoned.

<sup>1</sup> *Ausland*, 1870, p. 144.

The other two routes were communications by water, which, however, depend upon the navigableness of the rivers Sír- and Amú-Dariá. Preference was given to the route along the Amú-Dariá, because it is the shortest (?) and most convenient (?). This route leads from the Volga through the Caspian Sea, the Turkestán or Hyrcanian Steppe, the Khanate of Khiva, thence on the Amú-Dariá through Bokhára to Táshkend and Kokán.<sup>1</sup>

In connection with this route it was resolved to make a road from the eastern shore of the Caspian, and indeed from the Bay of Krasnovodsk, to the Amú-Dariá, and the utmost expedition in its construction was most urgently recommended. The steamers plying on the Caspian Sea and on the river Volga would make the communication with Moscow complete.<sup>2</sup> One circumstance is, however, essentially necessary to render this route of practical utility, and that is to have entire possession of that river, which now waters the greater portion of the Khanate of Khiva, a territory that has not yet been subjugated by Russia.

<sup>1</sup> Compare Vámbéry's *Russia's Designs on the Eastern Coast of the Caspian Sea*, in the supplement of the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1869, No. 361; also *A Retrospect of the Policy of the Great Foreign Powers*, in the *Ausland*, 1870, pp. 67-68; and again Vámbéry, *The Russian Commercial Route on the Eastern Coast of the Caspian*, in the supplement of the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1870, No. 34.

<sup>2</sup> For particulars of these projected routes vide *Russia's Designs on the Eastern Coast of the Caspian Sea*, by Vámbéry, in the supplement of the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1869, No. 364; also Vámbéry's *The Russian Commercial Route on the Eastern Coast of the Caspian Sea*, in the supplement of the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1870, No. 34, where the disadvantages of this route are discussed.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE OPERATIONS AGAINST KHIVA.

As scarcely a doubt could be entertained of Russia's sooner or later acquiring those districts about the Amú-Dariá which were not yet in her possession, no endeavours were spared to urge the Government on to energetic action in this matter. Thus Krasnovodsk was in all haste turned into a permanent place of arms,<sup>1</sup> and strong detachments of troops were here concentrated. General Kaufmann, the Governor-General of Turkestán, inspected the other fortified places, and had them strengthened according to their requirements. In short, there was every appearance of a war soon breaking out against Khiva, and in all probability it would then have happened if an insurrection of the Northern Kirghiz had not just at that time taken place.

This outbreak is supposed to have originated with the Cossacks of the Don, who would not submit to the new

<sup>1</sup> On November 10, 1869, Colonel Stolyetov, of the *État Major-Général*, embarked with one battalion of the 88th Daghestán Regiment, a detachment of thirty men of the sappers and miners, seventy Cossacks, a sub-division of mountain artillery, and a division of field artillery (unhorsed), on board two steamers at Petrovsk, on the west coast of the Caspian, and landed on November 17 and 19 in the creek of Krasnovodsk, near the valley of Kumodág, where the wells of Shagadám, Suidshekúi, and Balkúi are situated.

organisation of the Cossack army which had been resolved upon by the Minister of War at St. Petersburg. The Kalmuks and the Kirghiz joined with the Cossacks, as has been repeatedly the case in former times.<sup>1</sup> Only the Kirghiz in the district of Turgái remained passive. General Leon von Ballusek<sup>2</sup> induced the tribe of Tshiklinsk to conform to the new regulations, and to set out from Barsúki for the district appointed for the summer pasturage of this nomadic tribe. On the other hand, the insurrectionary movement extended from the Cossacks of the Don to the Kalmuks and Kirghiz dwelling in the steppes of the Don, the Volga, and along the borders of the Ural. The main body of the rebels moved up the right bank of the river Ural towards the town of Uralsk, which had been placed in a state of defence. The Russian settlers in the districts bordering on the European-Asiatic frontier became naturally very much alarmed, and many of the Russian families which were scattered over the plains and steppes fled with all their goods and chattels into the fortified places. The garrison of Uralsk, numbering only 168 men, succumbed under a surprise made by 12,000 insurgents. Soon afterwards its commerce was quite prostrated—in fact, so much so that the caravans from the Sír-Dariá discontinued altogether their journeys.

This insurrection, however, did not excite particular apprehension in Russia, as already on frequent occasions she had had to put down revolts of this kind. Moreover,

<sup>1</sup> Here it must be observed that the Cossacks of the Don, as well as the Kalmuks and Kirghiz, have never been extremely faithful subjects of Russia, and have repeatedly, especially under Pugachev, created revolts and caused bloody wars.

<sup>2</sup> President of the section of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society at Orenburg.

the want of unity in action amongst these Asiatic tribes, generally so hostilely disposed towards each other, led to the hope that this resistance to authority would be entirely suppressed without any great difficulty.

But this rebellion, which the Russians imagined they had crushed for ever in 1869, broke out again with all its former virulence in the summer of the following year. It had been chiefly fostered and supported by the Khivans, who, being inexorable enemies of Russia, constantly did their utmost to inflict what injury they could on Russian interests. Thus it happened that Russia was occupied almost throughout the whole summer of 1870 before she was able to restore perfect tranquillity to those vast steppe districts.

The fort of Novo-Alexandrovsk at the Bay of Mertvy-Kultuk on the Caspian Sea was first taken by the Kirghiz, then burnt, and the garrison put to the sword. This intelligence naturally spurred the Russian commander of the forces to renewed activity, by means of which he at length succeeded in entirely subduing the insurrection. But these tedious operations materially delayed the actual expedition against Khiva. Then the Russians commenced arming themselves, as it were, to overthrow the last remaining bulwark of the Central-Asian people of the Turcoman-Tartaric race—namely, the Khanate of Khiva.

During these transactions in the Kirghiz Steppe affairs in the Khanates had apparently not much changed. Bokhára had for the last two years acquiesced with remarkably quiet submission in her irretrievable fate; whilst the untimely and probably violent death of the Kette-Töre had doomed to silence a great portion of the discontented Mollahs. Mozaffer-Eddin, however, notwithstanding his ostentatious friendship for the Russians, and in particular

for the Governor-General von Kaufmann, secretly hoped still to regain his former power, as is revealed by the missions which he sent to the Courts of Kábul and Constantinople.

Things wore a different aspect in Kokán. Khudayer Khán was known to be from youth upwards a blockhead and dissolute rake, but he prospered to his heart's content in his older days under the shadow of Russian suzerainty. At his court a right jolly life was led and free from all cares. Khiva alone showed now as always a hostile demeanour towards Russia. This state is, as regards territory, the most extensive of the three Khanates; for its southern frontiers are bounded by the northern declivities of the Iranian mountain range as far as Herát. It forms, so to speak, the key to the highly important position of Herát, and for that reason the English have always endeavoured to win over the Khivans to their interests. The missions of Conolly, Abbot, and Shakespear in former years had no other object in view. The ruler of Khiva, Saïd Muhammed Khán, is likewise a dull, short-sighted prince; and his brother too is always stupefied from the effects of opium. The internal condition of Khiva is in frightful disorder. The central power of the government is considerably more feeble than that of Bokhára; the bureaucracy, the so-called *Sipáhis*, is quite impoverished, and therefore powerless. On the whole the Russians need have little cause of anxiety on account of the Uzbek States; in fact, they have already had occasion to make a small conquest on behalf of Mozaffer-Eddin.

Ever since Russia had assisted the Amír of Bokhára against his son and the Begs of Shahr-i-Sabz, the son's allies, there has been a hostile feeling between Russia and that small but turbulent state. In the course of the

summer of 1870 the Russian General Abramov, who was then quartered in Samarcand, undertook a scientific expedition towards the west for the purpose of exploring the country around the sources of the Zarafshán, on which occasion he was obliged to take with him a considerable force of Cossacks, and thus partially denude Samarcand of its garrison. The object of the expedition was attained, for on May 25, 1870, the source of the Zarafshán was discovered. During the General's absence on this expedition the Begs of Shahr-i-Sabz thought it a favourable opportunity, and not exposed to great danger, to make a predatory incursion into the territory of Samarcand. Led by a certain Aidar-Khodshi, they took by surprise the Cossack station in the Altyn-Tágh mountains, plundered the frontier villages, and drove out the villagers. Now it was high time to act energetically.

In the beginning of August 1870 a portion of the garrison of Samarcand was ordered to be in readiness for a campaign. General Abramov received orders to march with one battalion of infantry, two sotnias of Cossacks, and eight guns, and to seize upon Kitáb, the capital of Shahr-i-Sabz. Simultaneously a smaller detachment under Lieutenant-Colonel Sokavnin was despatched to the defile of Kará-Tjábe. The success of the campaign surpassed all expectations. Kitáb, which had the reputation of being impregnable, was taken by storm on August 14. The Russian loss was one officer and eighteen rank and file killed, and eight officers and 100 rank and file wounded. All other places in Shahr-i-Sabz surrendered without even striking a blow.

It was not the intention of the Russians to incorporate this small state, nor was it to remain quite independent. Accordingly they handed it over to its former ruler, the



Amír of Bokhára, who, as soon as the Russians had withdrawn, also took possession of the fortified places. Shahr-i-Sabz, which must now be struck off the map, stands consequently entirely under Russian influence; and the Amír must be contented to see his own Bokharian troops from time to time relieved by Russian Cossacks.<sup>1</sup>

Of more importance, however, than the three Khanates has now become the state of the Atálik-Gházi, which has sprung up in the adjacent Eastern Turkestán. Jakúb Beg had some time since extended his sway over the territory of Altyshár, formerly called 'The Six Cities,' and gradually made himself master of the greatest part of Thian-Shan Nan-Lu. Besides the state of the Atálik-Gházi there existed in Dzungaria only the Khanate of Kúlja, which owed its origin, like the Khanate of the Kúshbegi, to the great Mohammedan rising of the Dungánís in the year 1864.

The Chinese Government, then fully occupied with the subjugation of the Taípings, abandoned Dzungaria to the rebels. As before stated, the rebels divided into two parties—one, under the Kokánese Jakúb Beg, founded Káshgar; the other, consisting principally of the inhabitants of the Mongol districts, elected from amongst their own people a chief named Abál Oghlán, who established his residence at Kúlja.<sup>2</sup> Of these two states, however, Káshgar without doubt became the more important; but its proximity to the newly acquired Russian provinces in Central Asia might easily lead to an unpleasant kind of intermeddling. Besides, the part played towards the

<sup>1</sup> *The Campaign of the Russians against Shahr-i-Sabz (Allgemeine Zeitung, 1870, No. 296).*

<sup>2</sup> *The Russians in Central Asia (Allgemeine Zeitung, 1873, No. 29).*

Russians by the Atálik-Gházi had been up to the present moment of a very equivocal character.

After Captain Reinthal's visit to Káshgar, as before mentioned, the Russians erected a fort on the Naryn, only eight miles distant from the chief town of the Kúshbegi, by whom it could not of course be regarded with friendly eyes. So he began to coquet with the English, and received with particular civility some persons of that country travelling on private affairs, such as Messrs. Hayward and Shaw. He even frankly confessed to them that nothing could be more desirable, or give him greater pleasure, than an alliance with the English Government in India.

Now, as it was a very rare occurrence to find English goods and wares in the bazaars of Yárkand and Káshgar, and furthermore as the political importance of maintaining a good understanding with the Atálik-Gházi, who ruled over a territory on Russia's flank, was self-evident, the British Government at Calcutta determined on sending a mission to the Court of Káshgar. Mr. T. Douglas Forsyth, Political Agent at Jullundhur, accompanied by the traveller Mr. R. Shaw and an Indian merchant, Tára Singh, was entrusted with this important mission, during which, however, the English heaped blunder upon blunder. The mission was not only limited as to time, but was also sparingly furnished with money. In the inhospitable regions of the Chang-Chenmo Pass the mission was nearly starved to death through the treachery of the Cashmerian officials, in which affair even the Maharájah himself could not be held quite blameless. And when it had advanced only as far as Yárkand it had the misfortune to arrive there during the absence of the Kúshbegi. This circumstance compelled it, after remain-

ing there at the most only four weeks, which were passed, moreover, in a kind of honourable confinement, to return home without having in any way accomplished its object ; for it failed to see the Atálik-Gházi, and consequently to settle the requisite stipulations. The British mission was, therefore, a total failure, but chiefly through the shortsightedness of English diplomacy. Whether Jakúb Khán on this occasion followed a hint from Russia we must leave undetermined. This occurred in 1870.

Whatever might be the case, Jakúb Khán's obedience to Russia was by no means sincere, as after-events will show. He reconciled himself with the ruler of Bokhára, towards whom he had hostile feelings for many years. He knew so well how to stir up the Amír's secret desires, that they both united to take up a position against Russia by sending forward a combined army of 29,000 men to the Russian frontier. This confederation was also to be joined by the Kháns of Kokán and Khiva ; in short, the Islamite rulers of the states bordering on the Russian provinces of Central Asia were to combine in a powerful league for a 'Holy War' against their Christian enemies. Long conferences then followed at the Court of Káshgar, the centre of the coalition. Their designs, however, did not remain hidden from the Russians, who struck at once a blow that was calculated to put the Atálik Gházi on his guard. For they occupied directly the Khanate of Kúlja, adjoining to his territory.

For a long time the Russians had cast wistful eyes on that country. Already in the treaty concluded on August 6, 1851, at Kúlja, the Chinese Government had permitted the transit of Russian caravans to this western province ; and thus the cities of Chúgútshák and Urumtsi became the centres of an extensive traffic. In the year 1854 Russia

had already imported from the former place tea worth 1,600,000 roubles, and exported thither manufactured goods estimated at 500,000 roubles. But in 1855 hordes of Mongols made inroads into this country, and entirely destroyed this important entrepôt. Afterwards the former commercial relations were resumed; but they did not reach their former expansion, and were finally interrupted by the insurrection of the Dunganís.

The new ruler, Abál Oghlán, showed no friendly disposition towards the Russians. He even tolerated the inroads of his subjects into the neighbouring Russian provinces, stirred up the Kirghiz to rebellion, and broke off all relations with the Russian merchants. The Government at St. Petersburg therefore determined, basing its pretensions on the above-named treaty, to pursue energetic measures against this intractable neighbour.

In the beginning of May 1871 Major Balitsky with a small detachment crossed the river Borodshúdsir, which forms the boundary between both territories, for the purpose of making a reconnaissance of the enemy's country. Towards the end of June operations on a larger scale commenced under the command of General Kolpakovsky with a corps that did not, however, number more than 1,785 men and 63 officers. But the Russian arms of precision gained success everywhere. As early as July 4, 1871, Abál Oghlán left his capital and repaired to the head-quarters of the Russian general; to whom he said, 'I trusted to the righteousness of my cause and to the help of God. Conquered, I submit to the will of the Almighty. If any crime has been committed, punish the sovereign, but spare his innocent subjects.' On the following day the victorious general made his formal entry into Kúlja, after a campaign that lasted only eight

days. He promised protection to all who would lay down their arms. The 200 men who alone remained from Abál Oghlán's army were immediately discharged, and then each hurried off to his home. Two hours afterwards perfect order prevailed in the town, and the shops in the bazaar were again opened.

Dzungaria was 'in perpetuity' annexed as a province to Russia, for she declared the rule of the native sovereign to be for ever extinct. She then appointed the Russian city of Orel for the future residence of the Khán, Abál Oghlán, and gave the name of 'The Priilinskaya Guberniya,' or Government of Priilinsk, to his country. And here it cannot be denied that the conquerors brought the blessings of civilisation to these barbarous districts. Immediately after the occupation of Kúlja General Kolpakovsky abolished slavery, and declared all who had been hitherto slaves to be free, and they numbered nearly 75,000.

Although these events in the neighbouring state of Káshgar must have considerably toned down the warlike spirit, yet General von Kaufmann did not on that account remain inactive. On the contrary, he prepared to act with all vigour, particularly against Khiva, which even in November 1871 had commenced hostilities on the Caspian Sea. Just as the Russians had seized a particular point (the island of Kálály?), where they intended to erect a fort, the Khivan leader Alí Aráslán appeared with an overpowering force and drove them off. Not contented with this success, Khiva sent forth several detached bodies of troops to the tribes of the steppes stretching along the plateaux of Ust-Urt, to levy there contributions in the name of the Khán of Khiva, and to declare all the district south of the river Emba subject to the Khanate of Khiva.

Accordingly there seemed but little doubt of Khiva's recommencement of the struggle as early as the spring of 1872, especially as its fanatical Mollahs used every means of instigation in their power, whilst the populace were inflamed to the 'Holy War' by a whole host of refugees, who had fled from those parts of Turkestán held by the Russians.

Through the exertions of General von Kaufmann, aided by his influence over the Khán of Kokán, the coalition of the Central Asian rulers, that wore such a threatening aspect, was again successfully broken up; and at the same time Khiva was rendered harmless by the disturbances fomented by Russian intrigues throughout the territory of the Khanate. By means of Russian influence the Turcomans rose up; amongst whom some tribes, as, for instance, that of the Ogúrdsháli in the island of Chöleken, felt deep sympathy with the Russians. Under the leadership of Mamerál Beg they rose against the Khán, threatened his capital, and thus rendered action beyond the frontier impossible. The cause of their rising was a refusal to pay the taxes.

Khiva, now engaged with the affairs of its own country, could no longer join the coalition against Russia; in fact, it was for the moment obliged even to seek the friendship of the Russians in order to ward off their attack. For that reason the Khán quickly despatched a deputation to the Czar with a view of forming friendly relations with his court. As the coalition was not brought about, Bokhára and Káshgar came to the wise conclusion that it was not prudent to move against Russia without the co-operation of the other states; and consequently they deferred their warlike designs for a more propitious moment.

In the meanwhile the Russians had, through the capture of Kúlja, become much nearer neighbours to Jakúb Beg, and determined beforehand to bring the rebellious Kúshbegi to obedience by friendly means. Consequently about the middle of May 1872 the river Naryn was crossed by a Russian embassy under the guidance of Baron Kaulbars, a diplomatist of very great experience in the affairs of Central Asia.

This embassy, composed of several members following scientific and commercial pursuits, directed its chief attention to the conclusion of a commercial treaty with the Atálik-Gházi, and at the same time to enter into the most friendly and binding relations with him. It was received on the part of this exceedingly cunning and hypocritical Kúshbegi in the warmest and most gracious manner. From the frontier to Káshgar the embassy was accompanied by escorts and guards of honour, that had been sent forward for that purpose; and the ruler over Eastern Turkestán said to Baron Kaulbars at the first audience, ‘Sit upon my knees, on my bosom, or where ye like; for ye are guests sent me from heaven.’ The reception and treatment of the embassy were not less friendly and courteous than were his words. The Russians, in contradistinction to the English, were permitted to move about free and unhindered as they listed. In fact, two merchants received permission and safe-conduct on their journey to visit Yárkand and Khoten. Even a military review, which Baron Kaulbars requested to witness, was granted, upon which occasion Jakúb Beg thus expressed himself: ‘I look upon the Russians as my intimate friends; otherwise I should not have shown them my military power, for it is not usual to make known one’s actual condition to an enemy.’

It was consequently easy to conclude a commercial treaty, in which the Atálik-Gházi pledged himself not to throw any hindrance in the way of the commercial and political interests of Russia. With a degree of politeness quite unusual, Jákub Beg insisted upon signing the record of this treaty on May 21 (old style), on the Saint's day of the Grand-Duke Constantine. As the Russians were taking leave he overflowed with kindness, and openly avowed that he had already been entreated by the English to enter into friendly relations; but he felt himself powerfully attracted towards his good and mighty neighbour the Czar, and only with him desired to live in peace. Soon afterwards Jákub Khan's ambassador, Mirza-Múhi-ed-din-Maasum, appeared in Táshkend as the bearer of the signed stipulations. He was received by General von Kaufmann with every demonstration of honour and respect. This did not, however, prevent this crafty and deceitful Asiatic, scarcely six months later, from assuming a hostile attitude towards Russia.

In the meanwhile the Khivans had persisted in plundering the Russian caravans, and in making marauding incursions into the Kirghiz steppes. Moreover, they refused to liberate some forty Russian prisoners who, about a year ago, had been taken captive by the frontier tribes, and delivered over to the Khán of Khiva. According to the representation of the Khivans, the Khán had demanded of the Russian Government a convention by which both parties should be mutually bound not to molest or violate each other's territory.

Soon afterwards a mission from Russia arrived in Khiva to demand the release of these prisoners. Some of them were set at liberty, and the mission was informed that the remainder would, after concluding the above-mentioned



convention, be also released. The Russian authorities, however, did not approve of this mode of action, and declared their dissatisfaction. But the rumours of military movements on the part of Russia disquieted the Khán, and induced him to seek counsel of the British Government in India. The Viceroy received, indeed, the Uzbek diplomatic agent, who may have sought for not only advice but also substantial aid; but he gave him the only counsel possible under these circumstances, which was to comply with the just demands of the Czar. This suggestion, however, appears to have met with no attention: at all events this affair greatly contributed to the determination of Russia to take energetic measures, and, for the sake of protecting its commerce, to bring the Khanate of Khiva entirely under subjection.

For that purpose, in the autumn of 1872, a large expedition was set on foot; it consisted of fourteen companies of infantry, three sotnias of Cossacks, and twenty field-pieces. This detachment, under the command of the brave yet cautious Colonel Markasov, made a reconnaissance from Krasnovodsk into the Trans-Caspian steppes, and pushed forward to the well Ortaku (Urtalaya), which is situated about 300 versts eastwards from the Balkan mountains. Turning then to the south, the detachment reached the fort of Kizil-Arvát, which was destroyed in 1870, where it arrived October 30, 1872. On the march, however, it inflicted punishment on the Turkomans for their hostile attitude, by destroying several *aúls* in the district of Ushámála.

This reconnaissance gave rise to the strangest rumours. According to some reports, this unpretending expedition miscarried. This much, however, is certain, that the Khivans took the offensive, and stirred up all the tribes of

the steppes as far as Orenburg. The Khán, who was only twenty-three years old, and a dashing chieftain of these wild hordes, broke through the Russian frontier with 8,000 of these marauders of the steppes.

Soon after the receipt of this intelligence, it was determined on at St. Petersburg to adopt a more energetic course of action. In the beginning of the year 1873, after the return of General von Kaufmann, who had meanwhile paid a visit to St. Petersburg, it was resolved to make a commencement of the military operations in earnest, under the direction of that very experienced commander.<sup>1</sup> The attack on Khiva will be made from the east, and at

<sup>1</sup> For the sake of comparison, we give here *in extenso* the statement of the *Daily Telegraph* of January 13, 1873, on this subject, as follows:— ‘The Russian Government has a double motive or pretext for its new invasion of Khiva—the political grievance which formed the ostensible justification of the first attack, and the desire, or rather the necessity, of wiping out the reproach of a military failure. Refusing to accept the messages of propitiation sent by the Khan of Khiva, and determined to draw the utmost advantage from the wrongs which she could charge upon his government, Russia sent a column of troops, by way of reconnoissance, into the territory between the Caspian on one side, the Aral Sea and Amoo Daria river on the other. This force, under the command of Colonel Markosoff, had instructions to get as near as it possibly could to the city of Khiva, and even, it is believed, if fortune favoured the enterprise, to enter and occupy the place itself. The importance of such an acquisition could hardly be exaggerated, for the Khivan capital commanded the lower course of the Amoo Daria towards the Sea of Aral, and forms a most potential point for the conduct of military operations towards either the Afghan or the Persian frontier. While Colonel Markosoff's column was making its way across the steppes which lie between the Russian frontier and the city of Khiva, its progress was impeded and harassed, though with slight effect, by the troops of the Khan, in the desultory warfare to which they are best accustomed, but finally the attack on the invaders took the shape of a surprise, which resulted in the capture of the Russian camels and baggage. The reconnoitring column, thus deprived of its essential means for carrying on the campaign, had no alternative but to retrace its steps; and, although the

the same time with such a manifestation of power as will leave no doubt as to its success. Before April or

Russian Government would fain have it believed that the troops returned after accomplishing their object, the painful fact is that they suffered a repulse, That such was the case, at least in the belief of the enemy, was clearly proved by the subsequent action of the Khivans. Elated by their success—carried away, as most of those Central Asiatic peoples are apt to be, by a belief in their own invincibility and their perpetual tenure of independent power—they made a descent in great force upon the country of the Khirgiz, which is within the Russian confines, though not entirely reconciled to the Russian rule. In the steppes of the Khirgiz the “raiders” committed extensive and cruel depredations, plundering and destroying wherever they came, except in the cases—not by any means rare—where they found friends and sympathisers among the original nomadic possessors of this wild and thinly-peopled region. Indeed, it is not concealed from their own consciousness by those who guide the operations of Russia in Central Asia, that the Muscovite rule is not so much relished or so willingly borne as the world has been wanted to believe, that the Asiatic mind does not appreciate the European form of government. All the more desirable, therefore, was it that the shock to Russian *prestige* sustained in Colonel Markosoff’s repulse should be promptly countervailed, and that the swiftly flying rumour, which so peculiarly affects the Asiatic imagination—as we know by sad experience in our own Eastern affairs—should be disarmed by the tidings of an effectual vengeance. A Council of Ministers was summoned by the Emperor Alexander, over which he presided in person, and at which, despite the strongly-urged opposition of Prince Gortschakoff, it was decided by a large majority that a new expedition to Khiva should be undertaken, with a force sufficiently powerful not only to retaliate upon the Khan and his subjects the affront to the Russian arms involved in the defeat of Colonel Markosoff and the raid on the Khirgiz territory, but also to take possession of the city of Khiva itself, and practically bring the whole Khanate under Russian rule. The invading force is to operate in three columns, each of them being commanded by a general thoroughly acquainted with the nature of the country and the peculiar character of the warfare which its inhabitants may be expected to wage. As yet, the precise direction from which the various columns will approach their objective point is known only to a chosen few, if it has even been fully decided upon; one division, however, will, beyond any doubt, move westward from Tashkend. Altogether the troops will number 12,000 men, with about fifty pieces of artillery—a small and inadequate force, it might seem, if it were not remembered how powerfully the com-

May 1873, it will be scarcely possible to learn the actual results of the Khivan expedition.

pact formation, the strict discipline, and the intelligence of European troops can tell against the loose order and the imperfect armament of the Asiatic peoples. The direction of the concerted movements and command-in-chief of the three divisions will be entrusted to General Kaufmann, who has gained, with some distinction, in the valleys of the Sir Daria and the Zerefshan, the experience he is now required to turn to advantage in the lower valley of the Amoo Daria, or ancient Oxus. It is anticipated that the operations of the several columns will begin about the end of the present month.'

## CHAPTER XII.

## EVENTS IN AFGHÁNISTÁN.

FOR a series of years has Kábul, not less than Herát, notwithstanding its situation beyond the confines of Turkestán and on the southern slopes of the mountain ranges of Central Asia, exercised an important political influence over the Khanates of the Central-Asian steppes. Here, simultaneously, arose the first struggle between England and Russia for supremacy in the East, which was interwoven and carried on with every kind of intrigue; it was here that both powers, though only in diplomatic schemes, stood for the first time face to face on Asiatic soil.

Not so much from what has already happened in those countries, as from the events that might soon possibly arise there, do we consider ourselves bound to lay before our readers a short historical retrospect of the most recent occurrences in Northern Afghánistán—a country whose very name some thirty years ago hung upon every one's lips in England, and could not be uttered without horror, and which has of late begun again to attract anxious glances from India as well as from the West.

The Afgháns, who inhabit the greatest part of that mountainous region which expands with ever varying features from the valley of the Indus to the elevated plains of Persia, are a people of Aryan descent. They consequently form a link in the great Indo-Germanic

family, and speak *Pushto* (*Paxto*, Persian),<sup>1</sup> a language that in the first place traces back its origin to the Eranian family. If any people in Asia deserve the appellation of ‘*a nation*,’ it is surely the Afgháns. By virtue of their warlike vigour and endurance, in which they far surpass all their neighbours, they might be summoned to uphold order and discipline in a larger sphere, if they only possessed the faculty of maintaining these qualities amongst themselves. Their separatist tendencies and their inordinate love of independence are the chief causes of their weakness as a nation. Instead of contending against foreign enemies, their exuberant national strength breaks out into internal feuds and chronic anarchy. It is true that the separation into independent tribes is conformable with the nature of the country, which embraces within its limits every variety of climate—snow-girt mountains and sultry tropical plains, blooming valleys of high elevation, and low burning sandy plains. Consequently they require a manner of living of very great variety. The valleys of Afghánistán open out on every side like sally-ports; but just in the heart of the country the Afghán tribes are separated from one another by almost impassable defiles and mountain ridges. Nevertheless they have been able to assert their power even beyond their own frontiers, whenever a chieftain succeeded in uniting the numerously divided tribes, so as to make them

<sup>1</sup> The eminent Vienna professor and linguist, Dr. Frederick Müller, positively places the *Paxto* amongst the languages of the Eranian family, particularly on account of those phonetic peculiarities which decidedly characterise it as an Eranian language. (Vide his *Essay on the Language of the Afgháns* (*Paxto*), in the June number of 1862 in the *Transactions of the Philosophical Historical Class of the Imperial Academy of Sciences at Vienna*, vol. xl. p. 3.)

act in concert for one common cause, or at least in bringing one of these tribes into a predominant position.<sup>1</sup>

From the family of Sidú, a very distinguished Afghán branch of the house of Abdallah, descended two brothers, who served with distinction under Nádír Sháh of Persia till he was murdered in 1747, when one of them, by name Ahmed Khán, the head of the Sidushís (or sons of Sidú), revolted against the Persian suzerainty, seized the supreme power in his native country, and caused himself to be crowned at Kandáhar as King of the Afgháns. At the same time he assumed the title of Dúri-î-Dúrán (signifying 'Pearl of the Age' or the 'Age of good Fortune') and changed the name of the Abdallah into Dúránís.

Whoever wishes to found a state amongst the Afgháns must limit as little as possible the independence of the tribes, and must remain equal amongst equals. Thus acted Ahmed. Brilliant deeds of arms caused the conquest of the greater part of the territory of Khorásán. But India, which Ahmed knew from former experience, was essentially the country coveted for plunder. Delhi had already been twice in his hands, when a fresh Mahratta army in 1760 encountered him in a decisive engagement on the plain of Panipút, which he almost entirely destroyed. Yet the Mahrattas did not suffer him to remain in Delhi; so he had to be contented with the Punjáb and its capital, Lahore. He died in 1773, but too early, as he had left no sons powerful enough to carry out his intentions.

Disputes amongst his descendants for the succession to the throne agitated and weakened his kingdom, which lost

<sup>1</sup> Julius Braun, *Afghánistán* (*Neue freie Presse* of November 19, 1868).

a great portion of territory to Runjet-Singh, the ruler of the unbelieving Sikhs. Finally, the Empire of Dúrání fell to pieces in the year 1823. Only Herát remained to the descendants of Ahmed. All the other provinces came under the power of the Barukshís (Baráksís), a clan or tribe of the Dúránís. Amidst these complications under the last rulers of the empire arose Dost Mahommed Khán and his younger brothers, who vowed vengeance on Ahmed's family for their ingratitude, ignominy, and deeds of blood; but as soon as they began to make a partition of the empire they became deadly enemies. Dost Mahommed Khán, however, maintained possession of Kábul. Like Schamyl and Abd-el-Kader, he became one of the chief defenders of Islamism; but not so much from his own free will as through the provocation of England and her hypocritical and submissive ally Runjet-Singh, who was the real founder of the Sikh empire and the oppressor of the Mussulmans in the Punjáb.

When this ruler, grown grey in vice and crimes, wished to extend his frontier into the valley of the river Kábul, he came into collision with the Afgháns dwelling in that valley, and their sovereign, Dost Mahommed. Goaded on by the Mollahs against the unbelieving Sikhs, the Afgháns fought with exasperation, but succumbed at last to superior numbers; they were pursued by Runjet-Singh, in the year 1823, with frightful slaughter, to the Khyber Pass.

This country of fanaticism, however, was destined to prepare bitter hours for the Mahárajah and his supporters, the English. Revolt followed revolt. And these Mahomedan fanatics cheerfully sacrificed their lives for the chance of destroying even one unbeliever. At the battle of Jamrud, in 1836, fought near the entrance of the



Khyber Pass, not less than 12,000 Sikhs, and certainly not many fewer Afgháns, are said to have fallen.

Meanwhile, from the neighbouring Indian empire, the English, in secret understanding with a party of natives, took into favour the family of the Dúránís, who had been deposed in 1823, but in particular a certain Shudjá-úl-Múlk-Sháh, the murdered Khán's son, who was banished in 1809. They declared him the rightful heir and sovereign of Kábul, and repudiated Dost Mahommed as a usurper, against whom in 1838 they commenced hostilities. In point of fact this step was owing to the dread of an intervention in Afghánistán on the part of Russia, which was just then arming against Khiva.

Chiefly to prevent this, the English commenced a war against Afghánistán, having allied themselves with the Mahárájah Runjet-Singh,<sup>1</sup> the sworn enemy of the Afgháns. Kandáhar was taken. Dost Mahommed was obliged to fly to Bámíán, and the miserable puppet Sháh-Shudjá, who had been brought into the country by the English at so great a sacrifice and then forced upon the people, made, on August 7, 1839, his public entry into Kábul; its castle, Bálá-Hissár, built on a rock and now in ruins, served as his palace. Dost Mahommed made several attempts to drive out the English and their *protégé*, which were, however, always unsuccessful; finally he was himself compelled to seek refuge amongst his adversaries the English.

The resistance of the Afgháns, however, against British influence became more and more determined. In 1841 an insurrection broke out, which was so terrible that General Sir Robert Sale had great difficulty in reaching

<sup>1</sup> He died in 1839.

Jalálábád. In Kábul<sup>1</sup> also, on November 2, 1841, the rising<sup>2</sup> was so formidable and so sudden that Sháh-Shudjá and the British troops under General Mountstuart Elphinstone were scarcely able to gain the citadel Bálá-Hissár and their entrenched camp.

About the same time the English suffered great losses in Kohistán and the surrounding mountain districts. The troops in Ghizní and Kandáhar were blocked up by the deep snow, and prevented from assuming the offensive; and the English troops were everywhere exposed to the danger of being overpowered by the numerical superiority of the Afgháns. Their position in Kábul from day to day became more serious, as the negotiations with the Afgháns, at the head of whom stood a son of Dost Mohammed—Akbar-Khán—were all in vain.

The English envoy at Kábul, Sir William Macnaghten, was murdered when at a conference with Akbar relative to the withdrawal of the English troops. And at length a treaty was concluded, which stipulated a free retreat to

<sup>1</sup> The population of Kábul contains only a small proportion of Afgháns; for even the poorest Afghán disdains the occupation of trade and commerce. Consequently the inhabitants of the city consist of Tájiks, Persians, natives of India, and Hindkís (descendants of the Hindús); not the least important of the population are the Kizil-bashís (or *Red Caps*), who are the descendants of the Turks brought hither by Nádir Sháh for the security of his dynasty. Although degenerated, like most of the Turks out of their own country, these Kizil-bashís, when governed by their own chieftains, still represent a considerable military power. They are hated by the Afgháns. They might also prove highly serviceable to the English, had not the latter from the very commencement pursued a mistaken policy.

<sup>2</sup> The first English victim of this insurrection was Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Alexander Burnes. He was killed by a pistol-shot by a Mollah, or, according to other accounts, by an Armenian, in his attempt to escape in the disguise of a native from his house, which had been surrounded by a mob, and was by them torn to pieces. (Vide, with reference to Burnes, J. B. Eyries, *Notice sur Alexandre Burnes*, Paris, 1842, 8vo.)

the British force from Kábul, on the condition that some hostages were left behind. Akbar escorted in person the army, which marched out on January 6, 1842, to its destination, Jalálábád, distant 90 English miles; but notwithstanding the treaty, they were during the passage of the mountain passes continually exposed to attacks, which, together with the dreadful hardships of the long march, nearly annihilated the army of Kábulistán.

The grassy meadows and the rocky valleys, the cities and forts strewn with ruins—all these have been profusely saturated with British blood. And, indeed, this discomfiture of the Indo-British army in the year 1842 was more complete than that of Varus in the Teutoburg forest.

The English felt the impossibility of maintaining themselves in Afghánistán, and consequently determined to abandon the attempt; but not before they had first avenged their defeat by a fierce and destructive expedition. Dost Mahommed, released by the English, took again possession of his throne. Under his guidance the Afgháns, as early as 1846, formed an alliance with the Sikhs for the purpose of overthrowing the British Indian Empire; and the allies fought many a bloody battle against the English in the Punjáb. After the decisive battle of Gúzerát, on February 21, 1849, the Sikhs were abandoned by the Afgháns. Dost Mahommed fled with his army, still 1,600 men strong, across the Indus. The British troops again pushed through the Khyber Passes and began the subjugation of individual Afghán tribes.

Those portions of Afghánistán conquered by Runjet-Singh were, together with the empire of the Sikhs, incorporated with the British Indian Empire. In order to put an end to his position, doubly threatened—on one side by the English, and on the other by the Shiite Persians—

Dost Mahommed determined to seek the friendship of the former, who could make good use of his powerful kingdom as a bulwark against Russia in Herát and in Bucharia.

On March 30, 1855, an offensive and defensive alliance was concluded at Pesháwar between Dost Mahommed and the English, who had for some time past jealously watched the growth of Russian power in Asia, and, in fact, in Persia, where, from Mahommed Mirza-Sháh's reign, in 1834, the English and Russian influence had been constantly trying to outrival each other. Under the new sovereign of Persia, Nasr-eddin-Mirza, the Russian influence has prevailed at the Court of Tehrán, which England in vain endeavoured to neutralise through her ambassador Mr. Murray.

When disputes arose relative to the succession at Herát, after the death of the popular Wazír Yar-Mahommed-Khán, on August 31, 1851, the influence of Russia was sufficiently powerful to move the Sháh to intermeddle in the affairs of Herát, which was actually dependent on Persia; and Herát was just on the point of falling, when the English ambassador succeeded in effecting the raising of the siege. On that occasion the Persians entered into a very important convention with England, then supporting as a candidate the pretender Dost Mahommed of Kábul, and agreed never again to molest the Afgháns, and even in the event of being attacked by them in the first instance to implore the good services of England.

Notwithstanding this, the Persians in 1855 again sent an army to Herát, and Dost Mahommed, in spite of his heroic resistance, was compelled to yield to the victorious Persians. They took the city as well as the citadel. They then placed on the throne of Herát Júsúf, Russia's *protégé* and the vassal of Persia. About the same time,

however, Persia was attacked on the coast by a small English expeditionary force; but after repeated defeats she was obliged to withdraw her troops and to sue for peace, which was signed at Paris, on March 4, 1857, through the mediation of France, by Feruk-Khán, as Minister Plenipotentiary, whereby England obtained the right of appointing consuls wherever Russian consulates had been established.

England's fear of Russia showed itself again in that stipulation of the treaty by which the Court of Tehrán was bound never again to interfere in the affairs of Herát, and not even to send troops thither in the event of its sovereignty over that province being threatened without first having sought the good offices of the English in the matter. England's wish was to keep off Russia from Herát—the key to Hindostán—at any price. The Russians, as is reported, had on a former occasion offered the Sháh to exchange the province of Eriván for Herát.

After the termination of the Herát campaign, which had an unfavourable termination for Persia as well as for Dost Mahommed, the ruler of Kábul directed his attention to the small territory on the south of the Upper Oxus, stretching towards the Hindú-Kúsh, which, as far as Herát, has been from time immemorial the chosen battle-field for the smaller robber-states, such as the Khanates of Kundúz, Khúlm, Balkh, Akche, Sáripúl, Shiborgán, Andchúi, and Maimaneh. On this battle-field have met arrayed against each other even the rulers of Bokhára and Afghánistán, who in turns succeeded in bringing the smaller Khanates under their yoke. The influence of Bokhára prevailed to the beginning of this century; since then, however, it has been forced to yield to the encroachments of the Afghán tribes of the Dúránís, Sidúshís, and

Barúkshís. Finally, Dost Mahommed succeeded in bringing under subjection all the smaller Khanates, with the exception of Badakhshán and Maimaneh, and then he formed from them the Afghán province of Turkestán, and placed a garrison of 10,000 men in its capital, Balkh.

But Dost Mahommed did not give up his long-cherished designs on Herát, where in the meanwhile his nephew Ahmed-Khán reigned since 1857, who was compelled by the wrath of his uncle to seek assistance at the Court of Tehrán. Ahmed-Khán is nominally an independent sovereign, but in reality a vassal of Persia, of which he makes no secret. England has endeavoured in vain to emancipate him from Persia, and to bring him to feel the value of her own influence. Ahmed-Khán took but little notice of these efforts, and England herself could scarcely act freely in the matter without compromising her relations with Dost Mahommed, who has long considered Herát as his fair prey.

When the Indian mutiny broke out in 1857, the Cabinet of St. James's, in spite of the offensive and defensive treaty, found it, indeed, expedient to purchase the neutrality of the Afghán ruler during the whole continuance of the war, at the exorbitant price of 10,000*l.* monthly, adopting on this occasion the maxim that true economy consists in paying well or not at all. Although Dost Mahommed held his engagement with India, he nevertheless profited by this opportunity to seize upon Herát by a *coup de main*.

The Kandáhar princes in Southern Afghánistán wrested from Herát its most outlying province, Ferrah; this was of vital importance from its great fertility, a quality so much wanting in the central elevated plateau of Herát. The victory soon afterwards gained by Dost

Mahommed over the Khán of Kandáhar added this province also to his possessions. The imprudent attempt of the Amír of Herát to retake this province from so powerful a ruler led to a war with Kábul, and brought England, after having vainly endeavoured at mediation, into an awkward position. For on the one hand she saw how Dost Mahommed by degrees had elevated himself till he became master over the whole of Afghánistán, and finally, through the subjection of the northern Khanates, had consolidated a mighty empire at the very gates of India; on the other hand she became necessarily exposed to the reproach of Persia, which, already jealous of the great expansion of Dost Mahommed's territories, complained of the breach of the treaty of Paris, and demanded, by virtue of the same, a foreign intervention.<sup>1</sup> Too much engaged with the Indian mutiny, and perhaps partly satisfied that Herát had slipped away from Persia, Sir John Lawrence, then Governor-General of India, was contented with making representations on the subject to the sovereign of Kábul, of which, however, Dost Mahommed did not take further notice.

The death in 1863 of the aged Dost Mahommed forms a highly important event in the history of Central Asia. Independence was not restored to Herát; for Dost Mahommed's successor to the throne of Kábul, Shír-Alí-Khán, appointed his youthful son, Mahommed-Jakúb-Alí, as *Sirdar* (Governor) of the Khanate, who remained at the head of the government until the triumph of his cause.

Now commenced in Afghánistán those troubles which for a long time afterwards distracted the country. The Amír of Bokhára, desirous of taking advantage of this state

<sup>1</sup> *Kölnische Zeitung* of March 20, 1867.

of affairs, immediately sent 10,000 gold pieces to the Khán of Maimaneh ; an agreement was concluded between them, by which Mozaffer was to cross the Oxus and unite with the Khán of Maimaneh, for the purpose of conjointly attacking the Afgháns. But the hot-headed young Khán, Husein, without waiting for the arrival of his confederate, forthwith commenced the struggle single-handed.

Dost Mahommed had appointed his son Shír-Alí as his successor. But this choice roused the jealousy of his elder brothers Azím and Afzúl, who conjointly disputed his right to the sovereign power. The English, however, felt in duty bound to support Shír-Alí's claims, so that a frightful war of succession was kindled, resulting in perpetual insurrections and in bloody battles.

In the year 1865 the Amír of Kábul succeeded in treacherously seizing three of his step-brothers. But soon afterwards dissensions arose between him, and the Indian Government, which had offered an asylum to Azím-Khán. Meanwhile Shír-Alí's position became extremely critical ; for a portion of his troops refused to march against his brothers, then in arms against him, and at the same time the Amír of Bokhára was advancing against Balkh. In April 1866 Kábul itself was occupied by Azím while Shír-Alí was in Kandáhar.<sup>1</sup> The latter left Kandáhar with 8,000 infantry and 20,000 cavalry to attack Kábul. Although the contest, from want of provisions in camp, was for the present deferred, and Shír-Alí remained during part of the month of May still in Kandáhar, a decisive action was soon to be expected. In fact, by the end of May he was totally defeated, with

<sup>1</sup> Kandáhar is an abbreviation of Iskandahar (*Alexandria*). In fact, in ancient history it was called Alexandria, because it was founded by Alexander the Great.



the loss of the whole of his artillery, and fled back again to Kandáhar, in order if possible to reach Herát. Whilst Shír-Alí was raising new armies, Azím's and Afzúl's power became more and more consolidated.

About this time an envoy from Bokhára appeared at Kábul, in order to procure assistance from the ruler of Kábul against Russia. The latter would, however, do nothing without having first consulted the English Government. On the other hand, later intelligence from Calcutta mentioned that a Russian envoy had arrived in Kábul, and that Afzúl-Khán had concluded a convention with him, but had sent back the English agent to Pesháwar. In fact, the current opinion in Bombay was that, on account of these complications in Afghánistán, an army of observation would be formed on the North-West frontiers at Pesháwar. Shír-Alí, though conquered, had in the meanwhile recovered from his defeats, and in September 1866 made preparations on a large scale to attack Azím and Afzúl in Kábul, which had induced those princes to send an envoy to the Russians to procure their aid.

Towards the end of 1866 and the beginning of 1867 three important engagements took place between the troops of the Amír Shír-Alí and Afzúl-Khán, but without any decisive result. Shír-Alí was not defeated before February 1867 by Azím-Khán and his nephew Abderrahman, Afzúl's son, and compelled to fly to Herát, on which occasion Kandáhar fell into the hands of the conqueror.

Shír-Alí then offered Herát to the Russians and Balkh to Abderrahman, in order to induce him to desert his other relatives. This fact, however, is certain, that Russian influence was continually gaining ground in Kábul. Towards the middle of the year 1867 the Afgháns had actually the intention of placing Kábul under Russian protection ;

and in October of that year Jakúb-Khán, Shír-Alí's son, the governor of Herát, acknowledged Russian suzerainty.

On October 10, 1867, Afzúl-Khán, Abderrahman's father, died, so that the two deadly-opposed brothers, Shír-Alí and Azím, were the only two sons of Dost Mahommed still alive. It is indeed difficult to discover the truth out of such a confused mass of contradictory accounts, but it seems probable that both these opponents secretly courted the favour of Russia. England, which had determined in 1867 to drop her *protégé* Shír-Alí for the sake of Afzúl-Khán, who had become *de facto* ruler of Kábul, and to acknowledge him as the sovereign of that country, hesitated after his death as to which party she should support; for in March 1868 the Governor-General of India had the intention of having an interview with Azím-Khán in Pesháwar. The latter showed just as much indecision as the English; for, whilst he daily granted long audiences to the British agent, he sent an envoy to Samarcand, where he had an interview with the Russian commander-in-chief to request permission to enter into friendly relations with the Czar; and the result is supposed to have been very favourable. The Russian Government seized, however, the opportunity of diplomatically out-manceuvring the English Cabinet, by leaving the world for a long time in uncertainty which of the two candidates, Shír-Alí or Azím, she would support by her moral influence.

Whilst Shír-Alí was continuing his preparations for a fresh campaign against Kandáhar, and the Persians were taking possession of a part of Seistán, Azím-Khán might be considered the *protégé* of Russia. No slight joy was experienced in England when affairs took an unfavourable turn for Azím, whom the Home Government had acknowledged as sovereign *de facto*, and assumed a more

favourable aspect for England's former *protégé*, Shír-Alí. His son Sirdar Mahommed Jakúb occupied Kandáhar and Khelát in the country of the Gilji.

On the other hand, Abderrahman-Khán, who hitherto had remained true to Azím, but since his father Afzúl's death had aspired to the sovereignty, now refused aid to Azím ; so that the latter alone assembled, in April 1868, all his disposable troops, to march against Jakúb. But Jakúb was advancing against Ghizní (Ghuznee), and had already reached its immediate proximity ; he then occupied the town, which had opened its gates to him, and thus was able to cut off all supplies to the garrison, whereupon Azím was compelled to fall back on Kábul, where this event produced a total cessation of affairs.

Now, indeed, the cause of Azím, the nominal ally of Russia, might be declared to be all the more hopeless when he desired to enter into negotiations with Shír-Alí, who, however, showed no inclination to enter into them. Abderrahman-Khán, who had gone to the relief of Kábul, at that time threatened, was defeated at Maimadshán (probably Maimaneh, where, in June 1868, according to a despatch from Calcutta, the troops of Abderrahman and Jakúb-Khán stood opposed to each other), and retreated towards Balkh. Although Khúlm was afterwards evacuated by Shír-Alí-Khán, and occupied by Abderrahman, yet the prospects in the middle of the year 1868 were almost desperate for Mahommed Azím, particularly after it became manifest, all at once, that a treaty of alliance subsisted between Russia and Shír-Alí, and that his son Jakúb-Khán, who had again placed himself at the head of his father's troops, had reached Nani.

It may be said that since the taking of Kandáhar

and Khelát-i-Gilji by Jakúb-Khán the contest had been decided in favour of Shír-Alí, the rightful sovereign. The English Government had at one time favoured him—their *protégé*—at another time dropped him, whilst they acknowledged Azím-Khán as ruler *de facto*; their policy aimed at supporting one rival against the other. Azím-Khán, who, although acknowledged by the English, had at all times an aversion to their influence, sought, when his cause appeared to be in danger, the protection of Russia; at the same time making no secret of his opinion that the English agent, notwithstanding his friendly assurances, had only in view the sowing of discord between Kábul and Russia. Whilst he was, however, carrying on his negotiations, the victorious Shír-Alí succeeded with 5,000 men in uniting with his son<sup>1</sup> at Kandáhar, in driving out of Kábul his rival, who had gone to his troops at Ghizní, and even in entering the city itself.

On the 14th August, 1868, he ascended the throne as rightful sovereign, and thus for the present the dominion of Afghánistán was again united under one sceptre. His son, Mahommed Jakúb Alí-Khán, was at the same time proclaimed his heir and Wazír in Kábul. All this success was attained by means of Russian gold, so at least the inhabitants of Afghánistán and their neighbours assert. The same Shír-Alí is supposed also to have concluded a treaty with Persia, through the mediation of Russia, whereby Herát, the most western of the Afghán cities, was to be allotted to Persia, for the prevention of which England had already twice declared war against Persia. But notwithstanding this the Persians have lately, and in direct violation of the treaty of Paris of 1857, again

<sup>1</sup> Jakúb-Khán also occupied Khizai in July 1868.

occupied the valley of Helمند, and there established a fortified position between Herát and Kandáhar.<sup>1</sup>

Forsaken by all his troops, Amír-Azím-Khán gave up the struggle and fled to Balkh, whither also Abderrahman had gone to negotiate with the Russians. According to later reports, Azím-Khán had sought refuge amongst the tribes of the Hazáras, and Shír-Alí-Khán, Russia's ally, expressed a wish, in a very polite and conciliatory letter to Sir John Lawrence, to enter into friendly relations with the British Government. The Governor-General of India replied forthwith, that England desires to see a strong government in Afghánistán, is mindful of the friendship with Dost Mahommed, and is anxious to renew cordial relations with his legitimate successor. At the same time he advised the Amír to treat his adversary with mildness.

In December 1868, a meeting between the Viceroy of India and Shír-Alí was arranged at Pesháwar, on which occasion a large concentration of troops was to take place. The English commander-in-chief, General Mansfield, was to be present at the conference.<sup>2</sup> Even the native Indian press hailed with satisfaction the intelligence of Shír-Alí-Khán's desire to enter into friendly relations with the Governor-General. The *Bombay Gazette* hoped, now that Shír-Alí was in firm possession of the throne, that better days would dawn with respect to our relations on the frontier, especially if England would endeavour to pursue a friendly policy towards the Afgháns. The *Times of India* inferred from the step taken by the ruler of the Afgháns, that he had rightly interpreted the English policy of non-intervention. 'The invasion of

<sup>1</sup> According to intelligence from Calcutta of July 30, 1868, the Persians desired also to occupy Merv.

<sup>2</sup> According to intelligence from Bombay, October 31, 1868.

Afghánistán,' that paper states, 'as recommended by the ministerial papers for years, would only call to arms the whole nation against us, whilst that country now can serve as a friendly bulwark against attacks from the north.'

Nevertheless it is doubted by some that closer relations with the Afghán ruler will ever be cemented, unless indeed very large subsidies be promised to him; and more especially because he, only a few weeks previously, had received envoys from the Persians and the Russians. In fact, although the Indian Government endeavoured to be on good terms with Shír-Alí, yet it did not exert its power further than by simply aiding him with money and arms against his rivals. The interview between the Viceroy and the Amír was indeed, for the present, abandoned.

Meanwhile the country did not yet arrive at a state of perfect peace; for the ambitious Abderrahman had no intention of submission. Consequently, in October, fresh preparations for the war between Shír-Alí and Abderrahman were made in Afghánistán, and the latter marched with 8,000 to 10,000 men from Balkh against Kábul. Shír-Alí sent two corps against him, which were to have united at Bámián. Here it is supposed, according to intelligence from Bombay, of the 25th November, 1868, that a bloody engagement took place, and that Abderrahman was defeated, and compelled to take flight a second time to Balkh. But this proved soon to be a false report; for letters from India related that the battle had not been fought up to the 26th of November, and afterwards till the 5th of December. The *Bombay Gazette*, in spite, however, of the official denials of its report, maintained the correctness of its intelligence of the battle. A com-

parison with the hitherto known accounts shows that Abderrahman had been defeated in November, near Bámián, which forced him to retreat in the direction of Balkh. On his way thither he met the former Amír, Mahommed Azím-Khán, who was advancing with reinforcements from Balkh. Both leaders separated with the forces at their disposition, Mahommed Azím-Khan proceeding from Charikar towards Kábul, and Abderrahman from Bámián to the same destination. Shír-Alí was therefore obliged to divide his forces; he sent his son towards Bámián, whilst he himself took up a position farther to the rear, to cover Kábul, to receive Azím-Khan, and to serve as a reserve to Jakúb-Khán.

In the meantime, the Amír of Maimaneh made a diversion in favour of Shír-Alí, and took Sári-Púl, whilst the army corps of Shír-Alí and that of his nephew were drawing very near together. The battle so long foreseen, even as regards its results, actually took place at last on January 2, 1869, after Shír-Alí had followed Abderrahman as far as Ghizní, where he was stopped by a fall of snow. On the morning of January 2, the troops of Shír-Alí, 25,000 men strong, with from thirty to forty guns, attacked the intrenched position of Sirdár Abderrahman-Khán, which was on a plain lying to the south-west of Ghizní, between Kerabagh and Saidabád. The latter had at his disposition only 15,000 men, who had been dispirited by former defeats, and who recovered their drooping courage so much the less when they observed that the command of the hostile army had been intrusted to the victorious son of their adversary—the youthful and powerful Mahommed Jakúb-Khán. Mahommed Jakúb-Khán conducted the battle with great skill, and by mid-day Abderrahman was beaten and driven to flight. He retreated to a place which is

called after Sultán Mahmúd, where his disorganised troops bivouacked for the night.

The enemy, however, followed up their victory by an energetic pursuit. Abderrahman and his uncle escaped during the night, and abandoned their followers to their fate. At dawn Mahommed Jakúb made a second attack; of the party surprised some were dispersed, others went over to the conqueror, into whose hands fell all the guns and stores. The fugitives were pursued during the following days, and many of them were either taken prisoners or cut down. Both their leaders, who had fled, managed to find a hiding-place in the Wazírí hills, in the British territory. The Viceroy gave them leave to remain there, but under the condition that they were to keep themselves at a certain distance from the frontier, and to abstain from all political intrigues. At all events, it is quite certain that Shír-Alí had nothing more to fear from these rivals.

In Kábul and Jalálábád the victory was celebrated with great pomp, and announced by salutes of artillery. Finally, on January 16, 1869, the conqueror made his entry into Kábul with stately pomp, proud again to behold Afghánistán united under one sceptre. About this time Ibrahím-Khán, the Amír's son, and governor of Herát, is supposed to have occupied Balkh, whither, according to a telegram from Calcutta of December 27, 1868, the Russians also are stated to have gone.

Now that events had taken such an extraordinarily favourable turn for Shír-Alí, the British government of India, whose fault was always to espouse the cause of the Afghán pretenders just at the moment when they no longer stood in need of English assistance, most seriously meditated upon making use of the ruler of all



the Afgháns as a dam to stay the further advance of the Russians into Asia.

Although the victorious Shír-Alí commenced his vigorous government in Kábul by the commission of many acts of cruelty, in consequence, it is said, of an attempt to poison him, yet the English endeavoured to prepare the way for a good understanding with him.

In January 1869, the Viceroy, Sir John Lawrence, was succeeded in office by Lord Mayo, who again brought forth the project of a meeting with the Amír, which had on a former occasion been proposed and afterwards abandoned. The intention was to conclude a formal treaty with Shír-Alí, in order to secure his friendship, and, in the event of a further advance of the Russian power, to retain him as an outpost. Consequently, towards the end of January 1869, the Governor of the North-West Provinces was expected in Calcutta, for the purpose of advising the Government with respect to the stipulations of the above-mentioned treaty. The Viceroy wished, before seeking the cool atmosphere of Simla,<sup>1</sup> to repair to the North-West frontiers, there to have a conference with the Amír, who was apparently not disinclined to draw nearer to the Indian Government.

This was indeed the grandest and most magnificent *Durbar* since the days of Lord Ellenborough. The Viceroy of India, whilst on his journey to his summer

<sup>1</sup> Simla lies not far eastwards from the Sutlej, at an elevation of 7,400 F.F. above the level of the sea. It is one of the most celebrated sanitary stations in the East Indies, and consists of about 500 straggling houses, built in the European style. Here is the Governor-General's summer residence; and consequently during the summer the population amounts to more than 20,000, whilst in winter it only reaches about 2,000. Persons who have become sick in the tropical lowlands speedily regain their health in this station.

residence at Simla, made, on the 27th March, 1869, a halt at the town of Umbála, which he had reached by an uninterrupted line of railway. Here he met the Amír, who had arrived there on the 24th of March, having journeyed through Pesháwar and Lahore, and then across the large British parade-ground of the North-West Provinces.

He was escorted by the flower of his army, ceremoniously received at the frontier, and conducted in state to Umbála, where a striking military force, strengthened by the chieftains from the Sutlej and Rajputána, was intended to satisfy at the same time State policy and the passion for pomp and pageantry. The English altogether expressed themselves greatly satisfied with the *Durbar* and with the probable effect of Shír-Alí's journey through British territory.<sup>1</sup> To judge from the remarks of the latter, his friendship for the English was considered as secured for ever. But they know best how much value may be set upon such assurances from an Asiatic prince,

<sup>1</sup> The following letter, dated Bombay, July 13, 1869, from a well-informed person to the Author, gives some insight into the ideas and views then prevailing in India, namely:—'Quant à la question politique russe asiatique, bien fin serait qui pourrait vous l'exposer clairement. Personne ici n'y connaît rien, et il n'y a pas un homme dans la presse indo-anglaise qui soit en mesure de vous dire quel a été le but de l'entrevue d'Amballah. On suppose qu'on en s'est proposé que de faciliter les relations commerciales avec l'Asie centrale, et qu'on aurait repoussé les avances de l'Émir du Caboul ayant pour but d'obtenir du secours contre la Russie. Vous voyez par les journaux que le gouvernement anglais n'est pas d'avis de se mêler des affaires de ces contrées—c'est aussi l'opinion, dit-on, de Lord Mayo. On ne croit pas ici aux intentions agressives de la Russie, et on ne semble pas se préoccuper beaucoup de ses progrès. Schir Ali Khan avait expédié dernièrement un ambassadeur à un autre chef afghân pour l'engager à se liguier avec lui contre les Russes—cet ambassadeur a été massacré pour toute réponse. Ceci est bien vague, n'est-ce pas? Je vous répète, il est difficile, si près même du théâtre de ces évènements, d'y voir clair et de se faire une opinion.'

especially from this Afghán prince, who was never conspicuous for good faith.

Shír-Ali's outward appearance is not exactly calculated to awaken confidence. His countenance is of a decidedly Jewish type, with a cold and cruel expression of the mouth, and with the shy and nervous look of a hunted animal; for thus the *Times* correspondent describes the new ally, who has himself suffered many wrongs, but inflicted still greater on others. Since his tender youth he has lived amidst the wild tumults of war; he never forgave an adversary; he saw his favourite son fall in battle against his uncle, and on that account he perjured and betrayed his own brother; and now at last he offers his hand to the English as an ally to guard against future dangers.

That he was deeply impressed with many things which came under his observation in the British-Indian territory we readily believe; nor did he conceal his impressions, as Orientals are generally accustomed to do. 'Only think,' he remarked, amongst other things, to a chieftain in his suite, 'that a railway engine can do more than an army of elephants! And what an immense distance it can traverse, with such wonderful speed, for so small an outlay of money!'

The Highland regiments seemed to take his fancy greatly, but the want of covering to the lower limbs struck him as somewhat unseemly. Still more was he interested with the Irish soldiers, more especially so when he became aware of their natural propensity for fighting. He admired that quality vastly, as it was quite to his taste. He was fairly acquainted, for an Afghán, with European affairs. He conversed about Roman Catholicism in Ireland and its French sympathisers; about the Scottish clans, which he thought had a resemblance with those of the Afgháns,

except that the latter were distinguished from one another by the cut of their clothes, whilst the former were so by the colours of their plaids; about Napoleon and his generals, and many similar subjects. He not only knew of the Snider and Enfield rifles, but also asserted that they could be made just as well in his own country with the exception of the cartridges. And when Lord Mayo presented him with a costly sword, he expressed his thanks in these words: 'I shall not only use it against my enemies, but against those of England.' He could not easily have found words more explicit and friendly. It would be much better, however, if England never were obliged to rely on this sword as an auxiliary against Russia.

Amír-Shír-Alí on his return to Kábul was enthusiastically received; several radical reforms, however, which he began to introduce, gave rise to discontentment. He especially aimed at raising an army entirely dependent upon himself for discipline and pay; whereas at present his army was formed from innumerable small divisions, commanded by chieftains enfeoffed with land for their maintenance. Already he has commenced drilling a portion of his troops after English fashion, assisted by experienced native soldiers whom he had brought with him to Afghánistán. He enjoined his son Mahommed Jakúb-Khán, who carried on the government in his absence, not to neglect his English studies; also his youngest son Abdúla-Khán is obliged to read English for a few hours every day. He hastened immediately after his return to telegraph to the Queen of England his thanks for the friendly reception which had been accorded him by the Viceroy of India and other high officials.

In order to consolidate his power in Afghánistán, Shír-Alí undertook many extensive reforms, amongst which

was the transformation of his confederates into subjects who are bound to military service. The petty chieftains who were affected by this proceeding received a pecuniary indemnification, with a fairness bordering on the usages of civilised countries. In fact, shortly afterwards the telegraph announced from Bombay that the Amír of Badákhshán and the whole of the chieftains of Turkestán had sworn fealty as vassals to Shír-Alí. If this report be true, his suzerainty would also extend over Kundúz.

But that this complete subjugation of Afghánistán is not so thoroughly established may be conceived from this fact, that the heavy battery and other warlike stores which the Viceroy of India had presented as a gift to the Amír, were detained in the notorious Khyber Pass, and not suffered a passage through until the chieftains of that neighbourhood had received on account of Shír-Alí 900*l.* sterling, as a kind of black mail for their transit. Even this tribute levied on their own sovereign would not have saved this transport, had not the waylayers dreaded the wrath of the English.

Meanwhile, Shír-Alí-Khán was busily engaged in disarming the population, which did not everywhere proceed very smoothly, and in clothing his troops, with the aid of English tailors, in uniforms cut after the Indo-European pattern. Lest the brave Afgháns should find the new-fashioned clothing much too foreign, the sons and nephews of the Amír were to be the first to wear the new uniform. One of the latter, Ismaíl-Khán, however, appeared dissatisfied with the newly-introduced regulations for the army. Although the Amír endeavoured to conciliate him by the offer of a considerable annual income, he rose against him. He was, however, taken prisoner, and sent with both his brothers to the British territory. But Ismaíl-Khán

managed to escape and find concealment in Afghánistán. Both his brothers reached the British frontier garrison of Kohát, whence the Indian Government brought them to Lahore, which was fixed as their residence.

In conclusion, it ought not to be passed over in silence that all the pretenders to the throne of Afghánistán fly to Turkestán and Bokhára in order to find protection and support from the Russian army corps operating in those countries. Persia also, that always cherished the desire of extending her frontier towards Afghánistán, openly affords protection to the pretenders. Under these circumstances, Amír Shír-Alí-Khán is in a very critical position, which is rendered still more critical by his having become an ally of England.

The Afgháns are a set of ignorant people, who suffer themselves to be guided less by the Amír than by their *Imams*, or priests, who on their part are won over through Russian gold by the pretenders. The Afghán priesthood agitates, therefore, indirectly through the pretenders for Russia, as the priests impute it as a crime that the Amír, one of the faithful, should, contrary to the precepts of the Koran, have entered into an alliance with the unbelieving English.

On the other hand, the rebellious Crown Prince of Bokhára, the Kette-Töre, Abdúl-Melik, sought, as already mentioned, refuge at the court of Shír-Alí-Khán, who not only afforded him protection, but furthermore offered him the hand of his beautiful daughter, with a view of securing, through this alliance, not only the province of Turkestán—the adjoining Khanates to which are the hard nut the ruler of Kábul has to crack—but also for the sake of obtaining some claims even to the Khanate of Bokhára.

It required the greatest exertion on the part of the English politicians at Calcutta to move Shír-Alí-Khán again to dismiss his guest, whom he provided with pecuniary means and assistance on his journey to Kokán.

In the meanwhile, the rebel's father, Mozaffer-Eddin, Khán of Bokhára, endeavoured to re-establish his former just claim to Badákhshán and the district of the sources of the Oxus. The petty Khanates of Kundúz, Khúlm, Akche, Shiborgán, and Sárípúl were indeed from time immemorial always under the suzerainty of Bokhára.

In consequence of this, towards the end of the year 1869, on one side Khodjá-Ishán-Urúk was sent from Bokhára to the Afghán governor of Balkh diplomatically to demand the restitution of the two unimportant places, which had of late seceded. On the other side, however, the Bokharian general, Jakúb-Inág, was despatched with an army, in fact, to retake them. This was a sufficient cause to call the Afgháns to arms. For several days both parties stood face to face, till at length fresh negotiations warded off the outbreak of hostilities. Bokhára, probably influenced by Russia, was at last induced to consider the Oxus, which is the natural boundary, as the frontier line between its states and those of its Afghán neighbour.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'The Settlement of the Boundary Question between Bokhára and Afghánistán,' by Vámbéry (Supplement to the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1870, No. 71).

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE RIVALRY BETWEEN RUSSIA AND ENGLAND IN ASIA.

BEFORE we proceed to throw any light upon a question that from day to day thrusts itself more prominently forward—we mean the question of the rivalry between Russia and England, and its possible results—we consider it of vital importance briefly to explain England's position in the East Indies. In so doing, let it be premised that we stand apart equally from both sides, having neither partiality for the one nor animosity against the other; and, moreover, we are totally unconnected with the great movements of political life.

Seeing by the light in which now-a-days philosophical knowledge views historical events, the admiration of the once so highly-extolled colonial policy has long had to yield to a more sober appreciation of facts. The very circumstance of the export from England—for instance, in the year 1849—to the United States of America, long become independent of the mother-country, having amounted, in proportion to the population, to nearly twelve times more than that to her East Indian possessions,<sup>1</sup> would suffice to give a striking proof of the slight advantage of foreign colonies, even if numerous examples from other countries in history were not forthcoming to bear out this assertion.

<sup>1</sup> Max. Wirth, *Grundzüge der National-Ökonomie*, Cologne, 1861, 8vo, vol. i. p. 85.



Moreover, we know from experience, that as soon as a colony once feels strong enough, it emancipates itself from its mother-country, and declares its independence. The English colonies in Australia, New Zealand, and Canada are rapidly verging to this point; and we do not for a moment doubt but that the East Indies will in time follow in their footsteps.

We have, therefore, no admiration for England's colonial policy, and least of all as it concerns the East Indies. We pass over in silence the cruelty and barbarity with which English squatters and settlers, merchants, and even missionaries know how to extirpate the native populations, whilst at home the philanthropists of the city of London have upon their lips hollow phrases about humanity and freedom. And under the cover of this cloak they delude others, and sometimes themselves, whilst they deal out heavy blows against humanity and freedom. We are silent on such subjects; for we do not belong to the whining hypocrites of this age, who, seeming shocked at the destruction of a tribe of savages, lift up their hands in horror, who shed bitter tears over every drop of human blood that is spilt, and who have not yet learned the lessons that are clearly written in every page of history, that the development of mankind as well as of individual nations moves not onwards according to ethical principles—that the highest ideal possessions must give way to material advantages—that humanity, freedom, justice, magnanimity, and so many other qualities are but empty words, and must unhesitatingly be set aside when it is a question of existence.

Similar events must be so regarded by the English, if they desire to remain masters of that country; of this there exists no doubt. As regards the Sepoy mutiny of

1857, the Russian Government, whatever the ignorant and the malicious may assert to the contrary, was free from every attempt at underhand instigation.<sup>1</sup> But the mutiny, indeed, unsparingly exposed all the various shortcomings of the Indo-British *régime*; and what has since occurred has only immaterially bettered the state of affairs.

A political adversary, Arminius Vámbéry, for whom we entertain the highest regard, has drawn our attention to the fact that the people of Hindustán have had no cause of complaint against the English colonial policy, which, as Vámbéry says, in these flattering terms, ‘certainly would not displease Herr von Hellwald, if he visited the country itself, there to gain practical information with his penetrating eye.’<sup>2</sup> He imagines that we do an injustice to the English when we bury in silence the beneficent changes that the government of Calcutta has taken in hand for the physical and moral improvement of the native population of Hindustán. Far be it from us to have such an intention.

We are most willing to confess that England has done the work of civilisation in India, and is still engaged on that work; but we are inclined to think that it is not absolutely deserving of the importance usually attached to it. That we are not so entirely in the wrong in our view of this subject, we perceive from a letter addressed to the Ministry, in the year 1870, by Lord Napier of Magdala, the commander-in-chief of Her Majesty’s Forces in India. In this letter the noble lord admits that the English Government could never reckon less upon the attachment

<sup>1</sup> Charles Neumann, *The Insurrection in the Anglo-Indian Empire and its Results* (*Unsere Zeit*, 1861, p. 87).

<sup>2</sup> *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1870, No. 9.

of the people of India than at present ; and since then the circumstances have only become worse. Lord Napier states further in his despatch that the cause of this discontent lies deeper than in the income-tax, and ascribes it chiefly to the circumstance that the class of European functionaries who made India their home, and identified themselves with the native population, had with few exceptions died out. The recollection of the benefits (he presumes) which were bestowed upon the people in those parts of India whom we freed from the oppression and misgovernment of their despotic rulers, has disappeared with that generation. The generation of this day knows only of the present restrictions and duties which have been imposed upon it. Such words from a servant of the State are sufficiently clear and outspoken.

Lord Napier himself admits that the civilians of the present day have neither acquaintance with, nor affection for, the native population ; that the English rule was only at one time a blessing in some parts of India ; and that the present generation has no cause to be satisfied with the existing restrictions and duties. The English general was of course obliged to use the mildest terms. Moreover, he mentions in that report that the educated and ambitious amongst the natives of India had formerly a greater share of official employment and emoluments than they possess at the present day. And this statement requires no comment ; for it is quite natural that that class of the population should not rest satisfied with being simply treated as the *misera contribuens plebs*. This is, in fact, the most vulnerable spot in England's rule in India.

The native population of India, whether Hindú or Mahommedan, stands at this moment, even after the lapse of more than a century, in a position just as alien and

hostile towards the much-praised British coloniser as in the time of Clive and Hastings.<sup>1</sup> The worn-out metaphor of the pyramid turned upside down has been fitly applied to the British empire in the East. It was established by the sword, and, what is more, *it is ruled by the sword*. It is not the Nizam of Haiderábád, or the Rajah of Travancore, or others whose interests are intimately bound up with those of England, that uphold the English rule in India; nor is it loyalty of the native population of the country, whether it be Mahommedan, Buddhist, or Brahman; nor is it the army of 115,000 native hirelings which England still keeps under arms, but always as much dispersed as possible over the wide expanse of the empire; but it is, in fact, the 70,000 first-rate British troops alone, who, concentrated at the most important strategical points, hold the Sepoys in awe.

What progress has been made within the last few years with regard to the means of communication by railways and telegraphs has materially secured the *military position* of the English. Nothing more has been done; and consequently the power of the English in India is now, as formerly, merely *the power of the sword*.<sup>2</sup>

With regard to this, the circumspect general, in his report before alluded to, draws the attention of the Government to other dangers which are threatening the British rule in India, namely, the formidable development of the military power of the neighbouring states.

In this report Lord Napier of Magdala mentions that the ruler of Scindia has a well-armed and well-drilled standing army, which he can in a moment, if necessary,

<sup>1</sup> *The Russians in Central Asia* (*Neues Fremdenblatt* of February 2, 1860).

<sup>2</sup> *The Basis of the British Rule in India* (Supplement to the *Augsburger allgemeine Zeitung* of October 11, 1867).

double with drilled soldiers; this prince is also able to bring at least forty well-appointed guns into the field. His lordship also refers to the armed forces of Nepál, which consist of twenty-seven regiments, entirely organised and drilled after the English system, as well as of 2,000 artillerymen. He further remarks that this army can, in case of necessity, be fourfold increased with well-drilled combatants. This force is armed with good muskets, turned out of the native manufactories at Katmanda, and besides has a reserve of about 100,000 firearms, lying ready in store at the arsenal of Nepál. We are also informed that this state possesses a cannon foundry, which is able to manufacture 12 and 18 pounders, that are bored by steam-power, and that there are upwards of 400 guns stored in the arsenal. Finally, the noble lord observes: ‘The Nepálese display no inclination for a campaign in the plains during the hot weather, but, on the contrary, they would show no aversion to one in the cold season; in truth, they might become dangerous to the English in the mountain tracts of India.’

Lord Napier also calls attention to the fact that Holkar has secretly erected a cannon foundry worked by steam; and that the Guicowar, Alí-Morád, Yung-Bahádur, and the King of Ava have procured rifled guns and the best arms of precision, and many similar warlike stores.

When contemplating such facts there is every reason for serious apprehension, more especially as the late Viceroy, who fell by the hand of an assassin, followed a system naturally very unpopular with the army and the civil service—to save every shilling where it possibly could be done, in all branches of the administration, in order not to be obliged to relinquish partly or wholly the magnificent public works, upon the completion of

which the moral and material future of India so essentially depended.

On this subject the lamented Viceroy, Lord Mayo, expressed himself on the 10th of February, 1872, in one of his memorials to the Home Government in London, in terms to this effect:—It would be unjustifiable to expend one shilling more upon the army than is absolutely and imperatively necessary. This is a question of much higher consideration than the annual financial requirements, or the personal interests of those holding civil or military employment under the Crown. Every shilling spent for unnecessary military disbursements is abstracted from those large sums which it is our duty to apply to the amelioration of the moral and material conditions of the people.

In fact, it would not have been possible to carry out the programme of public works which Lord Mayo had projected and commenced, if the financial reforms that he so manfully advocated had not been introduced. But, on the other hand, the amount set aside for the army under the circumstances above pointed out appears not to have been spent in vain, but rather to have been required by a high political necessity, especially as a closer examination of Lord Mayo's benevolent endeavours teaches us how rarely such benevolence is practicable in India.

Lord Northbrook came out to India as successor to the assassinated Lord Mayo. He certainly took up the reins of government at a very critical moment. He had the choice between two courses—either to follow in the footsteps of Lord Mayo, or to turn his chief attention to the means of securing British power, but then leaving uncompleted the ameliorations planned by his predecessor.

The whole system to which India is subjected is extremely defective, and rests upon an insecure foundation. The supreme authority upon Indian affairs resides apparently in the Parliament of the mother-country; but Parliament was never enabled to exercise more than a nominal control over them. It has, besides, handed over its semblance of power to a Minister—the Secretary of State for India—over whose proceedings it has neither time nor inclination to watch. In a practical point of view, this Minister is irresponsible to the English nation, whilst he is legally invested with absolute power as regards the native population of India.

The Secretary of State for India has hitherto been, *par excellence*, a ruler who has just done whatever appeared right in his own eyes; and even the few and insufficient restrictions that existed formerly under the rule of the Company have disappeared under the government of the Crown. The necessity of referring to Parliament to obtain a renewal of its privileges, and the constant disputes arising from a large monopoly of the spirited competition in England's trade with India, occasioned the periodical interference of Parliament with the affairs of the East India Company. The certainty that its policy and its transactions would sooner or later be subjected to an inquiry in Parliament at home, exerted a beneficial influence on the Court of Directors and on the Control Department. But since India has been transferred to the Crown the control of Parliament has altogether ceased. And thus one Secretary of State could put a *veto* on any law considered urgently necessary by the local Government of India; a second Secretary of State could lavish immense sums of money from the Indian revenue in order to satisfy the claims of some importunate native prince;

and a third could impose higher taxes upon the Indian tax-payer, for the purpose of covering the expenses of an entertainment to some European potentate sanctioned by the mother-country; and so on. The Indian public and the press might protest against it as much as they pleased, but their voices were powerless against a Minister remote and irresponsible.

Now a permanent Committee for Indian affairs has been established in Parliament; but it inspires no confidence in India. Without entering more minutely into the numerous complaints and grievances that from day to day are noised abroad, it is evident from all these statements that the Indian Government requires radical reforms, and that it cannot indeed be expected from the natives to rest contented with an administration which is anything but satisfactory to the English themselves who are resident in India.

Thus we read in an Indian paper:—‘The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal looks upon the native judges and magistrates as dogs and jackals, and treats them as such. He continually seeks to throw difficulties in the way of a higher education. He does not wish the natives to learn anything and become civilised, and then to have, like Europeans, independent views about the government of a state; on the contrary, he wishes them only to be governed like beasts,’ &c., &c. It is certain that many Europeans secretly entertain the same views.

The British rule in India is liable to constant danger from the peculiarity of its position. This rule depends not only upon the military forces before enumerated, but also chiefly upon the extraordinary *prestige* of the power of the British Empire, as it strikes the eyes and the imaginations of the natives. Should this power at any



moment be broken by a disastrous defeat, and be divested of its magic halo by a manifest humiliation, then this power will be gone for ever.

To comprehend the truth and the full bearings of these relations, it must be borne in mind that in India not less than 200 millions of people, nearly equal to two-thirds of the population of Europe, are kept under by not more than 156,000 Europeans—a number that does not approximate to that of an army in a European state possessing only a fifth of the number of the population in India, and in which state there is no necessity to defend and maintain a foreign rule that is thoroughly detested.

Just as the conquest and domination of these gigantic territories, so much coveted by nations in every age, were achieved by a cunning policy of profiting by the domestic quarrels and feuds of the natives, and by taking advantage of the lust of power amongst the great, and of the discontent amongst the oppressed, in this extensive but heterogeneous assemblage of states, so is the rule of this country based upon the judicious management of the jarring interests of the native population.

India is not a colony. No Englishman goes thither to settle permanently.<sup>1</sup> Albion's sons only go to India to gain honour or wealth in the Army or Civil Service, or else to make a fortune in commerce, and then to return home to enjoy their gains. They are merely rulers, but not citizens of the country.

The right of conquest, never thoroughly acknowledged by the subdued, and foreign rule, never willingly borne by them, stand out here in unmitigated harshness. And

<sup>1</sup> Vide a tolerably detailed account in *Wilhelm Helfer's Reisen in Vorderasien und Indien*, by the Countess Nostitz, Leipsic, 1873, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 28, 33, 34 and 35.

it is not so great and irresistible a military power that asserts the former and maintains the latter; but it is the internecine feuds and internal dissensions, which have caused the most ancient of civilised nations to bend under the yoke of the sea-ruling stranger. The British found the country torn asunder and in subjection. The Mahomedan empire of the Great Mogul had extended far and wide, owing to its superiority in power over the smaller tyrannical native rulers. This was likewise a foreign rule. The fanatical tyranny of a strange religion contended with wild impatience against the national peculiarities displayed in their manners and customs, as well as in their thoughts and feelings. And this foreign rule was superseded by that of England. Then a selfish, heartless, and rapacious commercial policy took the place of religious intolerance and fanaticism. This rule—that of the East India Company—had, like the other, to succumb under the first shock. The sanguinary insurrection of 1857 brought it to an end, and then commenced the ‘Queen’s Government.’

India, as a ‘Crownland,’ is no longer an object of mercantile profit, but is one of the most important foundations of the political, commercial, and industrial powers of Great Britain, which foundation she endeavours to consolidate according to modern principles. Owing, however, to their isolated position, the English can only seek support from their superior civilisation; but it is a thoroughly absurd assertion—a mere phrase dressed up in the garb of false liberalism—to say that they actually do find their support in this civilisation. It is indeed true that they carry the blessings of civilisation to the banks of the Indus and the Ganges, that they here and there treat gently the peculiarities of the natives, and

endeavour by promoting their material interests to assuage the national ill-will, and to mitigate religious hatred.

This indeed would be excellent if it were calculated for Europeans; but in India we have to deal with Asiatics. It is generally overlooked that this deep-seated ethnical difference demands considerations totally foreign and almost incomprehensible to us. We cannot help smiling at the following remark of a liberal paper:—‘If the work of civilisation be but carried on for a generation, India will be not only the brightest jewel in, but also the most faithful province belonging to, the British crown.’ In contrast with this bold assertion, we call to mind simply the insurrection of the Kukas in the beginning of the year 1872, of which the English officers declared that they had not to deal with an ordinary disturbance, but with an eventful rebellion; and that the only hope of restoring tranquillity depended upon a chastisement that would strike terror into the breasts of the rebellious bands. In fact, peace was restored on the 17th January of last year, by blowing away from the guns forty-nine rebels.

But when, on the 4th of February of that year, an *aurora-borealis* was witnessed in India, for the first time within the memory of man, the natives whispered in each other’s ears—‘The red tints in the heavens were the blood which would be shed in a great battle to be fought by a mighty nation against the English.’ And in the country of the Kukas hundreds of families rushed out into the open air; the men tore their turbans from their heads, unloosed their hair, began to dance and rave like maniacs, shouting out that the light in the skies was a sign that Ram Sing had come back again! The English executions have therefore hitherto made no wholesome impression on the Kukas. On the portentous significance of England’s difficulties

with the Mahommedans, we are enlightened by a person who may at the present time lay claim to the credit of being one of the most profound living scholars in matters of Islamism—that is, M. Arminius Vámbéry. During the last three years, he says that the fanatical Wáhábís sent up more and more revolutionary rockets from their head-quarters at Patna. At one moment they plan a small revolt amongst the mountain tribes, at another time we behold an enthusiastic votary of this sect sowing the seeds of revolution, free and unhindered, in the ranks of a Sepoy regiment, and stirring them up to the Djihâd, or ‘religious war,’ against the unbelievers—that is to say, against their own masters. England looks on almost passively at this dangerous game; there are indeed some Englishmen who wildly pursue the utopian idea, that care should be taken to mould the education, the jurisdiction, and the civil administration of the Mahommedan subjects more after the Moslem fashion; no doubt the maintenance of a kind of *Sheriât*, inoculated with British institutions, would afford much satisfaction.

The desire of cajoling any people whatever, that have been conquered by the sword, into a tame submission under the conqueror’s yoke, is in itself quite a paradox; so much more so then is it with Asiatics; but with Mahommedans it is madness. Vámbéry expresses himself very much to the point on this subject when he says ‘that the best concession that could be granted to the Mahommedan Hindú would be, if all Britons, from the valleys of Kashmír to Cape Comorin, were to pack up their goods and chattels, and take their departure out of the country. If England is really anxious to succeed with her Mahommedan subjects in India, she must once for all make a clean sweep of all her so-called constitutional experiments,

and become more Asiatic in her vast possessions in Asia. But in so doing she must never forget that the fundamental principle of Islamism will always remain—the overthrow of the unbelievers.’<sup>1</sup> Thus far we are enlightened by Arminius Vámbéry, the learned and practical observer of Oriental affairs. His valuable expositions would even lead every unprejudiced individual to the conclusion that the English rule in India rests upon a ground deeply undermined by volcanoes, and that consequently no more errors can be committed without endangering its very existence.

From these statements it will be easily perceived that we do not believe in the long duration of the English rule in the East Indies. But in England people hold a different opinion; there, the loss of the East Indies—in fact, the mere risk of losing these possessions—is regarded as the general downfall of the monarchy. No one dares even to think of the possibility of giving up this colony; and every report that the overland mail brings from the Hooghly is looked for with eagerness and deep anxiety. ‘India at any price’ is the device of time-worn England.

That at some future day England’s commerce with one or more independent empires in the East Indies will have an undreamt-of extension, no one as yet seems to realise. It is only to be hoped that this knowledge will penetrate into England at the right time, so as to pre-

<sup>1</sup> ‘England’s Mahommedan Embarrassments in India, by A. Vámbéry’ (*Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1872, No. 51). Compare also this author’s excellent article, ‘Islamism in British India’ (*Allg. Zeitung*, 1872, Nos. 68, 70, 75), which is intimately connected with W. W. Hunter’s highly instructive book, *The Indian Mussulmans; are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen?* London, 1871.

vent the nation from committing a political suicide by adhering to the useless policy of non-intervention, which has already brought its power and influence to so low an ebb: for, according to the teachings of history, almost all illustrious nations have by such means terminated their existence as states.

But since every British heart yearns for the possession of the East Indies, and every Briton regards this as a *conditio sine qua non* for the greatness of his mother-country, and looks upon the loss of this colony as the greatest catastrophe—which it undeniably would be at the present time—thence it may be inferred of what incalculable importance for England must be the slow but steady progress of Russia in Asia—the only power with military strength nearly equal, if not superior, to that of England, that might be in a position to impair, if not to overthrow, the British dominion in the East.

From the unfortunate campaign in Afghánistán in 1842—an event which still remains deeply impressed upon their memories—the English have learned the lesson of never again intermeddling with the affairs of Central Asia. This idea they have elevated into a fixed principle, whereby they fell into error, as is always the case when nations endeavour to conduct their political affairs in strict accordance with principles.

The successes, however, which the Russian troops gained at Kokán, and in the territories of the sources of the old Jaxartes, did not remain unnoticed, either in the East Indies or in England. The idea was constantly present that the space, yet always sufficiently wide, which separated the Russians from the English in Asia, became from day to day smaller, and that the various diplomatic differences within that space might eventually lead even

to a military collision. The passage of the Sír-Dariá by the Russians, on the banks of which river Alexandreshata formerly marked the most northern point of Alexander the Great's expedition, has brought the Russians from the north to the very territory into which the Macedonian had once penetrated.

The route thence to India was indeed still considerably long, and not entirely free from obstacles of every kind. Certainly the Russians do not yet think of alarming some fine morning the British frontier-post at Pesháwar, but in more recent times they have approached still nearer to the English territory. In short, Russia and England are constantly coming into closer contact in the East, and on that account a certain degree of anxiety is felt in London on hearing of the gradual but steady advance of the Russians eastwards of the Sea of Aral.

A great portion of the English, however, resigned themselves to undisturbed tranquillity, from which the first reports of the Russian victories were scarcely able to rouse them. This conviction arose from the idea either that England could not possibly check Russia in her advance, or that the tenacity of the Cabinet of St. Petersburg was underrated. But after the first sounds of alarm had died away, there arose in England that party of optimists which is so severely handled by Vámbéry. They took a tolerably quiet view of the position of affairs; they let events run their course, and were only mistaken when they heartily rejoiced at the extension and the continual approach of their mighty neighbour and rival. They set forth the advantages that would undoubtedly accrue to England from the immediate neighbourhood of a well-organised state, and indulged in sanguine hopes that those portions of Asia which had now become Russian

would supply markets for the sale of British merchandise.<sup>1</sup> And for the rest, the gigantic chain of the Himalaya, the Karákorum, and the Hindú-Kúsh might be regarded as a sufficient bulwark for the protection of British India. These were the views which the Government at home and at Calcutta represented, and which enabled a handful of Russian soldiers very recently to accomplish extraordinary successes.

No longer so apathetic in her foreign policy as hitherto, England determined, in the event of Russia's further advance on Kábul, to hasten to the assistance of the Afgháns, to strengthen their frontier-stations for such an eventuality, and in the moment of danger to spare neither money nor troops for this end. It was not without reason that in the beginning of the year 1868 the frontiers were so closely inspected by General Sir William Mansfield. The railway between Lahore and Pesháwar, as a strategical necessity, was to be commenced at once, and so was the junction line between Kotri and Multán, in the valley of the Indus. Finally, the question of the whole system of defence was thoroughly investigated, also the construction of forts, the establishment of magazines, depôts, arsenals, and everything appertaining thereto; and the number of Armstrong batteries in India was also to be increased.

Not only the military and civilians, but also Europeans in general throughout India, desired to see the

<sup>1</sup> In this, however, they were entirely mistaken. In the Russian treaty with Bokhára the import duty on Russian goods was fixed at two and a half per cent., but on English goods at forty per cent. The Afghán merchants at Karshí actually went home again rather than pay the duties imposed on the English goods they had brought with them. (Vámbéry, *Eine neue Wendung in der central-asiatischen Frage. Allgemeine Zeitung.* 1869, No. 308.)



North-West frontier crossed, in order to meet the Russians half-way, and then to take up a position in Afghánistán for the decisive conflict. That India could be best defended in Afghánistán, and with the help of the Afgháns—a fact which we for various reasons take the liberty of doubting—is also accepted by the ‘Times,’ although that paper warned against precipitancy, and enjoined all to bide patiently the further course of events. But both soldiers and officials in India were in a frame of mind in no way favourable to the policy of expectancy. It can therefore be easily imagined what excitement was caused in the hot season of 1868 at Calcutta by the intelligence that disturbances and insurrections had broken out in the North-West frontier Provinces, which threatened to assume greater dimensions, and gave rise to the most alarming anxiety.

In the Hazára hills,<sup>1</sup> about thirty miles from Abbótábád, the Khán of Agror is the ruling prince. To preserve order, to maintain security, and to prevent the smuggling of salt, the English authorities established there a police station, which was very inconvenient to the Khán. At his instigation, as it appears, a strong corps of Patháns or Afgháns, consisting of independent Chigganzís, on the morning of July 30, 1868, made a dash across the frontier, attacked the English station and plundered it, whilst the Khán, though an English vassal, quietly looked on. The police-soldiers, led on by a young Shahzád, a native prince, defended themselves bravely, and did not retreat till they had suffered a serious loss, and put a considerable number of the enemy *hors de combat*. Fortunately, the Commissioners of the district, and also of

<sup>1</sup> *Hazára*, *Huzára*, or *Hazôrch* (derived from the Persian word *Hezar*, signifying thousand), is a small, originally Afghán, mountain province, eastwards of Pesháwar and Attock.

Pesháwar, were near at hand, and they then succeeded in collecting troops and retaking the post. The Khán was called on to explain his conduct; but the fact that the villagers took part with the enemy appeared particularly suspicious to the authorities, so much so, indeed, that they deemed it necessary to concentrate a tolerably strong force at Abbotabád.

Four Sepoy regiments, composed chiefly of Gurkas from Nepál, two regiments of European infantry, several squadrons of cavalry, and a mountain-battery, under the command of Major-General Wilde, formed a strong expeditionary force for such an out-of-the-way mountain post. But since several tribes, especially the frontier tribe of the Rawul-Pindís, rose up shortly afterwards against the English, this corps found for the first time the opportunity of trying their Snider rifles, the effect of which was quite 'satisfactory'—as the English report laconically expresses it. It was soon perceived that they had to look forward to a difficult campaign, that might last four or five months; the expeditionary force was accordingly brought up to the strength of 20,000 men, which was not much less than the army employed in Abyssinia. Colonels Bright and Vaughan were placed, with the rank of Brigadier-Generals, under the orders of General White, commanding the forces. The several detachments had to reach the theatre of war in forced marches; for instance, the two European regiments of infantry from the Punjáb accomplished a march of thirty-seven English miles in sixteen and a half hours.

Shortly after the first encounter, on July 30, 1868, the officers quartered in the neighbourhood of Agror and the political agents ascertained, by means of a reconnaissance, that the whole valley of Agror, lying beyond

the English frontier, was in a state of insurrection. On this occasion the critical situation was aggravated by the fact that reinforcements had to be despatched, and the troops stationed in the valley of Pesháwar could not be ordered to march, owing to the desertions taking place amongst the native regiments from that country, especially amongst the recruits from Agror and Swát (Suwát); that many circumstances indicated a plan that had been previously well devised and thoroughly organised; and that the rebels boldly held their ground. They alleged that the Akhund, the chief priest of Swát, and the Mahárájah of Kashmír, who owed allegiance to the British Sovereign, were siding with them, and that they were under the supreme command of Fírosí-Sháh (son of the late ex-Mogul of Delhi), who is supposed to have died three years previously in Arabia.<sup>1</sup> It is not true that Kashmír gave support to this insurrection; for the Mahárájah despatched immediately, in accordance with the directions of the Government of the Punjáb, four regiments and a proportionate number of guns to the scene of war.

The advanced guard of the army corps ordered to quell the insurrection in the country of the Hazáras arrived there on the 12th August, and the enemy was driven out of the Agror valley with considerable loss. After several skirmishes it was reported that tranquillity had been again restored, which intelligence caused great rejoicing in England. Unfortunately it applied only to the

<sup>1</sup> Five years previously an insurrection broke out in this very country, which required a force of 5,000 men, during the Sitána campaign, and which cost much blood before the rebels were mastered, particularly the fanatical Wáhábís, who in fact instigated the whole war. Unfortunately the Indian Government permitted the Wáhábís to settle down again on the Mahábán, or Black Mountain.

valley of the Agror ; consequently affairs were viewed very differently on the spot.

The concentration of troops was in any case to be continued, and the local authorities declared the presence of a force of 20,000 men absolutely necessary—a demand with which the Commander-in-Chief entirely concurred, on the strength of the cogent reasons adduced. In fact, it was quite necessary to make preparations against a more determined resistance.

The Akhund of Swát stirred up the neighbouring Afgháns, so that the British troops made a further advance between the 10th and 15th of September. Meanwhile the enemy was occupied in fortifying the pass in the valley of Terrek, at the outlet of the Agror valley. On the 28th September the British head-quarters were pushed forward to Oghí.

The Akhund of Swát thought it prudent to go over to the English, and the greater part of the Hazárádjís and independent Swátís gave in their submission, whilst the adventurer Fírozí-Sháh, with a small suite, went to Kábul and Bokhára. On the 5th September, after a slight and successful engagement with the rebels, the English occupied the highest points of the Black Mountains, the enemy vanished, and the resistance, according to all appearance, subsided, whilst some who had taken up arms already sued for peace. In fact, treaties of peace were concluded with the tribes of the Hassanzís, Akázís, and Chiggurzís, as well as with the enemies in the Purrarí district, and the expeditionary troops had now to operate only against the independent Swátís.

According to the *Bombay Post* of the 17th October, the disturbances on the Afghán frontier were considered nearly at an end, and telegrams from Bombay, of the 9th

January, 1869, at length reported the definitive recall of the remainder of the English expeditionary force.

Insignificant as the whole Hazára affair was in itself, yet, in order to comprehend thoroughly England's position in India, it is necessary to dwell for some time upon the reflections which formed the general topics of conversation on this occasion.

Whilst a large majority in India declared themselves in favour of an energetic action in Afghánistán, such was not the case in England, where the principle of non-intervention was firmly adhered to. We have already, on a former occasion, found an opportunity of expressing our opinions on the advantages and disadvantages of the Manchester policy, inaugurated by Richard Cobden, how far it had been, since it was first put in practice at the time of the Crimean war, from bringing a decided benefit to the country. In fact, it has rather diminished than increased the national prosperity of England, whilst at the same time the political importance of Great Britain has sunk down almost to zero. The non-intervention principle has indeed indisputable advantages; it *saves* many millions, it is *apparently* liberal, and, above all, it is *uncommonly convenient*; consequently it exactly corresponds with the ideal of a well-to-do shopkeeper, who, in his comfortable ease, does not like to be disturbed with the question '*what next?*' He who recollects the state of public opinion in England, and the tone of opposition in the daily papers, when it was a question of voting the requisite sums of money for the Abyssinian expedition, will admit the justness of this remark. Nor is it invalidated by the fact that all, even those who were the most violent in their opposition, after the successful result, extolled the wisdom of the Government, and looked with

pride upon the laurels gained by 'Old England' in remote Africa.

The Cabinet of St. James's can, however, scarcely be blamed for carrying out the Manchester policy, although the English statesmen did not allow themselves to be led astray by the dazzling speciousness of this principle. Although they saw through the hollowness of the grandiloquent and fine-sounding phrases in which the would-be liberals and popularity-hunting democrats are wont to dress up their speeches, to suit the ideas of the unthinking and uneducated masses; although they clearly perceived that the future of their country would suffer by such a course; that history in general entirely ignores principles; that no state can be governed by them; that every maxim holds good only for a certain time and under certain conditions, and thus loses the character of an immutable principle;—although they fully realised all this, what other task, we ask, could these statesmen have but to fully ascertain and follow out the will of the majority of the people? In a country like England, where the will of the people can, and in fact does, exercise such powerful influence, it seems to us most unreasonable to make the Cabinet alone responsible for the errors of the Government. The nation will not be kept under tutelage; it feels strong enough to dictate the leading ideas by which the affairs of the State are to be governed. The Cabinet has then done its duty if, unconcerned about the results, it simply becomes the executive instrument for carrying out the popular will.

Sir John Lawrence, at that time Viceroy of India, followed, as regards foreign affairs, a pacific, and, as the *Daily News* terms it, 'a wise policy;' that is to say, he maintained the non-intervention principle to the fullest

extent; in fact, so much so that it was asserted that no attempt would assuredly be made at further annexation as long as Sir John held the reins of government. That was, however, too broad an assertion; for Sir John, though so decidedly opposed to any annexation brought about merely to satiate the thirst of conquest, could not be accused of wishing to see introduced into Indian affairs the non-intervention theory as an immutable political principle. That would be equivalent to calling into question his political judgment.

At the time of the outbreak of the Hazára insurrection, Sir John Lawrence stood, as it were, with one foot in Europe; for the five years' period of his government was just elapsing, and the Earl of Mayo was appointed his successor; whose personal qualifications for the office—which is indeed no sinecure—were denied by the entire press both in England and in India, but who, after his violent death in 1872, was acknowledged by all to have carried out his task with great intelligence—a proof of the value of newspaper criticism.

When, therefore, the intelligence came of the events in the Hazára country, and there was a rumour of the large force that was being concentrated with an expedition unusual in India, many a Manchester man felt a degree of disquietude at the thought that the hitherto pacific policy of Sir John's *masterly inactivity* was on the wane, and that now again the great annexation policy would be in full force in India, to which Russia's successes in Central Asia afforded a very welcome pretext.

The *Daily News*, which had always advocated the policy of non-intervention in India, even more so than in Europe, as the quintessence of all wisdom in government, apprehended the preparations for a war on a larger or smaller

scale in Afghánistán. In the opinion of that paper there was every probability of a great war, as the 'little war' was already in full activity. Louder and louder resounded the cry from India that it was high time to protect Afghánistán against the advance of Russia; and when it became manifest that a tremendous (?) army was despatched in all haste towards the north, merely to crush a paltry revolt, the suspicion may be justified in imagining that this concentration of troops had been undertaken with still other ends in view. A *casus belli*, this paper states, might easily have originated against Afghánistán during these operations on the frontier; for it was well known that a large party existed who were in favour of the conquest and annexation of that country, as an absolute necessity for the protection of the British Empire in India. However well-meant this plan might be, it was nevertheless erroneous and detrimental. It was contrary to the views of the liberals in England, it was condemned by some of the greatest of Indian statesmen, and would, if carried out, entangle England in enormous difficulties, which perhaps might be overcome in the end, but not without vast sacrifices in blood and money.

The opponents of the Manchester political school made the most of the fact that England had, since the annexation of the Sikhs and the Punjáb in 1849—consequently during nineteen years—waged twenty-two 'little' wars. And indeed the circumstance of having assembled such an unusually large force for the twenty-third war seems to denote a change of front in the system of 'little' wars. All the previous wars have only had unimportant results; they were altogether inefficient for the protection of a frontier extending over 800 English miles, and the defence of this frontier is a vital question for England.



The North-West frontier of the British Indian Empire (westwards of the Indus) consists of wild mountain tracts, through which the Afghán highlands extend into the rich plains of India. The Afghán tribes dwelling in the mountains are only nominally dependent on their mother-country, and have from time immemorial regarded the plundering of the luxuriant plains as their chief means of subsistence and profit. They are uncivilised, and incorrigibly predatory neighbours and Mahommedans, who cling to the tradition that their forefathers had once been the conquerors and rulers of India. They will always remain enemies of the English. Fanaticism therefore easily acts upon them, as it generally does upon the needy and the hungry.

A conspiracy of long standing has taken deep root amongst them; and its aim is to drive the English out of India. Even fifteen years ago, three experienced commissioners of the North-West Provinces expressed an opinion that a secure frontier could never be maintained in the Punjáb until those tribes were entirely subjugated. The sect which has in view the re-establishment of the Mahommedan rule in India is supposed to have made great progress, in spite of all 'the little wars,' and to be of sufficient importance to warrant the necessity of England's extension of her frontiers in the same manner as Russia considered herself justified in so doing; for sooner or later the English must become entangled with them in an implacable conflict, as the United States of America were with the Red Indians. And the *Times* was of opinion that behind those half-independent mountain tribes stood the Afgháns proper, and behind them again stood the Russians.

It appeared, therefore, to be an urgent necessity to

annex the most important strategical mountain-passes, as well as the turbulent mountaineers, and once for all to put a stop to 'little wars.' Thus England had at least quite as good a case as Russia. It was quite immaterial what motives induced her to prepare for taking up a position in Afghánistán, as had been unceasingly desired for years by the Indian army. If this position were taken, then Russia's progress in Central Asia, in the opinion of the *Times* would not run on so smoothly as it has hitherto; for the English understood, at least quite as well as the Russians, the art of carrying on a war by means of subsidies and intrigues, and in addition they had a more concentrated power, a grander and more civilised basis of operations, than the Russians in their Asiatic possessions.

The ministerial *Morning Herald* of October 10, 1868, also intimated pretty clearly that it was the intention to occupy a certain portion of the Afghán territory,<sup>1</sup> as it declared that the moment had arrived when the true frontiers of the Indian Empire should be taken permanently into possession. This language is as plain and outspoken as could be possibly desired; yet the *Times* endeavoured to still the apprehensions which it had itself helped to create, for it represented the Hazára affair as un-fraught with danger, and also computed the strength of the expeditionary force at 6,500 men. It was not a question of a war against Afghánistán—which no one indeed had asserted—for that country must receive friendly support from the English in the event of her being at some future day attacked by the Russians.

The incorporation of the border countries reaching to the Afghán frontier was, however, only indirectly con-

<sup>1</sup> The *Standard* admits this too, although it never came to pass.

firmed by the *Times*. But it is certain that Lord Napier of Magdala, when consulted by the Government concerning the position of India and the course of policy to be pursued, very strongly urged such an extension of the frontier. In spite of the apathy displayed, or at all events assumed, by the English newspapers relative to the occupation of Bokhára, this event did actually make a deep impression on certain political circles; in fact, the India Office, incessantly warned of the threatening danger by the authorities in India, felt ill at ease relative to these affairs.

What was dreaded, and certainly not without cause, was not the conquest of Afghánistán by the Russians, in order to break down the last barrier which separates them from the British Indian Empire, but it was the turbulent enemies of India, who might avail themselves of the neighbourhood of the Russians to make political capital amongst their fellow-countrymen, and then resume their old schemes, which had been already frustrated by military force. The Government at that time preferred to ignore such apprehensions, and, following the easy-going doctrine of non-intervention, to suffer events quietly to take their course.

The representations from India, however, became so general and so urgent, that they could not easily be silenced, especially as Lord Napier—the most honoured and distinguished man in England since the successful termination of the Abyssinian campaign, and possessing also a thorough knowledge of India; to whom already the honour of a vote of thanks in Parliament has been three times accorded—raised his voice, which must have had great weight; and the English Government, too, must have been the more convinced of the correctness of his views, as he had found the way half smoothed by

the advocacy of Sir Stafford Northcote, the then Secretary of State for India. Doubtless Lord Napier, like all his colleagues, pronounced a somewhat more desponding judgment on the position of India, the tone of public opinion there, and the eventual influence of Russia's proximity upon the natives, than has hitherto been expressed by the special politicians of Europe.

What was done on the occasion of the disturbances in Hazára clearly indicates that England has renounced the Manchester policy in India; that she already takes measures not only to ward off, if needful, external enemies, but also, what is more important, to meet in a more decisive manner any internal insurrections than she was able to do in the last great mutiny of 1857.

This was particularly manifest in 1871 and 1872, when the Indian Government acted so energetically in crushing the revolt of the Luchais. This tribe, with whom the English have already repeatedly come into unpleasant contact, dwells in the mountain tracts on the east of the mouth of the Brahmapútra, and took advantage of the agitation for independence by the Birmese in 1871 to rise up in revolt, which brought down upon them the English expedition in the following year. In spite of their brave resistance these wild mountaineers very soon succumbed to the superiority of the British weapons.<sup>1</sup>

When, at the commencement of the year 1873, it became known that Russia clearly intended to put a stop, once for all, to the predatory incursions of the Khivans by the subjugation of the Khanate, then the whole English

<sup>1</sup> Concerning this expedition vide *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1872, Nos. 9, 35, 39, and 54. Also *Les Louchais et l'expédition anglaise (Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Paris, March, 1872)*; and R. G. Woodthorpe's *The Lushai Expedition*, 1871, 1872, London, 1872, 8vo.

press suddenly arose, and, in a more imposing manner than ever, raised a thundering cry of *thus far but no farther*. All at once there appeared to start up a great danger before the representatives of the British press, which has never, and certainly not on this occasion, displayed a thorough acquaintance with Asiatic affairs<sup>1</sup>—a danger where certainly none existed, except such as had long been threatening. But in this instance the press reflected the views of the chief of the Cabinet of St. James's, so that Russia deemed it advisable to enter into communications with him for the purpose of giving tranquillising assurances regarding her intentions with respect to Khiva.

That the impending events in Asia were not regarded with indifference by the public in general, and by the Government in particular, may be gathered from the fact that Mr. Mitchell, the British Consul at St. Petersburg, was summoned to London to consult with Lord Granville and Mr. Hammond at the Foreign Office, and with the Duke of Argyll, Minister of State for India, Sir Henry Rawlinson and Sir John W. Kaye, at the India Office. The firm language held by the English Cabinet in this affair is supposed to have made some impression in St. Petersburg, where it was resolved to send Count Shuvalov, the Minister of Police, on a special mission to London, with a view of coming to an understanding with the British Government. The English declaration, according to the statement of the *Daily News*, was to the effect that the Russians were not to occupy Balkh, the capital of Balkh-Turkestan—a Khanate which had formed a bone of contention between Khiva and Afghánistán, and might

<sup>1</sup> It is particularly amusing to observe how the correspondent of the *Allgemeine Zeitung* of 1873, No. 25, describes the English press as 'on the whole well-informed' on the matter.

possibly, after the conquest of Khiva, become a subject of dispute between Russia and Afghánistán.

The mission of Count Shuvalov was greeted by the *Times* in a leading article which expresses pretty clearly the public opinion in England.<sup>1</sup>

‘The mission of Count Schouvaloff to this country may be assumed to indicate two things—first, that Russia is impressed with the conviction of our earnestness on the Central Asian question, and next, that she is desirous of discussing that question in a conciliatory fashion, and bringing it, at all events for the present, to some amicable adjustment. Under these circumstances our own Government has only to express its policy in distinct language, and adhere to it firmly, and the Russian envoy will probably not dissent from the conclusion. Indeed, the intentions of England, as already communicated to the Government of the Emperor, leave no room for immediate objection or present antagonism, though they may have prompted the suggestion of a preferable alternative. We have simply stated that we shall refrain from all intervention with Russian conquests in Central Asia so long as they do not exceed certain specified limits. Of course, in this announcement it is implied that if these limits are exceeded we should regard it as a cause for war; but that contingency is not imminent, and it is already clear that the Russians have no desire to accelerate the event. They have probably, indeed, been taken by surprise. That England, however pacific might be her policy, would, if necessary, fight, and fight resolutely, for her Indian Empire, all Russian statesmen well know; but none know at what point or under what conditions the decision might be taken or the final terms of understanding proclaimed.

<sup>1</sup> Quotation from the *Times* of January 13, 1873.

The moment arrived unexpectedly, and now the trusted friend of the Emperor himself has repaired to this country to see what can be done.

‘We may safely presume that before taking a step of such importance a British Government would have well ascertained its own mind; nor do we know, indeed, that Ministers could pursue any more desirable policy than that which was indicated in the communication of last month. This does not commit us to any participation in Russian proceedings, nor to any doubtful political experiment. It declares only that the advances of Russia towards our Indian Empire will not, after a certain line is passed, be regarded with indifference. Practically, we have determined to maintain the independence of Afghanistan, and this resolution we have expressed by an intimation that certain territories of our ally, the Amir, to which Russia is now closely approaching, must be considered as under our protection. Such an announcement is manifestly calculated to produce, one way or another, a decisive result. If Russia accepts the proposed limitations, there will be an end for the time of the Central Asian question; if she resists them, the question will pass at some future moment to the arbitrament of the sword. We do not imagine the Russian Government to be disposed towards the latter alternative; and, as our terms are by no means unreasonable, they will, if steadily persisted in, be probably accepted. The result will not amount to a final extinction of political rivalry, but it will place the relations of the two States on a clear intelligible footing, and enable each Government to shape its policy accordingly.

‘The issue now plainly stated was inevitable. Some may even now think the statement premature, or the terms injudiciously chosen; but sooner or later some such issue

must have been established. There was a line to be drawn, but it was hard to say where. Either the two conquering Powers might be allowed to come into actual contact at a common boundary, or one must prescribe a limit to the other. In either case the chance of collision was evident and its risks clearly discernible. We, as has been often explained in these columns, are at present incomparably stronger in the East than Russia, but that very strength exposes us to special liabilities. We could take the field with a force to which the Russians in those parts could offer no opposition, and our campaign would be conducted with all the resources of a great military empire at our immediate command. In addition to these resources we should enjoy at least all the advantages which Russia possesses in the countries beyond our own frontiers. It would be much more easy for us than for her to bring intrigue and rupees into play, to enrol warlike tribes under our flag, to subsidise half-barbarous chieftains, and, in a word, to fight with the very weapons on which the Russians would rely. There is another consideration, too, of no light import, which, though it is often overlooked in this country, we may be sure is well appreciated at St. Petersburg. At home we English are reputed a pacific people, and more than once, it may be feared, foreign governments have traded on our presumed reluctance to engage in war; but in India it is far otherwise. There the whole society is as military as Russia itself; the army is permanently engaged on a most extensive scale, and is capable at a moment of indefinite expansion; while, what is still more to the purpose, a declaration of war would be hailed with delight by every Englishman in the country. None can tell but those who have tried it the effect of monotonous inaction in distant



regions on military minds. To escape from the weary sameness of life in garrison or cantonments, a regiment would march with glee upon the most desperate expedition, and the route to Khiva would be received at a military station with even more gratification than a recall to England. If Englishmen are peacemakers, Anglo-Indians are not, and the Russian Government knows the truth full well.

‘On the other hand, as may be observed with equal frankness, the very solidity and organisation of our Eastern Empire exposes it to risks of its own. We have far more to lose in Asia than Russia has. She, at the most, could but be driven back a few hundreds of miles, with the prospect of recovering the lost ground at some future opportunity. She has founded no empire in the East; her power is not centralised in any metropolis; her subjects are only scattered tribes, owing her a loose unsubstantial allegiance. There is nothing for an enemy to break down or destroy, whereas we rule a compact empire, of great antiquity, highly civilised, and containing a population singularly susceptible of political alarm. Russia, as she well understands, could disturb us, and possibly create even serious commotions in the very heart of our dominion. We are supposed to be constantly apprehensive of this very interference, and it has perhaps been calculated that we endure much rather than provoke the risk. But it should also be remembered that we have known of this risk from the first; that we have been accustomed to measure or compute its inconvenience; and that the very nearness of the peril might induce us to confront it at once. Except, indeed, for the possible results of a political agitation, Russia is practically powerless against us; but she may have thought, as many

have thought, that an expedition across the frontier might be attended with formidable convulsions in British India. Probably the alarm on that score, at any rate since the mutiny, has been much exaggerated; but there is no necessity for disguising the fact that we should embark in an Eastern war with far more powerful resources indeed than Russia, but also with a far greater stake. We have something to fight for; Russia has nothing—unless indeed it be freedom of conquest. On the other hand, we have a decided advantage at the present conjuncture, for we alone can assuredly do what we undertake to do. What we may threaten we could most certainly perform. What the Russians could threaten might, after all, be found to evaporate in words.'

Such swaggering language from the pen of the greatest organ of the English press, which had in its columns constantly preached the policy of non-intervention, might well give rise to astonishment, if indeed the explanation were not found in a certain necessity—after so many humiliating experiences from this very policy—of trying for once what might be effected by adopting a bolder line of intimidating 'Chauvinism.' And for the rest, it is of the utmost importance for England to pursue a firm and undeviating policy in this question. In this matter England must be thoroughly in earnest, if she does not wish to suffer a fresh diplomatic defeat on this occasion, and hereafter to see her colonial power diminished. The English ministers feel that their country, if its political *prestige* is not considerably to decline, must not for a second time allow itself to be taken by surprise, as was the case in the Black Sea question. As the question now stands, England has the alternative either to await patiently Russia's approach towards the Indian frontier,

or forthwith to check this approach. But only the latter alternative remains if Russia should not acquiesce in the line of demarcation proposed, which must necessarily neutralise the Afghán territory.

England may well, and in fact must, permit the Russians to dot here and there the south coast of the Caspian Sea with forts, which might threaten Persia and Herát; but she can by no means allow Russian pro-consuls in Balkh and Badákhshán; for these countries extend far into the Khanates of Afghánistán, which, as long as England has vital interests in India, must remain unapproachable to the Russians.

Consequently, when the ministerial *Daily Telegraph* says that the advance of Russia on the Khanates, her progress on the Oxus, and her intrigues in Kábul indicated only a diversion to bind the hands of England during the solution of the more important questions, which chiefly centred in the Black Sea and the Bosphorus, it merely spoke the truth. However, the question first begins really to assume a dangerous aspect when the Russians appear southwards of the Hindú-Kúsh. To avert this must be the great aim of the English. Whether they will succeed is not so very certain, notwithstanding the warlike tone of the press; it appears to us to be just as uncertain as that the great majority of the European papers—as Vámbéry asserts—are in favour of England's demands in this last question.<sup>1</sup>

In the latter half of January 1873, the intelligence burst upon us like a thunderbolt, that Persia had, three years ago, ceded to Russia, in a secret treaty, the valley of Atrak, lying on the southern frontier of Khiva, whereby

<sup>1</sup> *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1873, No. 26.

the province of Khárasm (Khorásán) became open to the Russians. Although this statement was immediately denied by competent persons, it left a deep impression.

England was therefore conscious of the danger; and no one can complain that this danger was underrated by English statesmen. In any case England was blamable for having suffered affairs to ripen to such an extent, and in having, at the same time, smoothed the way for Russia, through the indifference and ignorance of her diplomatists and men in power. We doubt very much, however, even if England had come forward at the right moment with an earnest diplomatic *veto*—and more than this she could not possibly have ventured to do—that she would have had it in her power to turn the course of events into a different direction; and not even if she had long since embarked upon the thankless and expensive task of subjugating the independent Afghán tribes. If this had been done some years ago, when the Russians were only in Samarcand and Bokhára, it would have undoubtedly hastened the hostile collision, if a collision was actually unavoidable—that is to say, that both parties would now be standing face to face, and the long-dreaded collision would at once take place.

England would scarcely have had any cause of regret if Afghánistán could form a better frontier than the Punjáb, which however cannot be asserted. On the contrary, we are of opinion that it is better for England to have the Khyber Pass in front than in rear. For, if the Russians wished to penetrate into the Punjáb—supposing always that they really had designs upon India—they would be obliged to march through this difficult mountain-pass, and the English might hope to render their *débouchement* quite impossible. But, if the English

held a position in Afghánistán and were defeated by a Russian force, then they would be compelled to retire through this pass lying in their rear, and might expect a catastrophe similar to that which happened in the year 1842; and, in the event of the Russians following up the pursuit, scarcely a man would reach India again. The first is consequently the less dangerous.

But, in the opinion of Vámbéry, Russia would, as soon as she has done with the three Khanates of Turkestán, enter into an alliance with the Afgháns, and then she would stand at the threshold of India. The obstacles in her way, such as the Hindú-Kúsh, he thinks, are considerably overrated, for passes are not wanting through which Russia might penetrate into the fairy-land of India. But in a strategical point of view there exists no doubt that England is stronger on the Indus than she is on the Oxus; and she cannot move even one step forward without endangering her position as a great power. All that can be done to strengthen her military position is to fortify the Khyber Pass and the other defiles that traverse the Suliman mountains.

From what is at present known of the geography of these countries, it seems to be impossible to out-flank these positions, and consequently the Russians would in any case be compelled to seize 'the bull by the horns.'<sup>1</sup> Since the Crimean war, and since the great mutiny of the native troops, the political position of the British possessions in Asia has considerably changed. The key of India

<sup>1</sup> The best account that we have as yet read regarding the military side of this question is still Chapter XXX., 'Russian Invasion in India,' from the pen of the French officer and Persian adjutant, General J. P. Ferrier, in his book entitled, *Caravan Journeys and Wanderings in Persia, Afghánistán, Turkestán, and Beloochistán.* London, 1857. 8vo. second edition.

is now in London. Every serious threatening of British India would, in all probability, lead to a European war, and Asia's fate would have to be decided on the Neva, the Danube, or in the Crimea.

On the other hand, the great British Empire is re-constituted, its military efficiency is organised incomparably better than formerly; besides the strong contingent of Sepoys, 70,000 first-rate British troops compose the army of India. But above all, the rapidity with which troops are now moved must be taken into consideration. Formerly in Asia *time* and *space* formed the two ruling elements both in war and in commerce. Now, since the introduction of steam-power, their influence is year by year being diminished; so that it becomes possible for the English to reach the Indus by rail sooner than the Russians could take up a position in Afghánistán, and there form their columns of attack.

But although it might be argued that the railway-net is still very defective at the probable theatre of war—that the Russians, on their part, have proved with what surprising rapidity enormous distances can be accomplished without railways—in short, although, notwithstanding the above alleged circumstances, it might be assumed, with Vámbéry, that England would not be able to resist the powerful blows which Russia, strengthened by innumerable hosts of Asiatic auxiliaries, could deal against the artificial structure of the Indo-British Empire, yet even then the possibility of England withstanding the shock must be admitted, either by her having taken up a position in Afghánistán, which is more unfavourable in a military point of view, or by her having endeavoured to establish a border Afghán state, devoted to her interests, and at the same time serving as a barrier. This latter,

however, is not so easily created, because the essential elements are wanting; and moreover it would scarcely serve to check the advance of the victorious Russians.

Consequently no one would venture to dispute that an attack made by the Russians upon British India would bring imminent danger on the stability of that Empire. And Vámbéry does not exaggerate these dangers in the event of such a collision actually taking place. Russian statesmen, however—possessing all the qualities that attain success at the courts of Eastern despots, exactly in an inverse ratio to English statesmen, who generally understand nothing of Eastern politics—know full well this circumstance, and feel quite conscious of it in all their dealings. Just as England stands with regard to Russia, so has Russia countless reasons to live in peace and amity with the sons of Albion; and the latter will only have to expect a direct attack upon India, if complications in other quarters should give rise to a sufficient cause.

For the cautious diplomacy of Russia—which Vámbéry agrees with Urquhart in considering superior under all circumstances to the English—underrates just as little, as England does her northern rival, the difficulties of a campaign against India, until Russia is able to move on a more extensive basis of operations. The whole extent of country from the Caspian Sea to the Belút-Tágh mountains, and, if possible, the important territories of the Chinese East-Turkestan, or at least Afghánistán, must be in complete possession of the Russians before the conquest of India can be thought of.

The circumstance that the influence of Russia is daily increasing, whilst that of England is declining, and that England is thus being quietly lifted out of the saddle,

appears to us of greater importance and fraught with more serious consequences in the proximate future. How this is to be prevented we do not know, nor does Vámbéry even enlighten us on that point. But British statesmen ought to have foreseen this peril, and ought to have nipped it in the bud. But how? There was but one way of doing so; it was to have placed in the very beginning an imperative *veto* on the extension of Russian power in the East.

Vámbéry appeals to the teaching of history, which shows that Russia had purposely avoided every collision with a rival power during her aggressive policy, and the extension of her power there had only made unopposed progress when she found no direct enemy in her path.<sup>1</sup> We admit this; but the word 'enemy' in this case can only be justly understood to mean a powerful enemy. But did England possess the means as regards money and men to make such a decision respected—that is to say, to prevent Russia, by force of arms, from extending her south-eastern frontier? And if she did, how was this to be done? Whither could the English go to meet the soldiers of the Czar?

As things now stand, and as long as no better conditions exist, the belief of Russia entertaining any designs of conquest in India appears to be untenable. We must leave it undecided whether the Eastern question can be solved, as Vámbéry supposes, more easily beyond the Hindú-Kúsh than on the Bosphorus.<sup>2</sup> It is certain, however, that Russia is England's most dangerous rival

<sup>1</sup> *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1870, No. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *The Rivalry between Russia and England in Central Asia* (*Unsere Zeit*, 1867, vol. ii. p. 586). Vide also the articles that Vámbéry has published in *Unsere Zeit*, 1868, vol. ii.



throughout all Asia; and we doubt not for a moment but that in the future Russia's dominion will extend considerably further still in Asia, and also that she must at length bring about the downfall of the English colonial system. But the statesmen on the Neva, who have given more than one proof of their cleverness, foresee this quite clearly, and have no further interest in hastening on more rapidly the process of disintegration now taking place throughout Asia.

At the same time these statesmen know too well the dangers of an Asiatic universal monarchy to endeavour to establish one by force, especially when the course of events is drifting them along towards such a dangerous goal. But assuredly these dangers are diminished, as regards Russia, by the quality which is so frequently brought up as a reproach<sup>1</sup> against her, namely, that she is so essentially Asiatic; through this peculiarity Russia possesses so much more than England the power of assimilating the people whom she has subjugated. This assimilation, however, can only take place with those people with whom Russia is now in contact—namely, the Mongols, Tartars, Uzbeks, and Turkomans; whilst it becomes a question, indeed, whether this would reach as far with nations possessing as much intelligence, such a peculiar development, and such a glorious history as the Chinese and Hindús.

We have here no intention of asserting that the progress of the Russians in Turkestán was not due to any settled and well-devised plan of the Russian Cabinet. On this subject the three memorials of the years 1854 and

<sup>1</sup> Vide many excellent remarks on this subject in Vámbéry's *Russland's Machtstellung in Asien. Eine historisch-politische Studie.* Leipsic, 1871. 8vo.

1855,<sup>1</sup> which were lately published, have given a satisfactory explanation. Although they are in many respects antiquated, yet they clearly indicate that much of what has since occurred was foreseen and managed with great caution and foresight at St. Petersburg.

But if we analyse the designs which Russia may have cherished in her constant progress in Asia—and the *arrière-pensées* of her policy in this vast scheme are difficult to conceal—only three final objects are conceivable towards which the Cabinet of St. Petersburg is steering her course. But of these three the conquest of India appears to us to be the most remote, the least advantageous, and, to speak frankly, the most improbable; of the other two, one is possible whilst the other is certain.

Although we readily admit that an expedition against India, proceeding from the banks of the Neva—planned and unceasingly worked out for nearly two centuries—would be the fulfilment of one of the grandest conceptions in the history of the world, yet, in order to account for Russian policy in Asia, we can find more proximate and also more practicable objects, which we do not hesitate to designate as equally grand and comprehensive, in which a collision with England, though of a different kind, appears to be almost unavoidable. These two objects are *the possible solution of the 'Eastern Question,'* and *the commercial monopoly in Asia.*

Although Russia's vocation does not lead her towards the West—although Russia's civilising and historical mis-

<sup>1</sup> Three Russian memorials on a campaign against India during the period of the Crimean War (*Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1873, No. 25). The first of these memorials bears the title, 'Mémoire sur les routes qui mènent de la Russie aux Indes. Présenté à S. M. le 14 juin 1854, par le général de Duhamel, Sénateur, ci-devant Ministre Plénipotentiaire en Perse.'

sion draws her towards Asia, and consists in elevating from the depths of barbarism a succession of nations enervated by oriental despotism, and sunk deep in superstition, as well as in spreading amongst them civilisation and moral improvement—although Russia, conscious of her mission, has for some years adapted her policy to this end—yet the possession of the Golden Horn will long remain the coveted object of the strenuous exertions of the Russian Cabinet. In consideration of the extremely difficult obstacles which impede the attainment of this object by the way of Europe, it seems not to lie without the reach of the combinations of Russian policy to pursue the longer but more certain course by the way of Asia.

Even Turkish diplomacy knows full well that, in consequence of having failed to reach the Bosphorus from the Danube, the plan has long been matured to gain possession of Constantinople by a roundabout way from Asia, after having subdued the whole of Western Asia, and taking the path which the Osmanlis once followed to overthrow the Roman Empire in the East. But Turkish diplomacy lives in the hope that, when the decisive moment arrives, England will stand by the side of Turkey, because in this question the interests of both nations are more identical than in any other.<sup>1</sup> We shall consider Turkey extremely fortunate if she should not be deceived in her expectations.

For, in fact, if the tamed British lion can be roused no more, who could prevent at any time the Russians from completely annihilating the Central Asian Khanates—from entirely setting aside the Sháh of Persia, who, since the year 1828, is but a mere puppet pulled by Russian wires—

<sup>1</sup> *The Russians in Samarcand* (*Kölnische Zeitung* of the 21st June, 1868).

from taking steps to put Afghánistán in order—and from dismembering and transforming Asiatic Turkey into a Russian satrapy—which, by the way, would not be so great a misfortune for those countries?

A very clever essay<sup>1</sup>—an accurate study of which cannot be sufficiently recommended to those who take interest in the Russian Asiatic question—points out the strategical lines which must be utilised by Russia to reach on one side the Mediterranean and on the other side the Arabian Sea.<sup>2</sup> Already much that was predicted in this essay has since been corroborated by the events that have taken place. The Caucasus is completely subjugated, and Russia only a few years ago undertook a more suitable division of her Trans-Caucasian territories.<sup>3</sup> The Caspian and Aral seas may at the present time be called Russian waters. The small island of Ashuráda, opposite to the Persian city Astrabád, is a Russian naval station, and *the strategical point*, Bokhára, whence caravan routes extend in every direction, is in the hands of the Russians.

As regards reaching Constantinople by way of Asia, this objection might be raised: that it would be much shorter

<sup>1</sup> *The Euphrates Line of Railway*, by an officer of high rank in the Imperial Austrian Service (*Oesterreichische Revue*, 1865, vol. ii. pp. 241–248). This officer is the present Austrian Minister of War, Francis Baron von Kuhn.

<sup>2</sup> These routes are: 1. The line from Kars through the valley of the Euphrates to Mesopotamia. 2. The line from Eriván along the lake of Van and through the valley of the Tigris to Mossul, Mesopotamia, and, after a junction with the first line, to Bagdad. 3. From Tabris in the valley of the Kereha to Shuster, thence a junction with the line 4, which runs from Tehrán through Ispahán to Shuster to the Persian Gulf.

<sup>3</sup> This was promulgated in the ukase of December 21, 1867 (New Style), and published in the *Journal de St.-Petersbourg* of January 2, 1868. (Vide, relative to this matter, Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1869, No. II. pp. 57–59.)

for Russia to invade the Turkish territory directly from her Trans-Caucasian provinces; in short, that she does not require to make that prodigiously roundabout way by the Caspian Sea. This objection can be met by this argument—which is brought forward in the above-mentioned essay—namely, that Russia cannot easily make a move against Asiatic Turkey until she feels certain of having secured her left flank, and extended her basis of operations by a previous seizure of the Persian province of Azerbeidshán; a firm establishment on the southern coasts of the Caspian Sea, namely, in the Persian provinces of Ghilán and Mazanderán; and the fortifying of the island of Ashuráda. By so doing, however, Russia would come into collision with Persia, which she alarmingly threatens from Turán.

Through the occupation of the Caspian provinces of Persia, and through the subsequent and not very difficult conquest of those parts of Armenia which have not yet become Russian, Russia throws the whole weight of her power upon the valleys of the Euphrates and the Tigris, and thus upon all Persia, which sinks down to be a mere dependency of the government of Tiflis when Russian authority is paramount in Turán.<sup>1</sup> Whether Russia takes possession of the whole of Persia, or suffers this state to live on in a sort of sham existence, by the possession of Turán Russia is always mistress of Central Asia, and can according to her will and pleasure place the Persians in opposition to the Asiatic Turks.

In any case, if Russia, in one way or the other, once becomes mistress of Tehrán, then Asia Minor and Syria will without any trouble fall to her lot; at the very least

<sup>1</sup> *Russia in Central Asia* (*Neue freie Presse* of September 5, 1867).

she will be able—for plans of this kind require a long time to mature their development—to press indirectly upon Asiatic Turkey, that portion of the Turkish Empire which supplies for its decisive struggles armies composed of vast and intrepid masses of religious fanatics, and which, through the compact body of an immense Mahomedan population, opposed to the divergent elements of European Turkey, forms its conservative vitality. But Russia's firm establishment in Asia Minor would threaten Constantinople in the most direct manner, and would, at the same time, absolutely command the commerce of the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal.

A limit, both in a military as well as in a political point of view, might be set, according to the intelligent views in the essay so often referred to, by the construction of the Euphrates line of railway.<sup>1</sup> For this would raise the influence of England whilst it diminished that of Russia in Western Asia, and would afford the English an opportunity of opposing sword in hand Russia's further advance. In that case, however, the scene of the 'unavoidable conflict' for the possession of that important railway would not be in India, but in the south of Mesopotamia.

Such a line from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates, with the necessary continuation through the valley of the Euphrates, would be shorter, healthier, and easier than the route through Suez and the Red Sea. Whilst the latter part of the Suez route is dreaded by travellers, on account of the frightfully oppressive heat of the sun, the Euphrates route would pass through the healthiest coun-

<sup>1</sup> Vide on this subject Julius Braun, in his article 'Syria and the Euphrates Line,' in the *Süddeutsche Presse* of February 28, 1868. et sqq. Also 'Mesopotamia and the Euphrates Line,' in the *Süddeutsche Presse* of June 1868.

tries, and would besides shorten the journey by at least a week. In that respect, then, the Canal route would lose all hope of the possibility of competition.

In the year 1867, the English company which was about to undertake the construction of the Euphrates railway, entered into an agreement with the Turkish Government—so, at least, the newspapers of that time reported—by which the line was to run from Scutari, on the Asiatic side of Constantinople, direct through Asia Minor to Aleppo, thence to Kalat-Djaber, in the valley of the Euphrates, down this valley and across the Tigris to Bagdád, and thence, as it appears, again along the Euphrates to Bassorah, on the Shat-el-Arab, or the united Euphrates and Tigris, whither the steamers from India come. Since then nothing more has been heard relative to the accomplishment of this project, which is, however, beset with considerable difficulties. But only recently we read a statement that the Gladstone Cabinet has at last decided on granting a guarantee for the interest of the capital to be spent in the construction of this line, which had been so long sought for in vain from the British Government. But very recently (in November 1872) the Euphrates railway has become the subject of searching discussions which may be useful to know.

The general opinion is that the British Government would run no great risk by guaranteeing the 5 per cent. interest on the loan raised by Turkey for this purpose. On the part of the opponents to this project an objection is made, that England would have but little benefit in ordinary circumstances from a railway that brought in no better return than that derived from the transmission of the mails, the conveyance of passengers, and the transport of troops to Eastern Asia. But the supporters of this

undertaking are of opinion that even in that case the advantages which the line in certain eventualities, liable to arise at any moment, would afford to the country, are so preponderating that the pecuniary risk in comparison is not deserving of any consideration. It is allowed by all that the projected line for many years to come would scarcely yield more than is sufficient to defray the necessary expenses for working and repairs. The most important traffic on the line would be the conveyance of troops and ordinary passengers, which would hardly bring in more than from 200,000*l.* to 300,000*l.* a year. The expenses and the risk which would be caused by the loading, unloading, and reshipping of goods, might be so great that the Suez Canal would have the preference, except in special cases, for the transit of goods and merchandise. The goods' traffic along the line might be generally of a local nature only, and its return at present does not admit of any reliable calculation. Yet there exists no doubt in the opinion of the adverse party that this local traffic is capable of a rapid and considerable development, because the line itself would greatly contribute to create that security the absence of which has been the most serious obstacle to the prosperity of these countries.

The chief argument brought forward against granting a guarantee appears to be this—namely, that political embarrassments might arise which would set at nought all calculations, and which could only be averted by a combined action of all the Great Powers, and by declaring the railroad and the land on either side to a certain distance entirely neutral. On the other hand, the supporters of the project are of opinion that the English Government cannot possibly secure the shareholders against all political eventualities without running the risk



either of having to pay yearly for the future the sum of 500,000*l.*, and perhaps of seeing the line and all its advantages fall into the hands of some other Power, or of taking upon itself the much greater risk of protecting the integrity of the whole valley of the Euphrates by force of arms. On the other hand it is justly argued that England would in any case be compelled to do the latter ; for the railway itself could not in any way create this obligation. This may be all quite true, but the capitalists who have taken shares in this enterprise would hardly accept anything less than an absolute guarantee.

On this occasion, however, many newspapers laid great stress upon the principle, that the British Empire was a great Asiatic power on account of its possession of India, and indeed the greatest if she chose. As mistress of the most splendid empire in Asia, and as the stronger and more civilised of the two rivals between whom the supremacy on that continent is divided, England cannot possibly, without becoming guilty of a flagrant dereliction of duty, and without openly confessing her degeneracy and decline, renounce her preponderating influence in Oriental politics, and admit that this question can find its own solution, or must be solved by the more powerful of the two rivals, as England in recent times suffered to occur in European affairs.

Every question which touches on the stability of a leading Asiatic government, as for instance the rise or the fall of a nation, new divisions of territory, even the intrigues of a court, or the gradual and quiet progress of inimical diplomacy, have for the sovereign of India the same interest that similar affairs would have in Central Europe for Austria and Germany, and so forth. These are merely high-sounding phrases, calculated to stimulate

John Bull's readiness to make sacrifices.<sup>1</sup> In any case it is already very late, if not too late, in the day to hope for great results from this enterprise.

Besides the difficulties which exist in the insecure condition of Turkey, there are still others which are found in the peculiarities of the ground. For instance, it is still quite uncertain how the passage of the high mountain range of the Cilician Taurus is to be accomplished. But in these days we are accustomed to see engineering skill in all struggles with the obstacles of nature crowned with success, so we ought not to attach too much importance to this circumstance. What is most beset with difficulties seems to be the wilderness on the south of the river Chabur, which discharges itself into the Euphrates. There is nothing here on the left Mesopotamian bank of the river but an extensive flat resembling a sea, and overgrown with absinthe herbs, and only resorted to by wild asses, bustards, and ostriches.

Dreadful whirlwinds frequently pass over these plains. And such a storm destroyed the pontoon bridge of Crassus at Bir, together with all the soldiers in the act of passing over it; and another caught Chesney's small steamer, the 'Tigris,' near Werdi, about nine geographical miles below the mouth of the Chabur, and sank her, together with the best operatives of his expedition. Half an hour afterwards the sun shone forth as if nothing had happened, and a gentle breeze passed over the spot of this misfortune.<sup>2</sup> It is natural to suppose that a railway-train might be overtaken by a similar surprise.

<sup>1</sup> *Wanderer* of the 27th November.

<sup>2</sup> Vide a detailed description of this catastrophe in Countess Pauline Nostitz's *J. W. Helfer's Reisen in Vorderasien und Indien*, Leipsic, 1873, 8vo, vol. i. pp. 248-251.

On the other hand, there is near Hit a bituminous spring which might be utilised for heating the steam-boilers; it is cheaper than coals in England, and might be rendered available for the future line of railway.

The late German Egyptologist, Dr. Julius Braun, who had gained a knowledge of the countries through which the Euphrates line is to pass by a personal inspection of them, spoke decidedly against this railway.<sup>1</sup> He was, however, obliged to admit that such a line would be the shortest route to India. But whether the exchange of merchandise between Europe and India would be sufficiently great to make a railway profitable, which throughout the whole valley of the Euphrates, with the Syrian desert on one side and the Mesopotamian wilderness on the other, would hardly derive any benefit from that district, ought to be known to the projectors of the scheme. But he was of opinion that goods conveyed by rail from Bassorah to Constantinople ought to consist of pearls and precious stones, if they were to cover the expenses of transit. Goods that were weighty, capacious, and proportionately of small value, such as coffee and cotton, he thought, would have to be transported by sea, taking advantage of the wind as a gratuitous motive-power. The open sea is free from duty and requires no outlay. Moreover, no one knows whether by any possibility, or at what expense, a railway could be constructed along the inundated and marshy banks of the Lower Euphrates, or how Bassorah—that dilapidated and most unhealthy place on the face of the earth—could serve as a terminus and a port.

Goods that are less bulky and heavy, but at the same

<sup>1</sup> In the *Süddeutsche Presse* of the 28th February, 1868, *et seq.*

time of higher value, as tea, silk, indigo, would be despatched by the way of Suez, in order to reach Europe in the shortest possible time, and with the least loss of interest. If therefore, as Dr. Braun imagined, the importance of the projected line of railway through Syria and Mesopotamia were based only on the traffic with India, which would demand no goods, but merely consignments of silver and specie, then it would have no claim whatever on our interest. But the future of such a line, or of those portions that can be made, will have quite a different aspect if it should traverse a country which would derive a hundredfold new benefits from its use. Dr. Braun was obliged to confess that, in fact, vast tracts of land, which formerly had fed millions of people, would with the progressive construction of the railway—but not in the narrow chalky valley of the Euphrates—increase in a few years to their former state of productiveness, and would be able to yield a superfluity of corn and wool, that would be greatly appreciated by Europe, always in want of such products.

It was important to set forth these opinions on the subject—although they are not on the whole very favourable—because they comprise nearly all the objections that can be brought against the Euphrates line from different points of view. We will only add, that the same author, even in the year 1868, considered the Suez Canal a chimaera—which no one, notwithstanding the differences of opinion about its utility, would dare to assert at the present time.

Whilst all that has been said above must be considered as only belonging to the region of possibility, Russia's striving after the monopoly of commerce in Asia may be regarded as a positive certainty, verging towards

realisation; the more so, because Russia, from the very beginning, turned her undivided attention to the direct material interest which she feels in the development and appropriation of the trade in the East. A short time ago some statements became known which are well calculated to throw a strong light on the designs of Russia upon those countries.

In the year 1857, the Russian General Khrulev, who was entrusted with a military and diplomatic mission in Bucharia, wrote to Prince Baryatinsky, then governor-general of the Caucasus, to draw his attention to the fact that Russia had the task of fulfilling the will of Peter the Great in Central Asia. To this effect, a 'Russian Asiatic Mercantile Company' was to be brought into existence, which was to be endowed with the privilege of providing and maintaining at its own expense two regiments of cavalry, together with the necessary contingent of camels, and several batteries, for the sake of protecting its commerce and extending its communications. This company was also to be permitted to make from the whole Russian army an unrestricted selection of the officers required for this service. Moreover, it was allowed to erect a series of forts and blockhouses along the Sea of Aral, and likewise to construct several gun-boats for the protection of the navigation in that sea. But for the purpose of giving the undertaking a thoroughly unsuspecting character before the whole world, especially before Europe, which was always jealously on the watch, the company was to take into its employment operatives, engineers, and medical men, to give the appearance of its being engaged in establishing colonies and depôt-centres for its commercial communications.

This plan was within the next four years carried out

as regards many of its details, as events proved, and the 'Asiatic Mercantile Company' was founded by the rich Russian landed proprietor Kokerev, who selected the French emigrant Tournon as the head-manager of the enterprise, under whose direction the Russian Government succeeded in making astonishing progress in Central Asia.

Even if we were to call in question the authenticity of this document, which we feel however little disposed to do, at all events it already gives us direct evidence of the deeply laid political plans with which we have to deal, and which have been successfully carried into execution during this century.

But not only these far-reaching political combinations, but also those relations now existing in that country, are sufficient to indemnify Russia for the sacrifices she has made, and to make it apparent to her that an extension of her present Asiatic commerce in Turkestán is essentially necessary. We must therefore take a cursory view of the state of commerce in Turán.

Agriculture and the breeding of cattle are almost the exclusive occupations of the people. The abundant superfluity of the produce of the land is sold to Russia or the neighbouring Khanates, and falls into the hands of those who take no part in the cultivation of the land. The want of capital and labour explains the low condition of industry. The bazaars contain little, and that little the miserable productions of their own handicraft; women and children are employed in the cleaning, the spinning, and winding, &c., of cotton.

The Sarts are assiduous tradesmen; a commodity goes through many hands before it reaches the consumer. Between the Mongol Tartar populations and the sedentary

Sarts there exists a trade of barter particularly lucrative to the latter. This internal commerce employs considerable capital; but unfortunately it is at present quite impossible to estimate, even approximately, the commercial dealings in Turkestan, Chemkend, Sairam, Karnak, Khojend, and Táshkend.<sup>1</sup>

In Turkestan the city of Bokhára holds a still more important position than Kábul does with respect to the region on the south of the Parapanisus. It forms the central point of internal traffic throughout Turanian Central Asia; and from it the caravans radiate, as from a focus, towards China, India, Persia, Siberia, and Europe. Thus Bokhára becomes a great mart and emporium, where the goods and wares of the European industrial classes come into competition, and where English goods transported through Calcutta, Kurrachí, and Kábul, are exposed for sale in the bazaars beside Russian, German, and French productions, which are transmitted from Nishni-Novgorod. From Bokhára these articles of merchandise are despatched over a great portion of Central Asia, and exchanged for the produce of the country. Thus naturally arose an *entrepôt* for a very extensive commerce, which is carried on entirely by means of caravans.<sup>2</sup>

The city of Táshkend is scarcely of less importance than Bokhára. It is indeed the actual central mart of Turkestan, and drives a most active traffic, on the one side, with Kokán, Bokhára, Kundúz, and Káshgar, and on the other side with Persia, Afghánistán, Kashmír, and India. In fact Táshkend almost entirely subsists by

<sup>1</sup> Petermann's *Geogr. Mittheilungen*, 1868, p. 381, according to P. I. Paschino.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Andree's *Geographie des Welthandels*, vol. i. p. 128.

trade:—firstly, with Russia and the Kirghiz Steppes, this being its principal source of commerce; secondly, by means of the transit of goods from Kúlja and Chúgútshak to Kokán and Bokhára. The transit trade, however, meets with great competition from the commercial towns of Southern Kokán, such as Andidshán, Usha, and Margilán, and the general commerce from Káshgar. All the most important towns of Southern Kokán, with the exception of Namangán, are situated upon the only great commercial route leading from Káshgar to Bokhára, and indeed towards the western parts of Asia.

The traffic with Russia and the north-west of China is carried on through Táshkend, and only partially through Namangán; the latter, although on a direct line from Bokhára to Kúlja and Chúgútshak, lies on a route much more dangerous and inaccessible for caravans than Táshkend. This southern portion of Kokán disposes of its own produce and manufactures, such as cotton, silk, textile fabrics, dried fruit, &c., to Russia, and almost entirely through their own merchants, and very rarely through those of Namangán. The merchants from Andidshán, Margilán, and Kokán scarcely ever enter Russian territory, but go more frequently to Káshgar, where all the Kokánese are called Andidshánians, in the same way as they are called Táshkendians by the Russians in the Siberian steppes.

For the inhabitants of these countries the competition of the Russians with the Táshkendians would be beneficial, as this would necessarily increase the price of all their productions. Scarcely any further proof will be required to show the great importance that the possession of Táshkend is for the extension of Russian commerce. A few



figures will suffice to explain it. Russia's trade with the interior of Asia was for a long time inconsiderable. During the period from 1857 to 1861 it consisted, as far as has been ascertained from the returns of the Orenburg custom-houses, as follows:—Exports about 1,500,000 roubles; imports, 2,701,150 roubles. As regards the custom-houses of other parts, the import hardly exceeds two-thirds of the above amount. Since 1861 commerce has, possibly in consequence of the American war, rapidly increased.

The extension of Russian trade with the East is expected, in comparison with the unimportant traffic with the European West, to re-establish an equilibrium between the exports and imports. Thus, Russia at present requires for its manufactories twenty millions of silver roubles' worth of cotton, for which it has to pay in ready money. In the conquered territories and also in the other countries of Central Asia there are vast stores of cotton, for which there was immediately a great demand, and this caused a greater sale of Russian fabricated goods, and, consequently, at a cheaper rate. In the year 1863, the export of Russian goods from Orenburg and from Siberia amounted to 4,904,925 roubles, the import to 9,760,727 roubles; and in 1865 the export to 6,574,170 roubles, and the import to 12,091,149 roubles.

As regards the transit trade from and to Káshgar the Kokánese succeeded in obtaining the monopoly of the trade with Káshgar, from which the Bokhárians and all who are not Kokánese are excluded. A glance at the map clearly indicates that, according to the directions of the caravan routes, the southern towns of Kokán can only *viâ* Káshgar successfully compete with Táshkend and Bokhára for the China trade; for this reason Káshgar is a vital question for the capitalists of Southern Kokán, but

considerably less so for Táshkend.<sup>1</sup> But Russia understood how to take advantage of this circumstance by concluding a commercial treaty with the Khán of Kokán, by which a free and safe passage through the territories of Kokán to all the neighbouring states is assured to the Russian merchants and their caravans, in the same manner as the Kokánese merchants are permitted to pass free and unhindered through the Russian territories. The only object of this was to open for the Russians a free communication to Káshgar and Yárkand. This object is still more effectually attained in the commercial treaty concluded by Baron Kaulbars with the Atálik-Gházi of Káshgar.

Upon mature reflection the condition of affairs, as they now stand, must appear favourable enough to explain Russia's course of action in Asia merely from her political and commercial motives. They would not, however, suffice to secure her the monopoly of trade in Asia, after which she is now striving and must always strive. In furtherance of this object Russia must follow out plans that can hardly be called extravagant, considering that she has undeniably made already prodigious strides towards their realisation, and now is in a fair way of accomplishing what she so successfully began.

Turkestán is to this day the trysting-place of the nomads, who impose their oppressive yoke upon the peaceful and industrious dwellers in towns as well as upon the tillers of the soil. Through this country not only conquerors and Mongol devastators have passed, but also caravans in all ages. For it is a thoroughfare between Central and Eastern Asia on the one side and Europe on the other. Between the Caucasus and Ural is situated

<sup>1</sup> *Globus*, 1867, vol. xii. pp. 146, 147; and *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, Berlin, 1867, vol. ii. pp. 85-87.

the Great Gate—the ingress for the migration of nations, the march of armies, and the transit of caravans.<sup>1</sup>

For this reason alone this country must be of special interest to Russia, even if the possession of Siberia had not drawn her attention to the value of this neighbouring state. But Turkestán, united into one dominion with Siberia, becomes doubly valuable to Russia, since it strengthens her position in Asia, and at the same time forms a rich mainland to Siberia's Tundras (barren wastes). What Russia when in possession of Siberia alone endeavoured to do, and partly succeeded in doing, that she will also, as mistress of Central Asia, easily turn to the best advantage.

In spite of the in many respects unjust disrepute in which Siberia has long been and still is, Russia has accomplished the construction of the greatest continental commercial road through that so rarely visited region to China, leading through the gates of Kiachta and Maimatchin, far into and towards the very heart of the Celestial Empire. Now that the districts along the river Amúr are daily increasing in importance, and stretch their broad expanse down to the lake of Issik-Kúl, and that the Russian frontier has approached within a few days' march of Pekin, the bold thought might easily arise of opening the Celestial Empire from the west, and in due course establishing a new commercial route through the now almost unknown territories in the interior of Southern Mongolia.<sup>2</sup> This route coming from the south would lead to the countries along the Amúr, and would bring them

<sup>1</sup> Charles Andree's *Geographie des Welthandels, mit historischen Erläuterungen*, vol. i. p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> A similar idea occurred to Christian von Sarauw, in his pamphlet, *Russland's Commerciale Mission in Mittel-Asien*.

into direct communication with the treasures of Middle Asia.

Recent events in China make this assumption more than probable ; and the practicability of carrying out this bold plan in the proximate future appears to be more easy than was perhaps at first anticipated. The Western Powers, as is known, first caused Russia to extend her territories along the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk. For instance, during the Crimean war, some Russian men-of-war were chased by a more powerful French squadron in the Chinese waters, and sought shelter in the creek formed by the mouth of the river Amúr, where they were blockaded by the French. The Russian admiral applied to the Governor of Siberia for support, who sent him forthwith some troops to afford relief to the crews of the ships.

Fortifications were immediately erected, and as soon as the position was rendered secure against hostile enterprises the Russian officers began to explore the course of the river, which was found to be navigable, and suitable as well as its confluents to form an advantageous channel for commercial intercourse. The neighbouring districts were also examined, and the results of these explorations were so satisfactory that the Russian admiral felt induced to proceed overland to St. Petersburg for the purpose of making his report about this country personally to the Emperor. The effect of this report was the establishment of the Russians upon the ground already occupied. The Cabinet of Peking demanded, but in vain, the razing of the fortifications on the south of the Amúr.

Then, more than a year afterwards, the 'Overland Mail' brought the intelligence from Hongkong, which made an unfavourable impression in the political and com-

mercial circles of London. People were alarmed at this recent and certainly not unimportant seizure by Russia on the northern frontier of China. At the gate of Kalgan in the well-known Great Wall, which forms there the boundary of China, the city of Kalgan or Tshang-chia-ku is situated. It has always belonged to China, although many Mongols and several Russians—between twenty and thirty—have established themselves there for commercial purposes. Their presence in that city has very frequently given rise to protestations on the part of the Chinese Government. A short time ago a report came from Hongkong that, under the pretence that the Russians residing in Kalgan might be exposed to some danger, a detachment of Russians had marched into the town and mounted guard. It was also observed that there is no probability of the Chinese Government having recourse to any coercive measures for the withdrawal of this Russian outpost.

It is well known of what great importance to England the trade with China is, and with what distrustful eyes the progress of the Russians on the southern bank of the Amúr is watched. Whilst the English put the most outrageous pressure upon China, and drain her in all commercial dealings in a most unprecedented manner, they consider every advance of the Russians along the continental route as a grievous encroachment. And yet how inconsiderable is the progress made by the Russians since they first appeared two hundred years ago in the north of China in comparison with what England has attained in the course of the last two decades!

The appearance of Russian troops in Kalgan is certainly an event of great political importance, particularly as it took place at the very moment when the rebels of Western China sent a deputation to London to implore

the protection of England. It is as if we had before us two important moves at chess, the results of which we are unable to divine. In any case, the occupation of Kalgan by the Russians is a proof of the sharp look-out kept at St. Petersburg at what is going on in England, and shows a determination not to remain behind. And if the Chinese Government takes no serious steps to check this advance of Russia it is very probable that they may have good reasons for so doing. England has cast her eyes on Yunnan, and Russia on the territories adjacent to the river Amúr. There exists no doubt that the Russian military post in Kalgan is no forlorn hope, and that a sufficient support is within reach, and also that the gate or pass in the Great Wall will never be evacuated by the Russians.

As regards the position of the Great Powers—especially that of England and Russia—in China, an interesting exposition is in our hands, from which we take the following very remarkable passages:—A very influential and competent commercial authority in Shanghai thus expressed his opinion on this point—‘If Great Britain is prepared to withdraw from her position in Eastern Asia as a pioneer of progress, then there are two nations—one a young Republic (North America) and the other a new Empire (Russia)—both aspiring after influence in China—indubitably ready to take England’s place.’ ‘We do not at all agree with this statement, because neither Russia nor America strives after influence in China for those purposes which we (English) pursue. Russia already possesses all the influence that she can ever require, and her whole aim is to maintain it as at present. A nod of the head from a Russian Ambassador in Peking is more efficacious than an armed demonstration on the part of any of the other European powers.’ Such an admission

from an Englishman is very interesting, and proves how discreetly Russia proceeds in her Asiatic policy. 'She has already,' as he expresses it in another passage of the above-mentioned exposition, 'one foot upon the neck of the dragon.'

If we cast a glance at the map, we perceive at once the difficult position of the English in Asia. The Russian progress in Turkestán steadily saps a way to the Himalaya, and under circumstances which indeed are daily becoming more favourable to the realisation of the well-known plans for the invasion of India from the Caspian Sea, which were conceived by Peter the Great and Napoleon I.

On the western frontier of India is Persia, hard pressed by her dangerous ally from the north, who bears down more alarmingly than ever upon Irán between the Caspian and Aral Seas. On the east is the hostile Birma, from which England, with her usual rapacity, tore away the maritime provinces of Aracan and Pegu. Behind the King of Birma stands colossal China, holding the same attitude towards Birma as Russia does towards Persia—this colossal empire, which Russian diplomacy knew how to circumvent so adroitly as to obtain possession of its northern border-lands.

Until the insurrection of the Kukas a few years ago imparted the first shock of alarm, people in England looked lightly upon the gravity of their position, which was threatened by the power of these two vast empires.

Since then the English in India have become more suspicious than ever of the Russians in their mode of proceeding in Turkestán. For they observe that their rivals no longer comport themselves like wild and devastating conquerors, but act like true pioneers of civilisa-

tion by promoting to their utmost in their annexed Asiatic provinces industry and trade, by the cultivation of silk and cotton, and the growth of the vine and tobacco, and also by developing the commercial relations of these countries with the whole Russian Empire.

As things now stand, no one in his right senses could ever regret this view of the case, and we may therefore confidently look upon it as mere rhodomontade when we very recently read in a leading article of a Vienna paper the following effusion:—‘The sore point of Great Britain in Asia is the sore point of the whole European civilised world in the greatest part of the globe. England represents in the Bay of Bengal, in the Straits of Malacca, in the Chinese waters, more than her own interests—she represents Europe and her civilisation. A defeat—a humiliation of Great Britain on those distant shores—is a defeat and humiliation for Europe. It is equivalent to an emancipation of those countries from European influence, which they have scarcely acquired, and which is with difficulty maintained; it is equivalent to a surrender of Asia to Russia, which, with the treasures of India, would equip the fierce and warlike hosts from Mongolia and Tartary, the mounted nomads of Irak, in order to bring Europe by means of these successors of the hordes of Tamerlane under the subjection of the “White Czar.” An all-devouring deluge of these semi-barbarous people might inundate Europe and destroy her civilisation for ever. Instead of Europe humanising Asia, it would be Asia subjugating Europe. Thus British rule in India denotes the world-wide rule of European civilisation, and whatever threatens the former has the serious—awfully serious—consequence of placing the latter in jeopardy.’

In our opinion Vámbéry forms quite a similar over-



estimate of England's position when he very lately expressed himself thus:—'Although I have always allowed the fullest recognition of the transactions of a Venyukov, Syevertsov, Osten-Sacken, Abramov, and Fedchenko, yet I have never believed that the advantages which arise from having determined a few years earlier any geographical latitude or longitude, could compensate for the danger which might result to Europe through the too great preponderance of a still half-civilised power like Russia; but especially when we take into consideration that this might occur at the expense of such a state as Great Britain. For to her is civilisation indebted for such great and important services; she is known to be the seat of noble freedom, and under her banner, however much her enemies and detractors may calumniate her, the true light of our western world is carried to the most remote zones, at enormous cost and with ardent enthusiasm.'<sup>1</sup>

It can be no subject of dispute which of the two—England or Russia—is the more civilised nation. But it is just as certain that the highly cultivated English only indifferently comprehend how to raise their Asiatic subjects to their own standard of civilisation, whilst the Russians attain with their much lower standard of civilisation much greater results amongst the Asiatic tribes, whom they understand to assimilate in a remarkable manner. Of course they can only bring them to the same standard which they have themselves; but the little they can communicate to them is actually much more than the great boons which the English do not understand to impart. Under the auspices of Russia the advance in civilisation amongst the Asiatics is indeed slow and inconsiderable,

<sup>1</sup> *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1873, No. 26.

but steady and suitable to their natural capacities and the disposition of the race; but they remain indifferent to British civilisation, which is absolutely incomprehensible to them.

The easy-going politicians of Old England now open their eyes to all this; for they at last begin to discover Russian influence in the hostile attitude of China and her outpost, Birma, which is animated with equal hatred of the Anglo-Indian preponderance in Asia. It was against this influence that, in the beginning of the year 1872, the Lushai expedition was directed; as the exploration of new commercial routes between the kingdom of Birma and the independent country of Yunnan, lately emancipated from the Chinese Empire by the Mussulman rebels, appears to have had chiefly in view the paralysing of this influence.

These districts, inhabited by tribes of a commercial turn of mind, were first explored by Cooper, who accompanied, in the year 1869, the British expedition led by Major Sladen to the southern provinces of the Celestial Empire. The King of Birma must then have imagined that the English had nothing less in view than the annexation of his kingdom; whereupon he, in secret understanding with the Court of Peking, stirred up the warlike mountaineers on his western frontier against their common enemy. The Anglo-Indian Government became convinced of this fact in the preceding autumn, when a letter from the King of Birma was intercepted, which revealed the delivery of 60,000 muskets by the Chinese Government to the Lushais.

In the meanwhile Cooper's report on the province of Yunnan was published in August, and shortly afterwards the equipment of the expedition against the eastern frontier commenced.

This aggressive policy of England in Asia is manifestly a challenge to her rapidly progressing powerful rival for the supremacy in Asia. But whatever may be said, the chances for England are not altogether favourable; she has allowed the Russians to have the start in a skilful annexation policy, and has by her mode of action brought herself into a difficult position in relation to her East Indian neighbours. Distant from the mother-country, narrowly watched by their enemies, and threatened by a powerful rival, the English have in truth no cause to underrate the dangers that surround their Indian empire. Russia presses with the whole weight of her preponderance on the countries of Central Asia, possesses far more shrewdness, pliancy, and congeniality—qualities adapted to make the Asiatic races tractable. Besides, she has Asiatic troops drilled according to the European system, which are far more serviceable, and decidedly more trustworthy, than the unwarlike Sepoys, always prone to mutiny.

Consequently the Russians, in their slow and steady progress towards the realisation of Peter the Great's dream of supreme domination in Asia, might, on the critical day of decision, have more chances in her favour than her rival, notwithstanding that the latter may have hitherto been so successful in all her smaller enterprises.

The extraordinary movement which is passing through the whole of Eastern Asia, affecting not less than 400,000,000 of souls, is as it were a real convulsion of peoples, by which old-established institutions are being entirely unhinged. During the last twenty years everything in China has become unsettled; even Thibet has become disquieted, and is endeavouring to emancipate herself from the Chinese rule. The old Chinese policy of closing her sea-ports and her frontiers is abandoned.

Russia wisely profited by this embarrassment of her neighbour to gain possession of that portion of Manchouria lying beyond the River Amúr as far as Korea, to take the Khalkas-Mongols under her protection, and to open the trade into the very heart of Asia. From Manchouria and the northern provinces she presses on China, regulates the influence of the maritime powers of Western Europe, and is in a position to set certain bounds upon their political development in the Celestial Empire—the India of the future—the vast emporium inhabited by more than 300,000,000 of producers and consumers.<sup>1</sup> If we add that Eastern Turkestán—bound but loosely to China Proper—has also thrown off the yoke, then we see the Empire of a thousand years, with all the corruption and stagnation of its system of government, standing before an alternative which in any case must smooth the way for the plan explained above. For nothing remains to the young ruler to whom are entrusted the destinies of the Eastern Asiatic people but either, yielding to the irresistible impetus of ideas in our railway-girt age, to enter upon the path of reform, and to open his boundless and commercially important empire to the intercourse of all mankind, to place it under the guidance of European

<sup>1</sup> *Russia in Central Asia* (*Neue freie Presse* of September 5, 1867). Vide also the following articles on the subject, which are well worth reading:—‘The Eastern Asiatic Expedition and the Trade with China’ (*Oesterreichischer Oekonomist*, 1869, No. 9); ‘China and the European Consulates’ (*Oesterreichischer Oekonomist*, 1869, No. 12); ‘Austrian Navigation and the Trade with Eastern Asia’ (*Oesterreichischer Oekonomist*, 1869, No. 14); which articles, from the pen of a well-informed writer, are closely connected with the Austrian expedition to Eastern Asia, but afford negative proofs that, still for a long time to come, Russia will be the only power able to enter into successful competition with the English and Americans in these countries.

civilisation—as there is now all appearance of his doing—or else the very foundations of China will totter, the individual provinces will become dismembered, the Empire will fall to pieces, and come piecemeal into the hands of the ‘White Czar;’ and Russia, which now enfolds in her gigantic embrace the north of the Chinese territories, will succeed to the inheritance of the ruler of Peking. In both cases she makes rapid strides towards her appointed goal. It is now intelligible of what great importance the possession of Turkestan must be, which is the connecting link between Central Asia and Europe—a possession which, amongst many advantages, brings that of being able to appear at the right moment on the field of battle.

The position of Russia towards China necessitates, therefore, an amount of influence great enough to secure the lion’s share in the utilisation of that market, and to keep the South Sea open; which, so to speak, had been dead for centuries, and only within the last hundred years has risen again into life; it is now visibly increasing in importance. On the Amúr Russia has already attained ‘an outlet and an inlet’ into the Pacific, which is already animated with stirring activity, whilst at the same time the construction of a vast railway from Moscow over the auriferous Ural Mountains is projected to the mouth of the river once belonging to Manchouria. Even now Russia, with imports to the value of one and a half million of francs, ranks next to the Republic of North America as one of the first powers in the import trade, to the very circumscribed market of the highly developed Japan<sup>1</sup>—the insular empire of the East.

<sup>1</sup> Charles Andree, *Geographie des Welthandels*, vol. i. pp. 489, &c.

If we consider that the countries lying along the North Pacific Ocean absorb the great portion of the silver currency floating throughout the world, and restore so little of it again into circulation, by which means they seriously affect the value of silver in Europe,<sup>1</sup> then we may conjecture what an immense field for activity, in every direction, lies open to a state which has its extreme frontiers only a few days' journey from the centres of trade in Eastern Asia. Furthermore, if we reflect upon the fact that the great continental railway is completed which unites the New-England States with the metalliferous California, and that in 1866 a direct line of steamers was established between San Francisco and Hakodadi in Japan, then it remains for Russia to open an overland route through a great portion of Asia in order to create a vast commercial communication, which will encircle, almost in one direct line, the whole of our globe, and a considerable portion of which will be commanded by Russia.

Such an object is worth striving after; and Russia knows full well that, especially in those countries of the far East and on their shores, commerce—that element of material prosperity and of influential power, which dominates more and more the civilised world—is hastening on towards an unbounded development. We can only get a glimpse into the land of future generations, as it were, through the faint light of dawn. But one fact stands out clearly, namely, that the Pacific Ocean is the gigantic page on which the history of future ages will be written.

The Russian Government appears to be so thoroughly penetrated with this idea, that it silently managed to secure an extraordinary diplomatic success in those parts.

<sup>1</sup> Arminius Bischof, *The Importance of the Pacific for the Development of Civilisation, Internationale Revue*, vol. i. pp. 852-865.

In fact, the treaty of alliance and commerce concluded between Japan and China last year was very significant. This diplomatic act was from the very beginning received with profound mistrust by the Anglo-Indian press, but the optimists of English diplomacy in Eastern Asia endeavoured to allay the excitement of public opinion by the assurance that it had in view only a harmless treaty of commerce. But such treaties may conceal also more important political stipulations: the commercial treaty just concluded between Russia and Japan affords an example of that kind, as it has entirely the character of an offensive and defensive alliance.

Whilst it must have appeared very remarkable for some time that the Japanese acquiesced with so much patience and without any remonstrance in the Russians gradually taking possession of the island of Saghalien, and whilst reporters, who had been led into error, spoke of Japanese complaints against these encroachments by the Russians, the world was suddenly startled by the intelligence of the alliance and the commercial treaty concluded between Russia and Japan, which gives to Russia the right, in the event of any act of injustice being committed or any disrespect shown by a third state against Japan, 'to use her good offices (*à bon entendeur salut*) to settle the difference, and to bring about an amicable arrangement.' By means of this highly important stipulation the full power of interfering in all the relations of Japan with the Western Powers is conceded to Russia, and to protect her against every '*douce*' or '*rude violence*' which may be meditated against her by the rulers of the Indian and Chinese Seas. The bearing of this stipulation is incalculable. To this stipulation, as a matter of course, is annexed a further article, by virtue of which, in case of a

war between one of the contracting parties and a third power, the other party is in duty bound to close forthwith its ports against all ships of that power.

It is the first case within the memory of man that a simple treaty of commerce—for as such the Russian official and officious newspapers designate it—has comprised such stipulations. Every idea of neutrality is excluded from it, and nothing is wanting to make it an offensive and defensive alliance but the name. The policy pursued in Japan and China by England, and also France taken in tow by the former, has had the effect of Japan placing herself entirely under the protection of Russia; and this happens, so to say, on the eve of the expiration and the revision of the treaties concluded between those two Empires and the Western Powers.

When, to the dismay of the European diplomatists, the contents of this treaty, hitherto so carefully concealed, were at length disclosed, the Mikado had no more peace, and was forced to yield to the solicitations of the diplomatists, and to send a plenipotentiary to China, who was delegated to demand the revision of the treaty and to expunge from it the stipulations in question. There was, however, every reason to believe that the Mikado had sent an ambassador to China only *pro formâ*, for the sake of gaining time, and for the sake of peace and quietness, in the firm conviction that the Chinese Government would not acquiesce in the revision of the treaty, which actually occurred.

It is known that the Chinese Government is extremely well served by European agents of every kind, who have either openly or secretly devoted themselves to its service, and are liberally remunerated for it, that there are amongst them soldiers by profession, and that the



times are past when European expeditions had to fight only against untrained hordes, armed with bows and arrows and with match-locks.

Although the Russian representative supported the steps taken by his colleagues in Yeddo, yet no one had the least faith in the Russian policy in Eastern Asia, particularly since the Russian-Japanese treaty, which was concluded almost at the same time with the Japanese-Chinese treaty, but contains still more serious stipulations.

It is surprising that Russia took upon herself in profound peace to seize upon important territories in the north of Japan as well as in the north of China; and on this account the governments concerned, apparently indeed, sounded an alarm, but did not actually take a single energetic step in order to put a stop to these so-called encroachments; whilst it will be easily remembered that in former times Chinese troops were quickly at hand to destroy the Russian batteries on the Amúr. The Russian men-of-war have never taken part in the battles of the Western Powers against China, although they were present.

After the massacre of Tien-tsin, the Russians took military possession of the city of Urga, ten miles south of Kiachta. This was done under the pretext of obtaining satisfaction and security for the murder of some Russian subjects. They have again recently occupied, under a plausible pretext, Kalgán, as we have described before. But the Chinese authorities, who caused the works on the fortifications of Tien-tsin, Shanghai, and other places, that are on the basis of operations against the Western Powers, to be carried on day and night, show a remarkable indifference towards these Russian encroachments. In

short, no one doubts but that Russia is in league with the Eastern Asiatic powers.

Consequently, now that China has refused a revision of the treaty, Russia is justified in protecting her ally against every act of 'disrespect.' In case of a war between England and Russia, Japan is bound to close all her ports against English ships! We have already drawn attention to the cautious and successful advance of the policy of Russia along her whole eastern line, from the Bosphorus to the Sea of Okhotsk. Here is a fresh confirmation of our views. Russian policy meets with success in Constantinople, Persia, Central Asia, Yeddo, and Peking; and matters have come to such a pass that England anxiously watches the manufacture of powder and arms in the states of the Mahárájahs of India.

Let us sum up briefly what has been said. It is now four years since Vámbéry<sup>1</sup>—the Dervish formerly enveloped in a hazy dawn of Mussulman sanctity—called the attention of Europe, and particularly of England, to Russia's noiseless advance into Transoxania. Events have verified his statements. Although it was as easy, as Vámbéry willingly admits, to prophesy the conquest of the Russians in Central Asia, as to predict that an avalanche in its fall would tear away the blocks of rock that obstructed its passage, yet there is still some merit in having said this, especially when persons otherwise sufficiently clear-sighted have obstinately refused to perceive the truth of this fact.

We believe that we have examined the question in the above pages from every point of view, and have arrived at

<sup>1</sup> Vide concluding chapter in 'The Rivalry of the Russians and English in Central Asia,' and his book entitled 'Travels in Central Asia,' pp. 439-443.

the following conclusions—namely, Russian policy may aim at three different objects in Asia, none of which, however, excludes the others. The first, the conquest of India, is of all the most improbable; the second, the attempt to bring the Eastern question to a solution from the East, is possible; and the third, the striving after the monopoly of commerce in Asia, and the consequent admission into the trade of the whole world, is positive.

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